

The Swanage School  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE**  
 Wednesday 27 April 2015, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Nick Brady, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), John Palmer-Snellin, Al Stephens, Emily Wyer

In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Jenny Maraspin (Deputy Headteacher)

Item		Action	Lead	Date
STU 5.1	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received from Paul Angel and John Lejeune.			
STU 5.2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest or conflict of interest arising from any agenda item.			
STU 5.3	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.			
STU 5.4	<b>Matters Arising &amp; Actions</b>  <u>STU 4.7 Policies</u> i) <u>Attendance Policy</u> : The Chair reported that she had approved the Attendance Policy by Chair's Action following the amendments suggested at the previous meeting. She noted that it had been agreed with the Headteacher that, in dealing with cases of poor attendance, a representative of the local authority and/or a governor might, at his discretion, be invited to the second meeting with parents (held if attendance failed to improve after an initial meeting). Only after two meetings had been held with parents would formal referral to the local authority take place.  ii) <u>Students with Medical Conditions &amp; Managing Medicines Policy</u> : This had been ratified by the full governing body on 23 March 2016, having been updated to reflect that the school did not currently have a defibrillator. TH reported that the installation of the defibrillator was imminent and that it would be for community use. It was suggested this be publicised once it is available. It was noted the Ambulance Service offer free training.  iii) <u>Careers Information, Advice &amp; Guidance Policy</u> : This had been published.	Publicise	TH	June '16

	<p><b><u>STU 4.5.i Behaviour</u></b></p> <p>Referring to the presentation on behavior management received at the previous meeting, the Chair asked for an update regarding the strategy for managing low-level disruption, in particular for Key Stage 4 children. TH reported that Year 10 were currently on work experience and a de-briefing day on their return would include a focus on mature behaviour. He noted that, whilst there were one or two teachers for whom the students are less well behaved, behaviour in general is perceived by staff and the leadership team to be of a high standard, and that students returning from the Purbeck school had commented that behavior is better at The Swanage School. The next Student Survey would be conducted in the Autumn Term and it was hoped this would show a more positive perception by students. The Chair offered to work with JM on the wording of questions in the Student Survey to ensure the feedback received is reliable and easily analysed.</p>			
STU 5.5	<p><b>School Development Plan (SDP)</b></p> <p>1. <b><u>Summary of SDP Progress to Date</u></b></p> <p>The Chair had circulated a review of progress on the SDP objectives for which the Student Committee is responsible for monitoring. The main conclusion was that good progress is being made in terms of getting objectives achieved and that the engagement of the Heads of House and Curriculum Area Leaders in supporting the work of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) was pleasing. The need to keep monitoring progress of all year groups was noted, due to progress in some subjects (particularly humanities) being less than in others and as academically more able students who entered with Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 not progressing quite as well. Agenda items later in the current meeting and scheduled for the next would focus on areas which require additional monitoring or which have not yet been covered sufficiently.</p> <p>Governors expressed their appreciation of work the SLT is doing.</p> <p>2. <b><u>Teaching &amp; Learning I: Student Progress Data</u></b></p> <p>TH gave governors a brief overview of the grade boundaries under the 1-9 grading system, noting that 4 and above would be equivalent to C and above in the current system, with approximately 57% of students nationwide attaining this level. Uncertainty remained over whether grade 4 or 5 would be considered a “pass” under the new scheme and data was provided for predicted outcomes under both scenarios.</p>			

Predicted attainment figures (for 5 passes including English & Maths) for Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 ranged from 64.7% to 79.5% with grade 4 as the pass mark, but fell significantly, to a range of 32.9% to 53.1%, with grade 5 deemed the pass mark.

Predicted Progress 8 figures were between 0.8 and 1.4 (measuring progress across eight key subjects between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, with 0 being the expected progress based on Key Stage 2 results, and a positive score showing more progress than expected). The Chair expressed concern that the predictions may be over-optimistic and TH acknowledged that it was difficult to judge the accuracy of staff predictions. Once results are published for the current Year 11, the SLT will have a better understanding of how well staff are making these judgements, but noted that it will take a few years for the new grading scheme to fully bed in.

