





Graham School and George Pindar School Joint Local Governing Committee Meeting Held via Zoom on Tuesday, 15th June 2021 at 5.00pm

Present:	Emma Robins (Principal, Graham School) [from 5.25pm] Lesley Welsh (Principal, George Pindar School) Alan Richards (Chair) Tracey Woodward	Samantha Taylor Mandy Gething Marcus Towse		
In	Helen Dowds (Executive Principal, Hope Learning Trust) Tracey Shaw (Finance Manager, Hope Learning Trust) [to 5.55pm]			
attendance:				
	Jess Swarbrick (Governance Advisor, Clerk)			

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		Action	
1.	Welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interest		
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received, with consent, from		
	Gerry Swain. Mark Thompson, Richard Benstead and Phil Rumsey were absent.		
	There were no declarations of interest.		
2.	Resources		
	The Finance Manager presented the start budget for both schools, referring to the detailed		
	and summary versions which had been circulated with the agenda. A presentation outlining		
	key points of note had also been previously distributed.		
	2.2 2021-22 Start Budget		
	George Pindar School		
	The Finance Manager reported that since the agenda had been released, she had met with the		
	CEO and had been asked to review the start budgets again to make further savings where		
	possible. She advised that the final version of the budget had therefore changed slightly, with		
	an improved final outturn figure of £17,000. She added that further contingencies within the		
	budget would be included in this surplus figure at year end if they were not used.		
	The Finance Manager advised that intake numbers in the budget were set at 150 for 2021/22		
	though this was likely to be 151. She noted that the budget was based on lagged funding with		
	income for 661 students though there would be 683 in school.		
	The Finance Manager outlined the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included in the budget		
	information and reported that the budget was within the parameters set by the Trust in terms		
	of pupil: teacher ratio (17:1) and teacher contact ratio (75%). She advised that at this point in		
	time, curriculum delivery was efficient in school.		
	It was noted that the pupil: teacher ratio did not seem to reflect the actual picture in school,		
	where there were classes with up to 33 students. The Finance Manager explained that the		
	17:1 figure was an average across the whole curriculum, and included Key Stage 4 option		
	subjects where there were some much smaller groups, as well as the Alternative Provision.		
	Mrs Welsh advised that she had undertaken a benchmarking exercise with Mrs Dowds, taking		
	the closest ten similar schools in terms of context, and comparing against these. She advised		

that George Pindar School was mid-table in comparison. Mrs Welsh noted that the Alternative Provision in particular, where there were 50 periods a week with a maximum of seven children in, did make a significant impact on the average ratio.

A comment was made that governors needed to understand what this ratio looked like in terms of actual class size, and the impact on effective teaching and learning. Mrs Welsh advised that if every class in school had only 17 students then staffing would need to be doubled in order to be as effective. She advised that the school was within the target parameters set by the Trust in terms of pupil: teacher ratio and teacher contact time. Mrs Welsh advised that some periods could have been cut out for the next academic year in Year 9, with a reduction to five large sets. However, considering the disruption which had taken place over the last year, and in order to support this cohort where there were concerns about getting them onto the path they needed to be on, a conscious decision had been made to keep slightly smaller groups. Mrs Welsh advised that this would enable more bespoke intervention to take place, to address the significant gaps and poor attitudes to self and school which some of these students were displaying.

Governors noted a contingency of 1% for staffing cost increases and asked whether this was a realistic figure. The Finance Manager advised that at this point there was no confirmation from central government on what increases would be made to teachers' pay. She noted that unions had agreed an increase of 1.5% for support staff which had been included from April 2021 and was still being accrued for. The Finance Manager also highlighted that the grant funding for teachers' pay award and pensions which had previously been received separately, was now included within the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) funding. She advised that the 1% contingency was realistic rather than cautious, and had been included in the budgets of all schools across the Trust.

[Emma Robins joined the meeting at 5.25pm]

Graham School

The Finance Manager advised that contextual data behind average teacher: pupil ratios at Graham School were similar to George Pindar School, taking into account the Alternative Provision. She noted that for all schools, the Early Careers Framework being introduced from September also meant that mentoring time for Newly and Recently Qualified Teachers now had to be included for two years, which was the equivalent of around 0.6 FTE. The Finance Manager advised that there may be some funding for this but it was likely to be lagged, and there was no confirmation of how much it would be so this had not been included in the budget at this point.

