

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHITCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL  
GOVERNING BODY HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Sian Hopkins	Partnership (Chair)
	Joyce Slack	Partnership
	David Collins	Partnership
	Maria Boffey	Community
	David Roylance	Community
	Dr Tessa Bailey	Parent
	Dr Catherine Bushell	Parent
	Jayne Catherall	Parent
	Paul Lloyd Davies	Parent
	Lisa Williams	Parent
	Stephen O'Hare	Parent
	Naomi Pearson	Parent
	Andrew Davies	Local Authority
	Jonathan Davies	Teacher
	Richard Burge	Staff
	Nick John	Headteacher
	Scott Britt	Deputy Head (observer)
	Ceri Garland	Deputy Head (observer)
	Wayne Lilly	Business Manager (observer)
	Steve Williams	Estates (observer)
	Gareth Coombs	Clerk to the Governors

**18 APOLOGIES**

Dr Paul Bulpin; Max Vine; Noreen Linforth.

**19 MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were confirmed as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

**20 SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

These were received, noted and approved. The Chair thanked Joyce Slack for her work in this matter.

**21 HEADTEACHER'S UPDATE – Nick John**

A full written update had been provided for governors.

The Headteacher felt that much had been achieved and as a school clear strides forward were being made relating to the school's improvement priorities.

With regard to the Self-Evaluation Process the focus of the review process for the academic year 2024-2025 was clearly outlined. It was acknowledged that Ceri Garland had done much work in this area. An overview of the Self-

Evaluation Process was clearly set out and would help the school to measure the progress being made in key areas.

Under Standards, a more detailed analysis of the summer results would be shared with the Self-Evaluation and School Improvement Sub-Committee.

The school had its third Estyn progress review meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024, during which information was shared on the progress the school has made since the last review meeting eight school weeks previously. The Headteacher was confident that the school would move to “very good” by Christmas. It was noted that the next review meeting would be held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024. Governors would be kept updated regarding progress.

An Estates update was provided. There had been some positive engagement with the Local Authority with a commitment to implement the agreed project to improve site security and traffic management on the upper school site. In addition Building Services are looking at the external fencing and the provision of a two way road. Costs for this work were awaited and it was likely that works would be undertaken in the 2025-2026 financial year. Although this was positive news the Headteacher felt that the small amount of funding for health and safety promised by the Local Authority was not really enough to make a significant difference. The lower school site still posed a problem regarding traffic access.

The Headteacher informed governors that Whitchurch High School was the only school in Wales with an Estates Team which worked for nothing regarding the additional estates work required and felt that this should be recognised by the Local Authority as being good value for money. Steve Williams was thanked for all his hard work and support in this area.

A full written report on Skills produced by Lauren Sharpe had been included in the Headteacher’s update. This included Literacy Skills, the Literacy Coordinator being Emma Aston and Numeracy Skills, the co-ordinator being Wendy Johnson. Both reports were noted by governors.

Staffing changes were fully reported and noted. This included colleagues leaving and new colleagues appointed.

The Headteacher highlighted an Apprenticeship Award given to Alicia White who had successfully completed her apprenticeship as an ICT technician. The award was a national apprenticeship level 3 award from Skills Academy Wales.

The Headteacher wished to record his thanks to Richard Burge and his ICT team for all their work in successfully setting up the apprenticeship programme and for all the support provided.

A report on student attendance was provided. This had been produced by Andrew Miles, Attendance Officer. The figures were produced by year group and compared extremely favourably with this point last year. Year 11, however remains a concern although over the last 2 weeks there has been some improvement. A table, graph and full listed figures regarding pupil attendance was provided.

The rising cost of Exam Invigilation was reported. Currently the cost was £55,705 but this figure could rise to at least £70,000 in the future.

A full report on pupil behaviour and exclusions was provided. The way the school deals with exclusions is constantly reviewed. The work of Caroline Robson and Claire Holling in this area was acknowledged.

Having attended a recent training meeting, the Headteacher informed governors that it had been recommended that the school appoint an Equity and Diversity Governor so that the school has a governor with responsibility for these areas. Information about the role was provided in an appendix to the Headteachers update report. There would be a signposting session for the Equity and Diversity Governors to join on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025 to explain the resources, links to other organisations and to explain the role in further detail. With this in mind governors were asked whether anyone was interested in taking on this role. If they were then they should contact the Headteacher who could provide further details of the role.

