

**OHC&AT SURREY & SUSSEX HUB [SASHUB]  
Brantridge (BrS), Grafham Grange (GrG) & St Dominic's (StD) Schools**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY (PART 1)  
4.15pm Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019  
at Grafham Grange School**

<b>1.</b>	<b>OPENING</b>																																																													
<b>.1</b>	<b>Attendees/Apologies</b>																																																													
<b>.1</b>	<p><b>Attendees were:</b></p> <p><u>Governors:</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Ken Cowdery</td> <td style="width: 15%;">(KC)</td> <td style="width: 40%;">Academy Governor, Chair</td> <td style="width: 15%;">[PF1/5]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Angela Drayton</td> <td>(AD)</td> <td>Principal (StD and Regional Lead)</td> <td>(PF1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andrew Falk</td> <td>(AF)</td> <td>Academy Governor</td> <td>[PF4-StD]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sherie Harris</td> <td>(SH)</td> <td>Staff Governor (GrG)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Philip Knights</td> <td>(PK)</td> <td>Academy Governor, Vice-Chair</td> <td>[PF5/1]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alison Livesley</td> <td>(AL)</td> <td>Academy Governor</td> <td>[PF4-BrS]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diane Puica</td> <td>(DP)</td> <td>Staff Governor (BrS)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dafydd Robert</td> <td>(DR)</td> <td>Principal (BrS)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Janet Tremble</td> <td>(JT)</td> <td>Principal (GrG)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Martin Lowthian</td> <td>(ML)</td> <td>Parent Governor (GrG)</td> <td>[PF5]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Julian Short</td> <td>(JS)</td> <td>Parent Governor (StD)</td> <td>[PF5]</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>In attendance:</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Karma Hardin</td> <td style="width: 15%;">(SM)</td> <td style="width: 40%;">OHC&amp;AT, Finance Assistant SASHUB</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diane Brazier</td> <td>(DB)</td> <td>School Business Manager (StD/BrS)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Anna French</td> <td>(AF)</td> <td>Deputy Principal (GrG)</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p><u>Officers:</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Frank Curry</td> <td style="width: 15%;">(FC)</td> <td style="width: 40%;">Minute-taking Secretary</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Ken Cowdery	(KC)	Academy Governor, Chair	[PF1/5]	Angela Drayton	(AD)	Principal (StD and Regional Lead)	(PF1)	Andrew Falk	(AF)	Academy Governor	[PF4-StD]	Sherie Harris	(SH)	Staff Governor (GrG)		Philip Knights	(PK)	Academy Governor, Vice-Chair	[PF5/1]	Alison Livesley	(AL)	Academy Governor	[PF4-BrS]	Diane Puica	(DP)	Staff Governor (BrS)		Dafydd Robert	(DR)	Principal (BrS)		Janet Tremble	(JT)	Principal (GrG)		Martin Lowthian	(ML)	Parent Governor (GrG)	[PF5]	Julian Short	(JS)	Parent Governor (StD)	[PF5]	Karma Hardin	(SM)	OHC&AT, Finance Assistant SASHUB		Diane Brazier	(DB)	School Business Manager (StD/BrS)		Anna French	(AF)	Deputy Principal (GrG)		Frank Curry	(FC)	Minute-taking Secretary		
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<b>.2</b>	<p><b>Apologies for Absence.</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Julian Short [JS] (Parent Governor StD / PF5), Liz Simmons [LS] (Academy Governor). Joanne Yarlett [JY] (Academy Governor / PF4) and Catherine Drummond [CD] (Parent Governor -BrS / PF2) were also not present.</p>																																																													
<b>.2</b>	<p><b>Chair's Remarks</b></p> <p>KC welcomed all to the meeting and briefly commented that it had been an eventful Spring Term.</p> <p>KC thanked AF for her pre-meeting governor development presentation about curriculum planning (notes attached).</p> <p>KC noted feedback from the recent inspection at Grafham Grange and the school improvement consultant monitoring visit at Brantridge, both of which had gone well but reports had not yet been published.</p> <p>KC also noted that Governors' advance questions to Principals and Principals' responses were include in with the papers.</p>																																																													
<b>.3</b>	<p><b>.Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest (s) in agenda items.</p>																																																													
<b>.4</b>	<p><b>Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>The Part 1 minutes of the previous St Dominic's/Brantridge/ Grafham Grange Governing Body Meeting, held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed by KC as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>																																																													
<b>.5</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>KC explained that most of the Matters Arising had been dealt with, as set out at SAS.19.01 and he would address exceptional items only, as follows:</p>																																																													
<b>.1</b>	<p>Item 2.5.1. The updated Skills Matrix self-assessments had not yet been received from some governors. KC requested that they be expedited as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>Action: AF, JY, AD and DR to submit their updated skills matrix.</b></p>	<b>AF, JY, AD, DR</b>																																																												

.2	Item 6.3.3. Investigation into unpaid invoices: KH confirmed that this matter had been resolved.	