The Finance Manager advised that Graham School had an additional literacy class which brought the average teacher: pupil ratio to 16:1 which was fairly low. She explained, however, that this was due to a number of other factors as well, including the requirement for additional groups where physical classrooms currently did not allow for bigger numbers, particularly in Years 7 and 8.

The Finance Manager advised that following a further review of the budget at the request of the CEO, the forecast surplus figure of £9,000 had now increased to £29,000.

The following question and discussion have been recorded as a separate, confidential minute.

2.1 Period 8 Management Reports

The Finance Manager presented the Period 8 management reports, which had been circulated with the agenda

Graham School

The Finance Manager reported a £27,000 improvement which meant that the budget was now over the expected surplus figure. She advised that this was due in part to receipt of Lateral Flow Testing funding of £14,000 and noted that a similar amount was expected in the next period which would see a further increase.

The Finance Manager advised that Capital works at Graham School were included in the budget, converting four ICT suites into two larger spaces, which would enable more efficient timetabling in the future.

The Finance Manager also highlighted savings on energy costs. She noted that at this point it was not clear whether this was due to the wider closure of the school earlier in the year, but that the energy efficiency of the new building may also be a factor.

Governors asked how these savings were being channelled back into provision for students, and what impact this was having. The Finance Manager advised that premises work was ongoing in both schools, with improvements to the teaching and learning environment and also to staffing areas.

George Pindar School

The Finance Manager reported a similar picture here to Graham, with additional funding received for Lateral Flow Testing and also savings on electricity costs. She noted, however, that gas expenditure was over budget due to issues with the boiler, which was due to be replaced in the summer holidays as part of the Capital works.

Governors asked for further detail in relation to the previous question, regarding the use of budget surplus on school improvement and the impact of this. The Finance Manager noted again that the school environment had been enhanced significantly which had supported improvements in teaching and learning. Mrs Dowds explained that surplus budget went into reserves which helped to pay for further school improvement. She advised that there had been a significant impact through the Trust's School Improvement Team, with transformational work in changing outcomes in English and Maths. She noted that there had also been a significant uplift in outcomes for Year 11 groups over the last three years. Miss Robins added that the support from the Trust in terms of school improvement and also central services including HR, had been incredibly beneficial to the school. Miss Robins advised that any additional surplus was used to support students, through improvements to the learning environment as well as CPD for staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Miss Robins advised that the impact of this could be seen in improved outcomes and also improvements in terms of attitudes and behaviour.

Governors raised a question regarding the central pooling of reserves which the Trust had brought in from this year, and how schools would access this. Mrs Dowds advised that any surplus would go into a central pot, but all schools could then approach the Trust with a request for funding in relation to specific priorities if required. She noted that expenditure from reserves would be allocated on a hierarchy of need across the Trust.

[Tracy Shaw left the meeting at 5.55pm]

3. Analysis of key evidence sources

3.1 Data Update: Summary of final TAG data

Summary data for Year 11 students had been circulated with the agenda.

George Pindar School

Mrs Welsh reported that colleagues had held a day of moderation on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) on 24th May, and data from this had been input into SISRA. She advised that SISRA generated Progress 8 (P8) scores using 2019 data and TAG data from participating schools nationally. Mrs Welsh reported that overall the data looked healthy, with an improvement from 2019 up to a P8 score of 0.03.

Mrs Welsh reported that trust-wide moderation had also taken place after half term, and it was expected that figures would improve slightly following this. She explained that the moderation process had been helpful and rigorous, and had highlighted that scoring for lower performing students was harsher than it could be. As a result, colleagues had revisited the portfolios of evidence and where necessary on reflection, had improved student grades where it was appropriate to do so. Mrs Welsh advised that the whole TAG process had been really challenging for both staff and students, but also incredibly powerful. She advised that there was positive proof from this that the school was making good progress, though there was still work to do. Mrs Welsh highlighted in particular the need for a focus on lower attaining students.