Governors questioned the SLT on the students who are academically more able (having arrived with Level 5 at Key Stage 2) noting that, in each year group, their expected Progress 8 score was lower than the average for the cohort overall. TH explained that this was to some extent explained by teaching staff being unwilling to predict a grade 9 given that they remain uncertain as to what the 9 standard “looks like in practice” given the new assessment scheme. For Years 7 & 8, where the difference in Progress 8 scores was more marked, the Project Based Learning (PBL) grades, which were generally lower, also acted to pull down Progress 8 scores which are calculated including PBL for these year groups given that they do not have option subjects to include. It was noted that JM would brief the committee under the next agenda item on work being done to challenge the academically more able students.

In line with national findings, girls were generally expected to perform better than boys.

GCSE results day will be 25 August, and governors are invited to attend. The school will receive the results on the previous day.

3. Teaching & Learning 2,3,4: Challenge, Assessment and Literacy in Humanities & Arts

As acting Curriculum Area Leader (CAL) for humanities subjects, JM gave a presentation and answered questions from governors on how staff are reviewing and refining their teaching practice to increase and embed differentiation to ensure that academically more able students have an opportunity to extend their learning whilst lower ability students remain supported. She outlined:

- three case studies of how teachers have approached the feedback received through lesson observations and continuing professional development (CPD) sessions, by reviewing their lessons in

	<p>conjunction with peers and, as a result, developing and executing changes with a view to ensuring that tasks given to students to deliver differentiated activities offer a valuable extension to learning for individual able students (ie not just more of the same work).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the review process for Project Based Learning (PBL) set up to consider whether the current PBL programme is fit for purpose and how it can be improved to ensure it delivers Year 7 &amp; 8 students with the skills required for assessments in Years 9 &amp; 10 and at GCSE. The review will be informed by academic research and best practice exemplars, as well as an internal SWOT analysis and staff/student surveys. It is being conducted as a departmental CPD research project and findings will be presented to staff peers and governors.</li> </ul> <p>TH noted that teaching staff have embraced a collegiate approach to their own development, being happy to discuss any weaknesses and to consider with their peers what their next steps will be to improve lesson plans and delivery. This had resulted in a powerful culture of reflective practice in a supportive learning environment for staff.</p> <p>Governors thanked JM for her presentation.</p> <p>4. <u>Behaviour 2: Distinctive Swanage School Personality (The Swanage School Challenge)</u>  TH reported that The Swanage School Challenge would be launched towards the end of May, led by the Heads of House. Student leadership positions will also be filled.</p>			
STU 5.6	<p><b>Receive Reports</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Special Education Needs (SEN)</u>  There was nothing to report at present.</li> <li>2. <u>E-Safety</u>  NB reported that he would meet with JM and the new Safeguarding &amp; Welfare Officer to decide on the 5-year rolling plan for e-safety education, as agreed at the last meeting of the committee. There was nothing else to report at present.</li> </ol>	Meet & Plan	NB/JM	June '16

STU 5.7	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>1. <u>Home School Agreement Policy (inc. Agreement)</u>  <b>APPROVED</b> the updated Home-School Agreement (“Pledge”) which parents would be asked to sign on an annual basis.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that the Policy itself be significantly shortened merely to stipulate that it is the policy of the governing body that there be an annual signed agreement. <b>AGREED</b> that a revision to this effect would be circulated for comment and approved by Chair’s Action.</p> <p>2. <u>ICT Policy</u>  The Chair raised a number of questions and comments in relation to the existing ICT policy, which had not yet been updated, relating primarily to whether the requirements of the policy are met in practice, and discussed with TH the intended review process. Noting that there was overlap with the E-safety Policy, it was agreed that the IT Manager and Business Manager would be asked to review and update the two policies, including the acceptable use agreements for students and staff, and consider whether the two policies should be merged. The Chair suggested that any aspects of either policy which are not being met should be assessed to decide whether this is because they are not sensible, in which case they should be removed from the policy, or otherwise systems should be put in place to ensure that any slippage is addressed.</p> <p>3. <u>Collective Worship Policy</u>  <b>AGREED</b> that the Collective Worship Policy be circulated as it currently stands to be re-approved by Chair’s Action after an opportunity for comments from committee members.</p>	Circulate & finalise	Clerk	May ‘16
STU 5.8	<p><b>Mental Health</b></p> <p>Two papers had been circulated to governors – “Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future” (Department for Education (DfE), February 2015) and “Future in mind: promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing” (Department of Health &amp; NHS England, 2015).</p> <p>EW summarized for the committee that the main change in perspective is the need to talk more about mental health, to be accepting of it and to reduce stigma. For schools, this would include the promotion of mental wellbeing and a greater openness regarding mental health issues. Whilst not statutory guidance, the DfE paper encourages schools to have a mental health lead and proposes that there be a named link at a local mental health service to provide advice and management of mental health problems. It is also expected that (over</p>			

