

The Swanage School  
**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE**  
Held on Wednesday 17 May 2017, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Geoff Atkinson, Nick Brady, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), 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 John Lejeune, James Peacock and Al Stephens.			
STU 5.2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest or conflict with any item.			
STU 5.3	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.			
STU 5.4	<b>Matters Arising &amp; Actions</b> Where not elsewhere on the agenda.  <u>STU 4.6.1 Performing Arts GCSE</u> The Chair sought clarification that both music and drama would be removed as separate GCSEs on the introduction of the Performing Arts GCSE and this was confirmed.  <u>STU 4.9.1 E-safety Policy</u> The section on school trips had not yet been added; TH agreed to draft a paragraph and send it to the Clerk.	School trips addition	TH	Jun '17
STU 5.5	<b>Progress towards School Development Plan Objectives</b> The Chair had circulated a written summary of progress towards the objectives in the School Development Plan (those relating to the remit of the committee), it having been agreed by the Headteacher as a fair portrayal of progress to date. On the objectives, the following points were highlighted:  - <u>Students progress in line with top 20% of schools nationally</u> – Progress 8 for Year 11 is predicated to be between zero and 0.5, however it is difficult to estimate if this will be in the top 20%. Issues that arose in the 2016 GCSE cohort look to have been addressed, if the “value add” scores for the current year prove to be			

a good indicator in these subjects. However, other issues appear to be emerging, with value add scores for Philosophy & Religious Education (PRE), Design Technology and Art looking disappointing. Of these three subjects, PRE was considered to be the biggest concern, particularly as it affects all students.

- Develop academic challenge for all students across the curriculum – from the presentations the committee has received from Curriculum Area Leaders (CALs), it is apparent that academic challenge is being used to differentiate work for students. JM felt that academic challenge is generally employed well, however believes there is always scope for further improvement.
- Reduce in-school variation in students' progress (so all subjects make broadly the same progress as the best) – it was recognised that there is still wide variation between subjects and also between year groups in the same subjects. For GCSEs it is predicted that, with the exception of PRE, the variation will be less this year, with controlled assessments better in Music, French, PE and Drama, which had poor results last year.
- Improve the level of literacy and numeracy – TH noted that the school is reconsidering which tool to use as a means of benchmarking progress in literacy and numeracy. The reading age test adopted at the start of the academic year had been found to be labour intensive to an extent where the benefits were unlikely to outweigh the costs. On presentation of work, some subjects were considered better than others at encouraging students to present their workbooks well. Mathematics in the curriculum was a focus of the leadership team and there is collaborative planning with Science, Design Technology and Project Based Learning (PBL). Swanage Primary School have provided training in primary school strategies for mental maths with a view to improving continuity of numeracy teaching to secondary school.
- Work towards achieving criteria for teaching school status – TH noted that a visit and follow-up by the representative of the National College was felt to have been positive. The application will next go to the Minister for Schools, but the upcoming General Election is thought likely to impact the timeframe for receiving the outcome, which is now expected in July.
- Improve whole school attendance to 95.5% - see item STU 5.7.
- Develop students' self-efficacy – This objective was considered difficult to measure, but there were examples of individual success stories among students, where personal growth could be shown to have come from positive experiences that have arisen through opportunities offered by the school. TH reported that student leadership is developing well but, whilst he considers it to be good compared to many other schools, it is not yet as he would like. The Swanage School Challenge had been launched.

	<p>- <u>Students have a distinctive Swanage School personality: confident, caring and resilient with high expectations of themselves and others</u> – it was acknowledged that this is also difficult to measure. TH was confident that all students would be able to articulate the characteristics of “The Swanage School Way” and know the behaviours expected of them. However, children make mistakes and do not always act in ways that are consistent with high standards. The principles of restorative justice, employed by the school, usually result in a positive resolution when issues arise.</p> <p>Overall, the committee was satisfied with the progress being made towards the objectives of the School Development Plan.</p>			
STU 5.6	<p><b>Progress</b> TH noted that the Year 11 students generally appeared to be fairly confident regarding their GCSEs. He confirmed that students are expected to attend every day (rather than being on home study-leave) and there is a schedule of lessons relating to the upcoming examinations.</p> <p>For Years 7-9 the committee received progress data for each subject. The picture shown was mixed and for several subjects, in particular French, the predicted scores appeared likely to be overly optimistic. TH confirmed that French is benefitting from the new assessment framework and is moderated, although cautioned that schools have different systems for grading which makes moderation harder. He noted that data for Years 10 and 11 is more robust than data for the younger years, where the distance from the GCSEs means there is far more professional judgement involved in deciding on a predicted result. For the same reason, there were some concerns about the impact of giving potentially inaccurate predicted grades to the younger students who, for example, may base their option choices on them. JM noted that as some curriculum areas were stronger than others at moderating the assessment framework, they intend to pair stronger and weaker departments to cross-moderate in the coming academic year.</p> <p>The Chair noted that it was pleasing to see that the SEND and Pupil Premium students appeared to be making similar progress to other groups.</p> <p>TH and JM confirmed that they will undertake a learning walk focusing on students who entered with Level 5 SATS results, as the data continues to suggest that they are generally not progressing as well as other groups.</p>	Learning walk L5	TH/JM	Jul '17
STU 5.7	<p><b>Attendance</b> TH informed the committee that a round of attendance meetings had been held in March and a further round held in early May. This had resulted in some fixed penalty notices being issued, which appear to have had an</p>			