Graham School

Miss Robins reported that TAG data for Graham School had been calculated in a similar way to George Pindar, with the P8 score of -0.02 showing an improvement on the last two years.

With reference to subject based progress data, Miss Robins advised that it was not felt this was reliable at this point due to the size of the data set used by SISRA. She advised that this would be reviewed and revisited at the next meeting.

Miss Robins also remarked on the helpful experience of the moderation process, and the opportunity for colleagues to be involved in this. She noted that final submission to the central exam boards was required by Friday 18th June.

Governors asked whether the TAGs would be moderated further when they were submitted to the exam boards. Mrs Dowds advised that following submission, exam boards would contact centres to request a sample of five students in one subject. If the sample was considered to be within tolerance and there was clear evidence of a secure process, there should be no further change. She noted that in the event of an appeal once results were published, there was a possibility that grades might change if that appeal was upheld. Mrs Dowds advised that this was a key reason for ensuring that there was a robust process in place from the start.

Governors asked whether schools were expecting a high number of appeals, and what contingencies were in place in terms of staffing to respond to these. Mrs Welsh advised that principals and senior leaders would be in school over the period that results were published, as there was a requirement to respond to any appeals within 48 hours. She advised that all evidence folders would be kept in a central location so these could be easily accessed. Mrs Welsh advised that all students had seen the evidence in their own folders, and were aware of the work which had used to calculate their grades, though they did not yet know the results.

Governors noted that for George Pindar School, middle attainers had made the most progress, whilst at Graham School higher attainers were performing best, and asked if there were any specific reasons for this. Miss Robins advised that Graham School had had an increased focus on upper ability students, and it was pleasing to see this reflected in the results. Mrs Welsh advised that there was still more work to do with higher ability students at George Pindar School. She further advised that the school had successfully ensured that middle ability students, who made up the vast majority of the community, were prepared for assessment. Mrs Welsh advised that there had been a focus on retrieval practice and exam technique which had started to pay off. She recognised, however, that more needed to be done to stretch and challenge higher ability students.

Governors asked whether the schools shared good practice, and if so what targets and aspects were a part of this. Miss Robins advised that she and Mrs Welsh worked collaboratively, and senior leaders and other colleagues also networked across both schools and other schools in the Trust. She noted that there were also cross-school courses in place which added to this collaborative working practice.

With reference to the higher ability focus at Graham School, Miss Robins advised that master classes had been put in place, and links with Scarborough Sixth Form College, specifically in Maths, had had a real impact in developing students' skills. She added that higher ability was celebrated as something to be proud of in conversations with students. Miss Robins noted that more development work was now needed in this area with boys and disadvantaged students.

3.2 Behaviour & Attendance

Behaviour and attendance reports had been circulated with the agenda, and questions were invited from governors.

A question was raised regarding specific reporting on vulnerable groups, as this was not clearly displayed within the reports. Governors asked whether this data could be made available, so that governors could clearly see how these groups were performing in terms of behaviour and attendance. It was noted that there was an expectation that governors should know this information. Mrs Dowds noted that within the TAG data report, attendance figures for sub-groups including gender and Pupil Premium was included. She suggested that more detailed analysis into vulnerable groups could be picked up through link governor meetings, particularly for the governor with links to the Vice Principal for behaviour and attendance. This would then be fed back to the LGC through visit reports.

The Chair proposed that questions around behaviour and attendance for vulnerable groups should not be limited to the teaching and learning link governor, but something that all governors should be asking during their visits to school. It was agreed that this was a key part of getting to know the schools effectively.

3.3 Link Governor Reports

Governors thanked Marcus Towse for his reports from discussions with the Vice Principal for Quality of Education at Graham School and also with the Assistant Vice Principal for Quality of Education at George Pindar School.

