

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES - ZOOM MEETING

1st February 2024 – 3.30pm

PRESENT

Steph Donbavand	Sue Donnelly	Clare Gaskell
Mike McGarry – HT (MM)	Harriett Michael-Phillips (HMP)	Karen Owens – Chair (KO)
Jim Rimmer	Richard Snowdon (RS)	

APOLOGIES

Paul Povey	Collette Sims
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ALSO PRESENT

Vicky Ashworth - AHT (VJA)	Tom Dolly – SDHT (TD)	Gayle Phillips - DHT
Andy Pritchard – RD (AP)	Pauline Neilson - Clerk	

24/42 WELCOME ACTION

The Head/Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

24/43 DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests in relation to the agenda.

24/44 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 7th December 2023

The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated and were agreed as a true and accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

24/36 – “Academy Trust Financial Handbook” should read “Academy Trust Handbook”

24/45 MATTERS ARISING

24/13 – KS3 Assessment Policy – an updated version had been sent to RS - he would liaise with CTE over any changes.

24/16 - Safeguarding – a meeting had now taken place.

24/37 - Referrals would be added in due course.

24/41- An update to the Spring calendar had been circulated to Trustees on 11/12/23.

24/46 MINUTES FROM THE AGM

The Minutes from the AGM were agreed as a true and accurate record.

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

The group had agreed the appointment of auditors Beever & Struthers for a further 12 months – to the 31 December 2024.

Mervyn Thomas (Member) had queried whether the Members had to approve/ratify the decision of the Board to join a MAT. It has now been confirmed that this is a decision that is made by the Trustees and does not need to have Member approval.

24/47 **AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING**

The meeting of the above Committee took place on 23 January 2024. The Minutes were not available for this meeting and will go to the next meeting - 28 March 2024.

24/48 **HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

This had been previously circulated and was taken as read with the following items highlighted:

There had been one **permanent exclusion** of a pupil in Y8; the pupil concerned has now joined another school. The Headteacher briefly described the support put in place and work that had been done with the pupil prior to the decision to exclude being made.

It was report that parents were waiting some time for referrals/ diagnosis, but that there is a long waiting list. There are still some issues with parental response to bad behaviour. The Police liaison officer had visited school that day.

New York Trip – this had been excellent.

Q: Had once of the teachers been ill?

A: Yes, but school had managed to replace him at the last minute.

Berlin Trip – pupils left today.

Southport Leaning Trust – a date for an extra -ordinary meeting will be sent to Trustees as soon as the school was given the green light to join the MAT. The Headteacher Board meeting is scheduled for 12th March.

Date will
be sent in
due
course

School is planning do a **Safety Assurance visit for Fire** - there are no current concerns.

Finance – school surplus has reduced but it is hoped this is just a temporary drop.

Results Tables

Following the recent mocks exams, Progress 8 figures had been republished. School is still in roughly the same position - this data will be discussed in more detail later in the agenda under KPIs.

Department Reviews – taking place up to May half term.

SDP – the SLT are currently reflecting on the old plan and looking at new items. It was noted that a new format is being used.

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

Q: How does this tie into the Southport Learning Trust?

A: Many colleagues are studying professional qualifications, and the new plan reflects information gained on some of these NPQ courses.

Work will continue on the old plan until the end of next term and a meeting will be set to discuss matters further after the Easter holiday.

Staffing – details in the report.

OFSTED – An HMI had been into school the previous week because of an ITT inspection with Edge Hill University; there had been many very positive comments. There had also been discussions about ending one-word judgements.

MAT – There have been lots of conversations back and forth over the last few weeks. Additional evidence has been provided for the DfE, and the rationale was accepted at a meeting the previous day. It had now been accepted that Range would be “a good fit” with the Southport Learning Trust.

A meeting has been arranged with Ian Raikes (Executive Headteacher of the Southport Learning Trust) and Browne Jacobson (legal representatives) to discuss the timelines etc.; it is hoped that the original timeline would still stand: full membership by the 1st September 2024.

24/49 KPI REPORT

Chris Tees (AHT) was not present at this meeting, but the document had been produced and was circulated in advance of the meeting. The information showed a positive picture. Some individual items had been noted, but, following the mock exams the figure stands at -0.1, and this is a reasonable place to be in at this time. There should be some upward movement in the Summer.

Some individual subjects stood out, and the Head had met with the Languages Department to discuss their results. Reassurance had been given that interventions were in place for all groups e.g. a breakdown of areas of shortfall had been completed, new resources had been distributed to parents, Easter school and a Prime mentor group set up.

Similar interventions were in place in other subjects and staff had a good awareness of the issues.

KSS – There has been no new data since the last meeting. The mock A-level exams are taking place in the first week after half term, following which the KPIs will be updated.

Q: Science seems to be a big area of concern, with figures below target now – were there reasons for this?

A: The Science team are aware of the issues and many interventions have been put in place. Science is a compulsory subject and it is sometimes difficult to get some children to engage, but work is ongoing.

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

There are various different 'drop ins' at the moment to support staff and SLT are providing additional support. Re-setting is being considered after the mock exams so that there could be more targeted support in lessons. Lunch time and after school revision classes are in place, but it is acknowledged that there were still some children with anxiety issues in Science.

The new Head of Physics (starting on 1 April 2024) Is very experienced, especially in disengagement. This should result in some new ideas after Easter. The new Physics teacher – Matthew Agwae, who started in January, has settled in well.

Catch-up funding has been put in to support staff, especially in Physics.

Trustees discussed this and the work done on focussed intervention in literature assessment was noted.

Dr Snowdon suggested it would be interesting to look at the three sciences data averaged and see what information became known.

There are a number of issues to consider, including grade boundaries, but school is looking forward to the next set of figures.

It was noted that boys had previously struggled, but that girls were now becoming more of an issue. This would be carefully monitored and school would consider girl-friendly strategies if required.

24/50 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Trustees were encouraged to read the front paragraph as it had been updated. Any concerns or questions – please contact MM.

24/51 FINANCE UPDATE - AP

The Financial statement was presented and discussed at the Audit Committee meeting on 23 January 2024.

Trustees noted the following information:

- There were no real concerns over the balances.
- School had been notified that there should be a reduction in Utility costs from April
- School minibus – passed its MOT
- Alternative Education - noted

MM explained that although some pupils were struggling, everything was being done to keep them in education and engaged. One pupil was on work placement - there were cost implications for this. The issues had been discussed at the meeting with the Southport Learning Trust and it had been noted the all school were experiencing similar issues. The Trust is currently trying to develop more bespoke provision as the need is increasing.

24/52 ATTENDANCE – VJA

A report had been previously circulated and was now examined and the following items highlighted:

- Attendance is hovering just above 90%, in line with the average figure
- The target is 93%
- Weekly discussions are taking place
- Boys' attendance is better than girls
- The Government has recently launched the "Moments Matter" campaign, but it still remains a difficult area of challenge with parents
- INSET DAY – Attendance sessions for staff
- There is now a new category for severely persistent absence of below 50%
- Much of the work on attendance is in conjunction with the LA, Attendance panels etc., but many children are still waiting for external support. For some pupils, managed moves are suggested and work placements for others as they can work well for some previously disengaged pupils. Cases are reviewed on a weekly basis.
- Claire Coulson, the school link officer, has increased her hours and she acts as an intermediary, and deals with urgent cases. She also meets regularly with staff from school to discuss issues with particular pupils.
- Assistant Heads of Year, as a group, are responsible for the pupils whose attendance is between 85% and 90%. There are currently about 10 pupils who fall into this category and they are discussed at weekly meetings.
- Form tutors also review attendance, and some tutorials have been arranged
- There was an end of term Awards lottery for over pupils whose attendance was above 95%.
- A number of short-term initiatives have been introduced, e.g. cookies are presented, on a Friday, to the tutor group with the most improved attendance.
- Attendance awareness continues to be raised in the termly newsletter.
- An SSAT audit has been undertaken and the report is expected in school on 21 February 2024.
- The Inclusion Hub with Lisa Nolan has been very good
- KS3 Curriculum - these pupils have the poorest attenders and have the most anxieties. Staff are looking at pathways etc. and school is waiting for a date from the Consultant.
- The Minister for Schools letter was noted.

Q: It is clear school had a multi-layered approach, is there any local data?

A: Data is submitted on a weekly basis; this allows comparisons to be made at National and local level. Range is currently 8th out of 18 schools, with the majority of Sefton schools having attendance levels of between 90.5 and 92.5%.

Q: Should this be noted as a priority on the KPI report? At the moment it focuses on the high-level information and it would be good to look at individual groups?

A: The information could be given but it was noted that this did not show the whole picture.

Trustees thanked VJA for her report.

24/53 DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS - TD

A PowerPoint presentation had been circulated and an update provided. There was also a detailed plan on the school website.

Things are looking positive, but it is difficult to maintain the narrow gap given the nature of these students. There is a 3–5-year plan in place that is updated each year. The work done in conjunction with the Southport Learning Trust is also very important.

There is a 3-pronged approach:

- i. **Intervention** - good quality teaching, focus on assessment etc, especially at KS3
Inset Day – February
- ii. **Targeted interventions** - using additional funds – bespoke teaching programme, additional teaching, Easter classes etc.
- iii. **Wider strategies** – Social and Emotional Needs, Attendance, PP Champions etc.

The Pupil Premium report was included in the PowerPoint and details can be found on the school website.

24/54 LINK REPORTS - FOCUS - OFSTED

Any future visits to be noted and a form completed as this could be highlighted by Ofsted.

Suggested questions for staff:

- Improving Reading
- Use of Assessment – KS3
- Healthy Relationships

24/55 POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Reserves and Investments Policy
- Staff Disciplinary and Capability Policy - **AGREED** that this policy would now become the responsibility of the Headteacher

As there were no major changes, Governors **ACCEPTED** the above Policies as presented.

Policies updated by the Headteacher – for information

- Equality Policy
- First Aid Policy
- GDPR Policy (including Privacy Notices)
- GDPR- CCTV
- GDPR- Data Breach
- 6th Form Attendance – this is a new Policy – it was noted that a slight amendment was needed on P1 para 7 – working from home privilege.

24/56 MAT INFORMATION

This item was covered in Headteacher Report

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL**24/57 CORRESPONDENCE**

An anonymous piece of correspondence, claiming to be from a parent and addressed to both HMP and KO (Chair), had been received.

Both HMP and KO had scrutinised the information in some detail and decided that no further action was needed. Both met with the Headteacher to discuss the contents of the letter.

The next newsletter would contain information on behalf of the board and details of would be put on the Trustees' section of the website outlining the work of Trustees.

It was noted the **MM** had already made a full declaration on his past work for MG Education Consultants and this was fully disclosed in the annual report and on the school website.

24/58 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Details can be found on GovernorHub.

24/59 DATE AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

28th March 2024 - 3.30 p.m. via Zoom

Signed Chair **Karen Owens** Date **28 March 2024** .