	<p>impact. Raising attendance remained a continual priority but was a struggle due to the combination of family and health factors that were involved. It was recognised that the small size of the school means that one student with very poor attendance will have a significant effect on the overall attendance percentage, and that without the interventions undertaken by the school, attendance would likely be much lower.</p>			
STU 5.8	<p><b>Risk Register</b> The Chair had compiled a summary of the risks suggested by committee members and noted that the key is not only to recognise a potential risk but to consider how to reduce its likelihood and the impact should it occur. It was agreed that the exercise had showed that the committee has a good understanding of the risks and how the leadership team manage them.</p> <p><b>AGREED the list of risks identified, subject to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- deleting the suggested risk relating to “<i>crisis within the ambulance service, mental health services and social care...</i>”, considered to be too general;</li> <li>- deleting the suggested risk relating to “<i>breach of behaviour standards on school trips</i>”, duplicated by the wider risk relating to behaviour standards in general;</li> <li>- deleting the suggested risk relating to “<i>negative Progress 8</i>”, covered by the wider risk on progress;</li> <li>- adding “<i>succession planning</i>” to the control procedures for the risk relating to “<i>Student Committee Chair and/or Link Governor roles prove difficult to fill in future</i>” .</li> </ul>	Update risk register	Clerk	May '17
STU 5.9	<p><b>Teaching &amp; Learning: Plans for 2017/18</b> The Curriculum Policy was reviewed in light of curriculum changes discussed at the last meeting and to ensure it conformed with the curriculum on offer. <b>The following changes were AGREED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- deletion of the paragraph on the organisation of Year 9 humanities subjects;</li> <li>- changing the list of option subjects to include Performing Arts rather than Music and Drama;</li> <li>- deletion of the paragraph on the extended project qualification;</li> <li>- addition of a paragraph on the Swanage School Challenge.</li> </ul>	Update and republish	Clerk	May '17
STU 5.10	<p><b>Celebration of Learning Awards</b> The committee suggested several additions to the awards that are given at the Celebration of Learning event, it being proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to split the subject awards to recognise both a Key Stage 3 and a Key Stage 4 student;</li> <li>- to add a Big Brother/Sister Award, voted for by students;</li> <li>- to add a Prefect of the Year Award for each House, nominated by the House Captains;</li> </ul>			

	<p>- to add an Academic Excellence Award for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to celebrate best grades.</p> <p>It was felt these additions would help the balance between academic, citizenship and sporting awards and ensure that younger children as well as older would be recognised for the subject awards. TH confirmed that the Year 11 leavers receive their “Good Book” when they leave the school.</p>			
STU 5.11	<p><b>Policies</b>  <b>APPROVED the Home-learning Policy subject to a change to the suggested homework hours to more realistic expectations.</b></p> <p>A report from “Show My Homework” was circulated. This showed the number of homework exercises set for each year group and for each subject, it being noted that appropriately the Year 10 students were set the most (with Year 11 revision towards the end of year meaning that fewer homework exercises were recorded). On average around 10 homework exercises were set each week for Year 10, meaning that at approximately 30-45 minutes each this would amount to 1-1.5 hours of homework per day. This was felt to be reasonable, although it was noted that there is a huge variety of opinion from parents over the value and quantity of homework. The benefits of a smaller quantity of well planned homework over a large quantity were expressed by the committee. The PASS Survey to be completed by students at the end of the year will gather information about students’ views.</p> <p>It was noted that development of the Mental Health Policy required input from staff, as discussed at the last meeting. JM agreed to take this forward and to ensure that the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is involved, it having been recognised that the mental health and SEND remits are closely linked.</p>	Amendment, publish	Clerk	May ‘17
		Follow-up Mental Health Policy	JM	Jul ‘17
STU 5.12	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Special Education Needs (SEND)</u> AS was not in attendance to give a report.</li> <li>2. <u>Mental Health</u> EW confirmed that other than the development of the policy, as discussed under STU 5.11, there was nothing else to report at present.</li> </ol>			

	<p>3. <u>E-Safety</u> NB had no report at present on e-safety. TH noted that he would struggle to give a presentation on e-safety at the Year 8 parent's evening, as last year, given the size of the current Year 8 cohort. It was agreed a hand-out would be a suitable alternative.</p>			
STU 5.13	<p><b>Teaching School Application</b> This had been covered under STU 5.5 above.</p>			
STU 5.14	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>1. <u>Committee Business</u> The Chair sought views on the arrangements for Student Committee meetings in the coming year, in particular the balance between presentations from CALs and time for discussion on other topics.</p> <p>JM noted that the CALs all felt they had benefitted from the experience of presenting to the committee, with the process of evaluating performance a valuable one. It was agreed to continue with CAL presentations but to ask for them to be shorter and less detailed such that the committee can hear two in one meeting, thereby having presenters at every other meeting. The alternate meetings would focus on topic discussions.</p> <p>It was agreed that the effectiveness of Project Based Learning and whether it is meeting the needs of the GCSE curriculum changes would be a good focus area for the committee to address next year, particularly as the school have set up a working party to look at this.</p> <p>2. <u>Bournemouth University Projects</u> JM noted that there will be a presentation day, to include a keynote speaker from the University, on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017, to which all governors would be invited. This would be to showcase the outcome of the academic research projects undertaken jointly between staff at the school and the University.</p>			
STU 5.15	<p><b>Confidentiality</b> No item required confidential minutes.</p>			
	<p><b>Next Meeting</b> It was agreed to ask the Heads of House to give a presentation on behaviour and citizenship, but to defer the presentation from the Science CAL to early next academic year.</p>			