Marcus reported that in his meeting at Graham School he had been interested in how the transition from remote learning to classroom-based learning had been supported, and how the after-effects of lockdown had been managed. He reported that there was clearly a quality

assurance system in place for the recovery of missed learning, but he had not been clear whether this was being followed systematically at subject level. *Marcus had raised a question in his report about how governors would be able to see whether gaps in learning had been filled following the third data capture of the year in June.*

Miss Robins advised that the issue of learning gaps was applicable to both Graham School and George Pindar School. She advised that schemes of learning were under constant review and adapted based on where students were in terms of progress. Miss Robins advised that GL Assessments had been completed as a baseline in September, and these tests would be retaken this term, which would provide an immediate benchmark of progress and learning gaps. She advised that Year 10 students would be completing a formal exam period, which would also help to identify gaps in learning and these would be addressed as needed. Miss Robins reminded governors that three colleagues had been offered honorariums this year to focus on catch-up, analysing data and working with individual students on interventions.

Miss Robins advised that once outcomes from the assessments were available this would provide a good indication of progress during the year. She noted, however, that the disruption and disturbance to learning over the year needed to be taken into account, not just from the lockdown in early spring term but also periods of isolation for students throughout the year.

Marcus clarified his question, which was how would governors be clear whether or not there were persistent learning gaps, or whether the school was successful in supporting students making progress. Miss Robins advised that a comparison of the start and end of year assessments would indicate clearly where there were any issues. She advised that she was confident that there had been a clear focus on addressing learning gaps through teaching and learning in the classroom, and it had been a continuous area of focus during line management meetings.

Mrs Welsh advised that it was important for quality assurance to be consistent, and to be clear on the impact it had on the quality of teaching and learning. She advised that leaders across the Trust would be meeting to discuss this before the end of term, as it was a key theme for all schools.

4. Academy Development Plan / Self-Evaluation Framework

Principals had been asked at the previous meeting to identify the top four priorities from their Academy Development Plans. Questions were invited on the summary impact reports which had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that a lot of points relating to the priorities had already been covered through other discussions earlier in the meeting.

Mrs Dowds emphasised to governors the importance of focus and challenge on the Academy Development Plan. Governors needed to be asking whether the priorities were right, and whether the identified impact and action taken was effective, in order to bring about school improvement.

Governors noted that the impact of low levels of literacy on students' education had been highlighted at the previous meeting and asked whether this should be one of the top four priorities for George Pindar School. Mrs Welsh advised that a programme called Read Write Inc (RWI) was being introduced from September as an intervention for a specific group of students. She advised that the Thinking Reading intervention which was already used in school required students to have a reading age of six to access, whilst RWI could be used for students below this.

Governors asked whether there were students in the new Year 7 cohort or already in school who fell into that category. Mrs Welsh advised that there were students across the school but particularly in the current Year7 who had been receiving interventions who were not quite at the Thinking Reading access level.

Governors recognised that it was very difficult for children to access any subject when their literacy level was low, and asked what was being done to support improvement of literacy levels in order to enable access to the curriculum. Mrs Welsh advised that the Fresh Start package which was already in place for identified students focused on improving literacy. Students were taken out of lessons over an eight to twelve week period, until they were literacy ready to go back into the classroom. She advised that the Fresh Start programme required overstaffing, and there was a dedicated Thinking Reading co-ordinator in both schools who ran the intervention with TA support.

Mrs Welsh advised that the new 2021/22 Academy Development Plan would include literacy as a key priority as there were a lot of actions which would be taking place from September in relation to this.

Governors asked whether the number of places on the Fresh Start / Thinking Reading programme was limited. Mrs Welsh advised that the co-ordinator was currently only working with ten students, though she would like to increase this significantly for the next academic year. Miss Robins advised that the set-up was similar across both schools. She added that interventions were also run within the Learning Support area around spelling and numeracy. Where possible, these were run during form time so that students did not miss out on curriculum and social time. Miss Robins advised that all Year 7 and 8 students also had a library lesson each week, and there were projects within humanities on analysis and understanding of language which supported literacy development.

Governors asked both Principals why they had chosen these specific priorities, how they knew they were the right ones and what governors could do to support progress against them.

Graham School

Miss Robins advised that she had chosen a priority from each of the four key areas of the Development Plan. With reference to Quality of Education, this was ensuring that quality assurance informed the consistency of teaching and learning, and TAGs. She further advised, however, that above all, the key priority of the school was attendance, and that governors should continue to interrogate and challenge on continued improvements in this area.

Miss Robins advised that work around student leadership was now well embedded, though it was still a priority to keep this growing. With reference to leadership and management, the key priority identified was community engagement and particularly transition. Miss Robins advised that for the rest of the summer term this remained a key focus.