	<p>time and from within the school's budget) all schools will provide access to a qualified, supervised counsellor and take more responsibility for early stage intervention.</p> <p>JM confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the counsellor at the school is trained and registered and that she has regular contact with their supervisor;</li> <li>- the new Safeguarding &amp; Welfare Officer will assist the safeguarding and welfare team with early intervention and linking to agencies;</li> <li>- the school has an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant.</li> </ul> <p><b>AGREED that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The committee recommend to the full governing body that Emily Wyer be appointed to a link governor role for mental health, to work alongside the SEN &amp; Safeguarding Governor.</b></li> <li>- <b>EW would meet with the Counsellor and Safeguarding Officer to discuss the government's recommendations in more detail.</b></li> <li>- <b>The Clerk would pass details to the Chair of the Staffing Committee with a view to discussing staff mental health and counselling.</b></li> </ul>	<p>FGB Agenda</p> <p>Meet</p> <p>Staffing Agenda</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>EW</p> <p>Clerk</p>	<p>May '16</p> <p>Jun '16</p> <p>Jun '16</p>
<p>STU 5.9</p>	<p><b>Curriculum Planning</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>EBacc</u> The Chair reported that the government has not yet published its response to the consultation on the EBacc and therefore the committee would return to this at a later meeting.</li> <li>2. <u>Curriculum Plan 2016/17</u> TH reported that the SLT would tailor the curriculum model depending on the recruitment choices still to be made following interviews held over the last few days. The Senior Leadership Team would be meeting immediately after the Student Committee Meeting finished to agree which offers to make.</li> </ol>	<p>Agenda</p>	<p>Clerk</p>	<p>May '16</p>
<p>STU 5.10</p>	<p><b>Confidentiality</b> No items were deemed to require confidential minutes.</p>			

STU 5.11	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>1. <u>Homework</u> In response to a question regarding consistency in the level of homework given to each year group, it was agreed that JM would circulate a report from “Show My Homework” by year group for the next meeting.</p> <p>2. <u>Year 11</u> EW expressed concerns over the level of stress currently being felt by Year 11 students. She noted that the change of staff for some subjects at the end of Year 10 had impacted them and that they were too aware of having had to “catch-up” in Science in particular. Acknowledging this, JM and TH noted that they and other staff are extremely conscious of the hard work that the Year 11 cohort have undertaken and the stress that examinations bring. Whilst crucial that the students feel supported, staff also need to instil a sense of importance and urgency to motivate students to perform their best, it being noted this is a fine balancing act. The recent change to having Year 11 in a single tutor group and giving them access to teachers in each curriculum area during tutor time was thought to be working well. It was suggested that keeping in touch with parents about managing stress may be beneficial.</p>	Report / Agenda	JM / Clerk	Jun '16
STU 5.12	<p><b>Next Meeting</b> Provisionally, the next meeting will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee priorities for 2016/17 (Committee members are asked to bring their ideas)</li> <li>- Updated attendance figures</li> <li>- School Development Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Challenge, assessment &amp; literacy in mathematics</li> <li>o Results of literacy strategy</li> <li>o Academic challenge</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Policy for Academically More Able Students</li> <li>o Numeracy Policy</li> </ul> </li> <li>- EBacc</li> <li>- Work experience (Year 10 &amp; 11 surveys)</li> <li>- Homework</li> </ul>			
	The meeting closed at 7.40pm			