The Autumn Showcase had been a fantastic event. There were two winners of the Chris Sharpe Memorial Award this year and it was impossible to split them. Huge congratulations were recorded to Matthew Cleves and Dafydd Peters-Jones for winning the award.

Parent/Carer engagement evening had been held for years 7, 8, 11. 12 and 13. Each evening had been a success and an opportunity to share information and discuss strategies to enable the school to work effectively in partnership for the year ahead.

The school policy on the use of mobile phones was outlined. As the result of a campaign organised by a parent, it had become necessary to produce a statement to be shared with the press in relation to mobile phone usage at the school. The mobile phone policy is reviewed annually.

The school rugby team had been deducted 4 points for playing a game they didn't need to at a festival. The school was informed of this at the last minute after travel and accommodation had been arranged. Upon appeal the 4 points were returned to the school by an independent investigation team and the WRU would be asked to review their rules in this matter. The Headteacher

and Steve Williams wished to record their appreciation to the governing body for their support.

Further updates on school activities and website links were provided and other upcoming events noted.

The following Faculty updates were provided and noted by governors:-

- Health & Wellbeing: Sarah Smith
- Science: Dave Eyles
- English: Kirsty Price
- Humanities: Noreen Linforth
- Skills & Socio-Economic Studies: Kelly Gambold
- Sport & Exercise: Gwyn Morris
- Maths: Fiona Harding
- Performing Arts: Lara Jones-Price
- Languages: Janine Davies
- Art: Michelle Edwards
- Technologies: Lauren Saleh
- Year Group Updates

A new development to report was the operation of a Sixth Form Leadership Team which was very active in the school and had managed to get the installation of a ping-pong table in the school canteen which has really helped with a sense of community. There were other activities which the team was involved in which included raising over £100 after a successful bake sale.

## **22 SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **(i) Self Evaluation and School Improvement**

Written minutes were available and all actions and decisions of the Sub-Committee were noted and approved by governors. Joyce Slack reported that Estyn had been impressed by the giant leap forward by the school in this area.

### **(ii) Curriculum**

Written minutes were available and Scott Britt went through the main points which included objectives and the SIP. There had been an improvement in Teaching, Learning and Assessment. All actions and decisions were approved by governors.

### **(iii) Finance**

The main points considered by the Sub-Committee were tabled and noted by governors. David Collins and Wayne Lilly went through the issues considered. The financial situation of the school and all concerns were noted and actions and decisions approved. The cashflow situation would require close monitoring and governors would be kept informed of the situation.

### **(iv) Building and Estates**

Written minutes were available. Joyce Slack went through the main points considered by the Sub-Committee. This included assessing remedial work on the swimming pool changing rooms; the new science block; health & safety

issues in the drama block which were being addressed by a contractor. All health & safety issues were being identified. However, it was expected that these would take up half the school estates budget. The Local Authority had been asked to fund heating for the Dutch barn which had been without heating for a number of years. All actions and decisions of the Sub-Committee were approved by governors.

## **23 POLICIES**

The following policies were adopted by the governing body:-

- Staff Discipline Policy and Procedure
- Leave Policy and Procedure
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Achievement Policy (with one sanction update regarding out of bounds classification)
- Intimate Care Policy
- Charging and Remission Policy
- Duty to Prevent Sexual Harassment Policy
- Bilingualism Policy
- Learning, Teaching and Feedback Policy

The following Policies had no changes required and were ratified by the governing body:-

- Parental / Maternity / Adoption Support Leave Policy and Procedure
- Exam Word Processor Policy

## **24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **(i) Draft Admissions Policy 2026-2027**

Joyce Slack informed governors that there were no changes required in this policy other than the change of dates. It was agreed that this should go out for formal consultation to feeder schools, neighbouring schools and relevant local authorities. The report will then come back to the governing body for formal ratification.

### **(ii) Mandatory Governor Training**

All new governors were reminded that they would need to undertake mandatory training in their first year of appointment. Should they need any advice in this matter they could contact Joyce Slack.

## **25 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

None

## **26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025.

Meeting concluded.

SRHopkins