Again with reference to attendance, Miss Robins advised that the school continued to work to improve this. Figures were improving week on week but there was still a lot to be done.

Governors asked what work was being done with feeder primary schools to improve the transition process. Mrs Dowds advised that the DfE had announced that afternoon that no face to face transition would be permitted this year, meaning that visits and meetings would

need to be virtual. Miss Robins advised that the Assistant Vice Principal leading on transition had visited the larger feeder primary schools with the Vice Principal for Behaviour and Welfare, and had spoken to students in their bubbles. She advised that a transition film had also been produced, which provided information for children and parents. Miss Robins advised that enhanced transition opportunities were being run for children from smaller primary schools, and those with SEND or other specific needs such as anxiety. Visits had been arranged at the end of the school day along with the SENCo which had been positive.

Miss Robins also reported that she was looking at a greater exchange of information around curriculum with feeder primary schools, and this was an area for further development. She advised that she had been invited to be a governor at one of the larger feeder schools, and noted that this would be a good opportunity to learn and develop as well as establish links. Miss Robins advised that a summer school would be run in the first week of the holidays, which would include academic based aspects as well as team building activities. It was noted that this would be run using funding from the DfE.

George Pindar School

Mrs Welsh advised that she had chosen priority areas that could be used by governors as a focus during their monitoring visits. As with Graham School, she had picked one from each of the four areas of the development plan.

Mrs Welsh advised that following on from the safeguarding incident at Graham School which had been reported on earlier in the meeting, George Pindar School had been asked as a partner school to ensure that practices and procedures were robust. She advised that both schools were working together on ensuring that the way that issues such as consent and peer on peer abuse were taught was clear and effective, particularly in light of the changes to the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) curriculum. This was part of the priority to quality assure the delivery of Philosophy and Ethics lessons.

Mrs Welsh advised that the TAG process had shown how important it was for teachers to be able to mark and moderate accurately, and had increased engagement and confidence in forecast grades.

In terms of behaviour, Mrs Welsh advised that there would always be a need to have real focus on how to meet the needs of those students who struggled to behave. She advised that the Opportunities Board had recognised the 72% reduction in fixed term exclusions but had been concerned that this was too high. Mrs Welsh advised that she had been quick to justify why some of these students had had to be excluded, but also the support which was needed from other agencies to help students at crisis point.

Mrs Welsh advised that the priority to maintain an up to date tracker of teacher performance linked to earlier discussions around quality assurance, and a move beyond compliance to supporting colleagues to make an impact on students' education.

Governors asked whether the intention for the next meeting would be to seek new priorities to report on, or to have an update on the ones reports on tonight. Mrs Dowds advised that an update on these identified priorities would enable governors to see what progress was being made. However, she also noted that it was important to review progress against the Academy Development Plan as a whole. Governors needed to continually assess whether the priorities were the right ones, whether they were having an impact, and whether sustainable change was being made.