.3	Item 7.1.4. Co-educational offer at Brantridge - was it mandatory to offer placements: JT confirmed that this was the case in the event that the school can meet an applicant's needs.	
.4	Item 3.5.3. Keeping Children Safe in Education: AL advised that it was very important for Governors them to confirm that they had read and understood it. <b>Action: All governors to review the latest version of KCSIE.</b>	<b>Governors</b>
.5	Item 1.1.1. Declarations of interest: Governors were reminded to return their annual declaration of interest to OHCAT if they had already done so. <b>Action: Governors who have not yet issued their declaration of interests forms to do so.</b>	<b>Governors</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>Chair's Report</b> KC highlighted the following points in his Report: 1) His personal thanks also on behalf of the schools and governing body to Martin Hartwell and Sam Marshall for their service as governors. They had both decided to stand down. 2) Both Grafham Grange and St Dominic's had been undergone OFSTED residential inspection. The outcomes had not yet been published, though positive feedback had been received. 3) KC noted that LS had commented to him prior to the meeting that, in considering Brexit risks, the most tangible risk would most likely be around staffing/recruitment, if there are any non-UK citizens working in schools planning to leave UK. The schools did not consider this to be a significant risk at this stage.	
<b>.2</b>	<b>Governor Development Needs</b> KC reminded governors of the importance of self-development in the governance role. There many resources available to them.	
<b>.3</b>	<b>Scheme of Delegation and Schedule of Responsibility updates</b> This item informed Governors that OHCAT had delegated to them the responsibility for convening a committee to consider any parental representations in the event of a pupil receiving Fixed Term Exclusions in excess of 5 cumulative days (but not more than 15 cumulative days) in any one term.	
<b>.4</b>	<b>Revised OFSTED Inspection Framework</b> A new OFSTED inspection framework was due to be introduced in September. KC requested that the schools prepare a presentation on the subject at the Governing Body's September meeting.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO GOVERNORS' REPORTS</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>Review of Portfolio Governor Reports</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>PF1 Ethos, Vision and Strategy</b> KC commented that he was pleased to note that the agreed vision and values of SASHUB were being embedded across the three schools. It was also pleasing to record that the risks facing the schools were diminishing and there was now more assurance.	
<b>.2</b>	<b>PF2 Teaching and Learning</b> KC noted that, disappointingly, no PF2 meetings had taken place so far this academic year and that given Sam Marshall's decision to stand down as a Governor and CD's non-attendance there was no report to GB again. AL expressed the view that this was a serious omission, given that education was at the heart of the mission, although, of course, data was being made available to the Governing Body. KC agreed and suggested that the Governing Body look to appoint an educationalist to fill this vital portfolio role. Perhaps the role should be, exceptionally, remunerated. ML agreed strongly that an expert was needed. Both AD and JT thought that they could try to identify suitable candidate from other schools and were encouraged to do so. KC would also check with OHCAT on the question of appointing an external school improvement advisor on a consultancy basis to report to GB.	

	<b>Action: KC to contact OHCAT to request support in obtaining an educational governor and an external school improvement advisor on a consultancy basis un the interim.</b>	<b>KC</b>
.3	<b>PF3-Finance, Premises and Resources</b> KC noted that, although not at the meeting, LS had furnished a very comprehensive report which gave good assurance in this vital area. KC suggested that the area be picked up in Agenda Item 6 (School Finance and Funding).	
.4	<b>PF4-Child Protection and Safeguarding</b> StD: AF had provided a paper on Child Protection and Safeguarding for St Dominic's and AL for Brantridge. AF made the point that, in view of the very detailed and positive feedback given at the end of the 3-day OFSTED Care Inspection, he had no reason not to provide full assurance. BrS: AL was able also to provide assurance on the basis of the recent Brantridge 'healthcheck', though there were some useful recommendations on assurance and policies which needed to be pursued. GrG: There was no report submitted by the Grafham Grange PF3 governor, although JT had tabled a Local Governors' Dashboard for Spring 2018/19 which included some key data and covered the area in her Principal's report. The Ofsted Report residential inspection report should also be due soon for governors to review.	
.5	<b>PF5-Marketing and Admissions</b> ML felt that good progress was being made across the three schools. Admissions procedures were broadly consistent with published policies. However, there was a recommendation that that the policies on the three school websites be harmonised to have the same structure and level of content.	
.6	<b>PF6 Human Resources</b> KC reported that with Martin Hartwell's resignation, the work was being undertaken by LS with support from himself. The report was blended into the comprehensive PF3 Finance report prepared by LS. Discussion on staffing issues would be picked up in the Principals' reports.	
<b>.4</b>	<b>PROCEDURE APPROVALS</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>OHCAT Policy Updates</b> There were none circulated at this meeting.	
<b>.2</b>	<b>Procedures requiring approval</b> There were none circulated for approval at this meeting but Principals conceded that there was a great deal of work to be completed to ensure that procedures tallied with OHCAT policies, following transition from the Radius Trust.	
<b>.3</b>	<b>Progress update on reconciling procedures with new policies</b> DB reported that there were a great many procedures to be scrutinised and tallied with policies. She had prepared an action plan to take the work forward.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' REPORTS</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>Brantridge Report /Dashboard/Q&amp;As</b>	
.1	Observing that his report, dashboard and Q&As had been circulated in advance of the meeting, DR restricted his comments to headlines. The number of pupils was now up to 40 which was both pleasing and vital in taking the school to a more stable financial future. In March, the school had undergone a 'health-check' inspection led by David Scott. The report's feedback was available on Sharepoint and tallied closely with the school's own self-evaluation. DR added that, in the summer term, it was planned the modify the school's curriculum delivery to provide for more practical work in the afternoon sessions, leaving more academic work for the mornings. SH commented that this made a great deal of sense.	
.2	AL added that there was a great deal of work to do on the Teaching and Learning side before the next inspection. DL agreed and looked at it as a challenge which he was confident could be met. The emphasis in the new framework was on shorter lessons. DR was preparing an action plan to develop and implement a broad and balanced curriculum, focussed on pupils' needs but which would exert less pressure on staff.	

.3	KC enquired about staff absenteeism which currently stood at 7.5%. DR conceded that this was a concern though there were specific circumstances for some staff. In response to KC, he explained that the resulting gap in capacity was met with agency staff. This was, however, both expensive and, in some respects, unsatisfactory, in that some agency staff were not adequately trained for the task. Discussion turned to OHCA's policy of introducing soft freezes which many felt was counter-productive.	
.4	Both AD and DR commented that recruitment of Teaching Assistants was becoming difficult. ML recognized that recruiting was difficult and suggested that his experience in business demonstrated that small incentives were helpful. AD felt that recruitment was a regional issue. Good support staff were vital; home grown staff also provided a good strategy. On the subject of soft freezes, DB remarked that this only applied to new staff. Governors agreed that staff recruitment was currently an intractable issue to which there was no easy solution.	
<b>.2</b>	<b>Grafham Grange Report/Dashboard/Q&amp;A's</b>	
.1	Observing that her report had been circulated in advance of the meeting, JT restricted his comments to headlines. JT tabled the Dashboard for Spring term, which also indicated that sick absence among staff was increasing to 7.7%. In overall terms, JT considered that the school had, since September, been stabilised and the focus was on increasing student numbers, now on 37. A stable leadership team had been established which was now focussed on the curriculum and closure of the residential provision. With a particular cohort of boys due to move on and behaviour improving, there would be more scope for concentrating on teaching and learning and improving the quality of the educational offering. Staffing was an issue, as elsewhere and it was vital to retain good staff.	
.2	PK commented that he had been very impressed by the changed position which had been reached. He felt that there was a dedicated staff who were making good progress. He was pleased with the improved student headcount. It would be important in the future to be able to demonstrate such progress with clear evidence of successful outcomes for students.	
.3	ML agreed with PK and added that, from the perspective of a parent, matters had greatly improved, a sentiment shared by SH from a staff viewpoint.	
<b>.3</b>	<b>St Dominic's Report/Dashboard/Q&amp;A's</b>	
.1	Observing that her report, dashboard and Q&As had been circulated in advance of the meeting, VP restricted her comments to headlines. VP concurred with previous comments that staffing remained a critical issue but in overall terms, the school had made continued positive progress with currently 110 pupils. Since the Autumn Term, progress had also been made on improving behaviour. The consultation on closure of residential provision ended on 20 <sup>th</sup> March with all 8 families expressing concern about the planned increase in pupil numbers.	
.2	KC reiterated the parental concerns and asked whether the schools would be able to cope with and provide adequate resources for the pupils. VP considered that the school would seek to stage the increase over two to three academic period. She stated that whilst there would be some stress in the short term, it should settle down. VP stated that she felt that the managing growth in numbers is now better handled and that growth should be on a stable path.	
.3	KC asked about the number of bullying incidents reported, VP clarified that the figures in the table were incorrect and should have read 116 (17/18) and 69 (18/19).	
.4	When challenged re behaviour incidents, AD confirmed that problems with Year 9 pupils had been resolved with some moving on and some had settled down. A firm line had stabilised the school.	
.5	KC expressed concern at the reported high level of stress in the senior management team and asked whether this was a short-term issue only and, if not, whether it is sustainable. AD spoke in respect of the SAS Hub Regional Team (RT) as a whole and stated that she believes there is an imbalance between the RT members' commitments to the regional hub and the particular demands of their home schools. AD would be reviewing terms of reference and composition of the RT as well as the scope of the RT members' roles ready for next academic year.	

.6	PF queried whether this indicated a lack of capacity in senior/middle leadership at the home schools. AD responded that this was in deed an issue and that there were also issues around training and confidence. AD noted that lack of resilience was another key feature she observed amongst middle leaders and would be addressing this. AD reiterated that effective recruitment/retention was essential but that it is very difficult to source the right staff. AD added that it was necessary to select new staff carefully and, in most circumstances, not to recruit an unsuitable person – even if a post remains vacant.	
.7	Governors expressed their concern about the ongoing issues of staff recruitment, given the low number of suitable applications typically received. Governors felt that the schools, with the support of OHCAT, needed to review their recruitment/ retention strategies and implement any practicable measures that can improve the situation.	
.5	KC thanked the Principals for their reports.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>SCHOOL FINANCE AND FUNDING</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>Brantridge/ Latest Management Accounts</b>	
.1	KH was pleased to report significant improvement in the financial outlook for the financial year. The previous outturn forecast of £177k deficit had now improved to £60k, based on the increase of student numbers from 35 to 40 in March. IKH felt that with a further review of unexpended budget line items, the school should return to a break-even position in which case the ‘soft-freeze’ on expenditure should be lifted. KH commented that this was a significant achievement by the school.	
.2	KC noted the extent of unspent non-pay figures and commented on the potential negative impact of unnecessary or overly extended soft-freezes. DR commented that there were good relations with the OHCAT finance team and that, working together, he was confident at reaching a break-even position. KH said that she understood the concern expressed by Governors on soft-freezes but OHCAT had to balance the books and sometimes difficult measures were necessary.	
<b>.2</b>	<b>Grafham Grange/ Latest Management Accounts</b>	
.1	KH reported that, following the £60k costs incurred in introducing residential, the January accounts indicated a forecast outturn deficit of £15k, though again she felt that the school would break even over the financial year and that the soft freeze should soon be lifted. KC repeated his comments again unspent non-pay costs and soft-freezes.	
.2	Discussion, however, turned to future challenges, notably the pressure from County Councils to reduce capitation fees. Surrey, in particular, was apparently pushing hard on this issue. All attendees agreed that it was important for students to be provided with the support they needed and had been assessed as needing. ECHPs, in particular, should be probed in detail so that necessary top-up funding is secured for services beyond the school’s offer. Nevertheless, governors acknowledged that Local Authorities were all under significant financial pressures.	
<b>.3</b>	<b>St Dominic’s/ Latest Management Accounts</b>	
.1	KH informed Governors that St Dominic’s was reporting a satisfactory forecast outturn surplus that should contribute to the school’s reserves. Governors noted the positive position and had no further comments/queries.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR REVIEW/DISCUSSION</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>.1 Schools’ 3-year strategy, financial plans and strategies</b>	
.1	AD summarised the SASHUB schools’ position. The schools were consolidating progress and moving forward under the new structure. There were significant pressures, particularly over staffing and funding challenges that lay ahead.	
.2	Even so, AD would continue to work with the principals to set a three year strategy with accompanying financial forecast by the end of the academic year. AD would aim to present a draft at the next GB meeting.	

<b>.2</b>	<b>Brantridge Co-educational Consultation Update</b>	
.1	DR reported that the consultation had now closed. There had been 11 responses of which 9 had been positive. In terms of potential recruitment, the best case, at present, would seem to be admission of 2 girls in September at KS 2 level. There would be transition costs and there was also an issue regarding travel time, given Brantridge's location. The transition costs would be in the region of £60k for installation of toilets etc.. DR felt that the case, at present, for moving to co-education was not overwhelming but would like to know the Governing Body's view.	
.2	KC expressed the view that the interests of the girls must be a primary consideration; transition to co-educational provision at St Dominic's had worked. AL expressed concern that, given the small anticipated supply of girls, the transition to co-education could divert resources from the higher priorities of raising educational standards and increasing pupil numbers. Other governors concurred with AL's view and after further discussion many governors agreed that a year's delay in implementation of the transition would be prudent.	
.3	Given the strength of feeling of many governors, it was felt that the views of the Governing Body on the matter should be passed on to OHCAT. KC asked for show of hands of those who were in favour of a deferral of the transition arrangements. A clear majority voted that a year's delay in implementation would be prudent. <b>Action: KC to write to OHCAT conveying this view on behalf of the Governing Body.</b>	<b>KC</b>
<b>.3</b>	<b>St Dominic's Residential Consultation update</b>	
.1	AD reported that the consultation on the proposed closure of residential provision closed on 20 <sup>th</sup> March. 9 formal responses had been received of which 7 were from the families involved and one from Surrey County Council. The families expressed concern about the proposed expansion of student numbers and regret regarding the closure.	
.2	AD added that the LA supported the expansion of numbers and wanted detailed discussion with the school regarding the exit plan for the current residents.	
.3	AD's own view was that expansion from 120 to 150 was feasible but changes were required to the accommodation. A SIF bid had been registered to support such changes.	
.4	Governors expressed concerns over staff and logistics but AD felt that they could be overcome. A great deal of planning was required but this was the price to be paid for the school's success.	
.5	AF queried the underlying strategy; was it finance driven or with consideration of the best interests of the needs of the pupils attending St Dominic's? AF suggested that there was a need to provide more analysis of the impacts as part of the business case process.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>CALENDAR</b>	
<b>.1</b>	<b>.1 School Events.</b>	
.1	The schools undertook to notify Governors by email of school events to which they would be invited.	
.2	AD explained that, as attendance at the usual presentation evenings at St Dominic's was declining, she proposed to substitute this with a graduation ceremony on Leavers Day on 28 <sup>th</sup> June which would feature a presentation by students.	
<b>.2</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	
.1	Date of Next Governing Body meeting: 4pm Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> July at Brantridge School.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
<b>.1</b>	There being no other Part 1 or Part 2 business, KC thanked attendees for their participation and contributions and the meeting was ended.	

GB19.01	NOTES OF PRE-MEETING GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT SESSION	
	<p><b>CURRICULUM PLANNING</b></p> <p>KC invited Anna French (AF) (Grafham Grange staff) to deliver a short presentation on the development of the curriculum at Grafham Grange:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) AF described the principal aims of the curriculum to be achieving stability, reflecting mainstream education, as far as possible and providing a broad and balanced mix, in order to deliver an academic/vocational balance and ultimately to provide a pathway to independence for pupils.</li> <li>2) The pupil population was some 70% below the chronological age of mainstream pupils in literacy and numeracy and carried a history of being let down and failure.</li> <li>3) The minimum provision at KS3 and 4 was English, Maths and Science, supported by Religious Education and Sex and Relationships; basically core subjects with a mix of more varied provision.</li> <li>4) However, the school was also developing more needs led material including music, sports, physical fitness, horticulture, cooking, business studies, motor vehicle maintenance, typing and environmental studies.</li> <li>5) The school was looking to modifications to provide girls with more balance. However, this would need a bigger cohort than the 3 applications currently received.</li> <li>6) In the KS2 to KS4 range, the school was giving further thought to the development of a primary curriculum.</li> <li>7) In the upper school, ASDAN , GCSE and BTEC subjects were being developed to provide more functional skills and it was hoped eventually to provide on- site vocational provision and apprenticeships which presently had to be sourced externally.</li> <li>8) The whole school provision covered PSHE, citizenship and life skills, supported by an increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy.</li> <li>9) AF also indicated a "wish list" for the future which included music, drama, performing arts, ICT/Business studies, hopefully in collaboration with St Dominic's.</li> <li>10) Governors thanked AF for a very interesting and comprehensive presentation.</li> </ol>	