	Governors noted it would be helpful to join up discussions around key priorities to other specific areas of the agenda. For example, if attendance was a key priority for Graham School,	
	it would be more beneficial for governors to hear an update on actions in the Academy	
	Development Plan on this priority when alongside the attendance data, rather than as a	
	separate item.	
	ACTION: The Chair agreed to review the agenda structure with Mrs Dowds to enable a more cohesive approach to the review of development priorities.	AR / HD
	Governors asked about where support for young people's mental health fit into the priorities, as this was a significant issue. Mrs Dowds advised that this was included within the Academy Development Plan, though had not been picked out as one of the four top priorities by either Principal.	
	Mrs Welsh advised that the Academy Development Plans were live documents and were kept under regular review. She proposed sharing a link to the live document with governors so that they could see where progress was being made on a weekly or monthly basis. It was agreed that this would be helpful for governors to gain better insight into areas of specific interest and focus.	
	ACTION: Mrs Welsh and Miss Robins agreed to share the link to the live Academy Development Plan with governors.	ER / LW
5.	SEND Annual Review Report No update provided.	
6.	Governance Update	
	Governors noted the summary of discussions from the latest cycle of Trustee meetings which had been circulated for information.	
	The Chair reminded governors of the upcoming assurance model training organised by the Trust, and encouraged all to book on to either session (1st and 7th July) if they had not already done so.	
	Safeguarding (standing item)	
7.		
7.	ACTION: The Chair advised that he would be circulating a list of key questions to governors which could be referred to during monitoring visits.	AR
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It was highlighted that a question had been raised at the previous meeting regarding measures and milestones. Without key milestones and with discussions in qualitative terms, how could governors hold leaders to account on whether outcomes were successful. Mrs Dowds advised that previous versions of the Academy Development Plan did include milestones, but the current format had been determined by the CEO for all schools to adhere to. Mrs Dowds further advised that the CEO as part of the leadership development day on 14th July, this point would be reviewed and discussed amongst other items. She advised that her understanding was that there were detailed documents providing depth, which sat beneath the development plan showing headline measures. Mrs Dowds noted that all governors would have the opportunity to raise questions with the CEO as part of the training sessions on the assurance model and development plan in July. A further question was raised as to whether governors needed to be satisfied by a report of improvement rather than seeing evidence to support this. Mrs Dowds advised that the governors' role was to ask questions of clarification and evidence from school leaders to demonstrate where improvements were being made. This challenge would then be recorded in the minutes. Mrs Dowds noted, however, that not all things were easily measurable and some were qualitative.

With reference to the Action Plan:

- 1. The Chair to send the Governor Visits Feedback Form to all governors; governors to complete the form after a Link Governor visit and submit to the Clerk. Completed.
- 2. Ms Taylor said she would provide a written report (visit on wellbeing) when she received the Link Governor pro-forma. To follow.
- 3. The Chair and Executive Principal to review the format of the Principal summary report, so that it reflected the four most important priorities for action (one from each sub-area). Completed.
- 4. Miss Robins and the Chair to make arrangements for the sub-group of governors for the NPQH presentations. Completed.

There were no other matters arising.

11. Any Other Business

- **11.1** The Chair reported that he had received a request from Miss Robins for her Vice Principal to attend future LGC meetings as an observer. Governors agreed they were happy with this request, and extended the invitation to senior leaders from George Pindar School as well.
- 11.2 The Chair reported that he had received an email from a parent from Graham School who was interested in the parent governor vacancy. The Governance Advisor explained that whilst the constitution allowed for both parent governor posts to be filled from either school, it would be preferable to have one from each in the interests of representation. It was noted that the vacancy had not recently been actively advertised at either school, and there should be an opportunity for all eligible candidates to apply for the position initially.

ACTION: Miss Robins and Mrs Welsh agreed to publicise the parent governor vacancy to their parent/carer community and invite nominations to the position.

ER / LW

12. Dates and Times of Next Meetings

A copy of the Trust meeting schedule for 2021/22 had been circulated with the agenda for information. Governors noted the LGC dates for the next academic year as follows:

Tuesday 5th October 2021, 5pm Tuesday 30th November 2021, 5pm Tuesday 25th January 2022, 5pm Tuesday 5th April 2022, 5pm

Tuesday 21st June 2022, 5pm (AR will not be available)

The meeting ended at 7.20pm.

Approved by the Graham-George Pindar Joint Local Governing Committee at the meeting held on 5th October 2021

Action Plan - Graham School and George Pindar School joint LGC meeting 15th June 2021

	Action	Item	Responsible	Date
1.	The Chair agreed to review the agenda structure	4	Alan Richards, Helen	01/09/2021
	with Mrs Dowds to enable a more cohesive		Dowds	
	approach to the review of development priorities.			
2.	Mrs Welsh and Miss Robins agreed to share the	4	Emma Robins, Lesley	30/06/2021
	link to the live Academy Development Plan with		Welsh	
	governors.			
3.	The Chair advised that he would be circulating a	7	Alan Richards	30/06/2021
	list of key questions to governors which could be			
	referred to during monitoring visits.			
4.	Miss Robins and Mrs Welsh agreed to publicise	11.2	Lesley Welsh, Emma	30/06/2021
	the parent governor vacancy to their parent/carer		Robins	
	community and invite nominations to the			
	position.			

Items for the next meeting's agenda: