



**MINUTES OF THE  
SAS HUB LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING  
HELD VIRTUALLY ON  
THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER 2022 AT 4.15PM**

**Members of the LGB:** Dafydd Roberts (DR) - Principal, Brantridge School, Vicky Perry (VP) - Principal, St Dominic's School, Robin Bertrand (RB) – Principal, Grafham Grange School, Julian Short (JS) - Chair, Leigh Edser (LE) - *left the meeting at 18.25 (item 7)*, Harry Moss (HM), Tisha Davis (TD), Martin Lowthian (ML) – Vice Chair, and Michael Wood (MW) – *left the meeting at 18.40*.

**Also in attendance:** Katie Swire (KS) - Clerk to the LGB, David Clark (DC) - new Staff Governor for St Dominic's school – [Observing].

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

JS welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided introductions for the benefit of the Clerk (KS), attending her first meeting of the SAS Hub LGB.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The LGB received apologies for absence from Dean Else and Lucy McMann and approved to the absences.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- i. The LGB noted that there were no declarations of interest to be made.
- ii. Governors were reminded to complete and return their annual declaration of interest via GovernorHub. **Action: All governors.**

**4. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS**

- i. The LGB re-elected JS as Chair, and ML as Vice Chair, for the 2022-23 academic year and therefore agreed to recommend the appointment of JS as Chair and ML as Vice Chair of the LGB for 2022-23 to the OHCAT Board.
- ii. The LGB noted that the consultation on the revised OHC&AT Scheme of Delegation and associated [documents](#) launched on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and that [responses](#) should be submitted by 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022.
- iii. The LGB welcomed David Clarke to the meeting and recommend his appointment as Staff Governor for St Dominic's School to the OHCAT Board.

- iv. The LGB noted that there is currently a vacancy for a staff governor at Grafham Grange school on the LGB. The role has been advertised and two members of staff have expressed an interest to apply for the role. Pending the receipt of applications, a staff ballot will ensue to fill the vacancy and appoint a new staff governor to the LGB in the spring term.
- v. Governors noted that LE has resigned from the LGB with effect from 2 December 2022 and this will be her last meeting. The Chair noted this thanks to LE for her support and expertise in carrying out the Safeguarding portfolio role while a governor on the SAS Hub LGB. JS also noted his personal thanks to LE for her invaluable insight and support given during his term as Chair.

## 5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The LGB received and approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2022, circulated as **Enclosure 05**.

## 6. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

The LGB noted that there were no matters arising.

## 7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORTS AND PORTFOLIO REPORTS

The LGB received and noted the following reports from each Principal, as follows:

- i. Grafham Grange School Principal's report, **circulated as Enclosure 07i**.
- ii. Brantridge School Principal's report, **circulated as Enclosure 07ii**.
- iii. St Dominic's School Principal's report, **circulated as Enclosure 07iii**.

The Chair asked each Principal to provide an additional verbal summary, highlighting the key aspects of their report. Portfolio reports from each governor were also taken at appropriate points in the Principal's report. Having asked questions, governors noted the following highlights for each school as follows.

### **Grafham Grange School**

#### **Pupil Matters**

There are currently 59 pupils on roll; this is in line with the PAN (published admissions number). Pupil numbers are healthy; however, the school budget is under the PAN and therefore the school is not in a position to increase pupil numbers for pupils who require additional 1:1 support, despite the local authority wishing the school to increase their intake. To mitigate future pupil admissions and to safeguard the budget position, future 1:1 staff will be employed on fixed term contracts, not permanent. This may have potential

retention implications but will ensure that staffing numbers are more accurately aligned to pupil numbers and pupil need.

Transitions into school for some Year 7 pupils have been difficult and this is due to the school receiving very late admission notice from the local authority in August 2022.

Strategies continue to be reviewed to improve behaviour to increase the ratio of positive behaviour above 80%. Leadership responsibilities are being redirected to support the newly introduced Team for Inclusion and Engagement, to drive the impact of this team. Trauma informed practice is a key area for development and RB has enrolled on an external course to increase knowledge in this area to share best practice with the wider staff group. Much of the behaviour incidents within the school need further unpicking and are linked to trauma: understanding the root cause of behaviour through trauma informed practice will help change patterns of pupil behaviour.

#### School Improvement

Much work has been undertaken to implement Ofsted recommendations following the Section 8 Safeguarding monitoring visit in July 2021. An action plan has been developed to respond to each recommendation and this document is reviewed weekly. The school anticipates a further Section 5 visit from Ofsted this academic year. JS noted that as part of his portfolio visit, he had seen significant evidence of the measures that have been put in place to address the Ofsted recommendations. Staff are engaged with the action plan and the review and tracking mechanisms in place are detailed and robust. JS added that the action plan used by Grafham may also be useful to St Dominic's and Brantridge in recording and evaluating continuous school improvement. RB agreed to share the action plan with VP and DR. **Action: RB.**

#### Staffing

One of the key actions following the Ofsted visit has been the need to increase leadership capacity within the school to drive and accelerate school improvement and implement safeguarding recommendations. Recruitment for a new Assistant Principal successfully concluded today. A further appointment to the SLT has been made, with the appointment of an internal candidate who was unsuccessful for the Assistant Principal role but will be a valued addition to the leadership team. RB thanked governors who had participated in the interview process.

A rigorous programme of CPD has been implemented for staff, and daily learning and development sessions occur throughout the week. The profile of safeguarding has been raised, with one CPD session per week aimed at

safeguarding practise. To date, the model has been successful in aligning and focusing teaching and learning practices across the school, with collaborative sharing of pupil information and best practice.

All teaching staff are now part of a formalised appraisal process; a similar process will be rolled out to support staff.

### Health and Safety

There have been a number of issues relating to the late running of the heating project, and the subsequent faulty boilers that require engineer call outs to rectify. RB has been trying to resolve the situation with OHCAT colleagues, who are seeking a resolution. Similar issues have occurred with the sewage works on site and these are yet to be completed. The school has therefore alerted the OHCAT Premises Team to investigate further to ensure that the work is completed.

The other key health and safety action, taken as a precautionary measure, has been to reduce the potential for pupils accessing the area of the school containing asbestos with the installation of two layers of fencing around the site.

### **Brantridge School**

#### Pupil Matters

Pupil numbers for this academic year are the highest to date, with 75 pupils on roll. The decision to not proceed with secondary education will further impact pupil numbers during a transitional phase, with the departure of 21 Year 6 and 14 Year 7 pupils in July 2023 and the intake of 35 new pupils in September 2023. To manage the fluctuation in pupil numbers and the transition of new pupils into the school, the intake of pupils will be staggered in February 2023, May 2023, and September 2023. This approach will support the transition for new pupils but will also help manage the needs and provision for existing students by not over comprising staff settling new pupils into school. The three phased approach will include the opening of two new classes: in February and May 2023, with the final cohort of pupils arriving in September 2023. This will mean that for periods of time during the academic year, pupil numbers will rise above 75.

There are increasing numbers of pupils joining the school who have experienced trauma and therefore the school is working to increase knowledge and training around trauma informed practice to support pupils appropriately. There is a strong focus on increasing trauma informed practice, and this is evident in the appointment of a specific Therapy Lead and the roll out of CPD initiatives, as well as bespoke training in this area. DR highlighted that the trend is likely to increase in pupils and unpicking trauma cases takes

time. An action plan is being developed to respond to and increase staffing capacity to support pupils who have experienced trauma.

### Staffing

Staffing continues to be a challenge in the school, which is a similar pattern across the education sector, particularly for special schools. Staff vacancies are currently being covered by agency staff, which is having an impact on staffing costs. The area where this is most prevalent is in 1:1 Teaching Assistants, where there are currently 11 permanent roles that are vacant and are being covered by agency staff. DR noted that Teaching Assistant roles can be challenging to recruit to, as the roles have little career progression. There have, however, been some positive outcomes to staffing linked to the increase in pupil numbers, with some existing staff members able to apply for newly created roles across the school.

### Health and Safety

There have been some health and safety challenges on the school site, particularly around restricted access for specific areas of the school for pupils, due to the collapse of the ceiling on the first floor in the food tech room, and a similar collapse in the corridor of the main school building. The school manages these incidents proactively, but there is often an associated impact on pupils, with reduced capacity in the school for bespoke break out spaces to support students with emotional regulation.

## **St Dominic's School**

### Pupil Matters

There are currently 153 pupils on roll; this is the highest on roll for the school to date and demonstrates the high demand for special school places. The school received 325 consultation papers for pupils wishing to join the school during the 2021/22 academic year. Of the 325 received, 26 places were offered to pupils. Demand is particularly high from Surrey County Council. The school has been working closely with the OHC&AT legal team to improve the consultation process for admission referrals, and associated documentation to reduce the number of forced pupil placements, in order manage and meet pupil needs. JS noted that governors are supportive of the work undertaken by the school and OHCAT and the LGB is mindful of the need to balance the needs of prospective pupils against meeting the needs of existing pupils, without compromising the safety of pupils and staff.

End of year (2021-22) examination results were extremely pleasing, and pupils performed very well. It is anticipated that this trend will continue, with a similarly academically able cohort emerging for this year. In response to the increasing ability and attainment of pupils, there are plans to expand the Sixth Form offer further for Statistics, in addition to Maths. Science is an area of strength among the Sixth Form cohort.

New pupils have successfully transitioned into the school and there has been lots of positive feedback from new families.

### Staffing

Recruiting to vacancies remains a challenge, specifically for support staff roles, where there are currently 22 vacancies; 11 of which are being covered by agency staff. Agency recruitment is increasing, and the school has managed to source some good candidates, some of whom are being considered for permanent roles.

The school is managing staffing shortages well; however, this can be difficult during periods of staff sickness, which puts an additional pressure on staff to manage resources flexibly during the school day to meet the needs of pupils. A number of strategies are being explored to improve staff retention and the school is working with Grafham Grange school on an initiative for support staff to develop an internal qualification that is linked to pay progression. There are also plans to create shared working across the two schools to enable staff to develop their skills and experience in different school settings and create a mechanism for sharing knowledge and best practice.

HM noted that current staff turnover at St Dominic's sits at 5% and asked if this was in line with previous school years. VP noted that before the Covid-19 pandemic, staff turnover was slightly higher than 5%, particularly for the autumn term. The pandemic stilted staff turnover because staff were not seeking alternative employment, however, post Covid-19 has seen an increase in an employee's market, with higher numbers of jobs and staff more incentivised to seek the most desirable employment offer, such as seeking increased flexible working. This trend is evident in staff who have not returned from maternity leave because they are seeking remote working opportunities which the school cannot practicably offer.

Following a question from the Chair, VP confirmed that exit interviews are offered to all staff before they leave the school. There is a higher completion of exit questionnaires than in depth, face to face, exit interviews.

### Ofsted

The school has now received the formal outcome from Ofsted which gave an overall rating of Good. The school is pleased with the outcome. Associated recommendations from the Ofsted report have been incorporated into the School Development Plan as many of the recommendations had already been identified as strategic priorities by the school, negating the need for a separate Ofsted response action plan.

### Health and Safety

Summary data for the last academic year (2021/22) shows incidents of slips and trips among pupils to be proportionately higher, however, in the context of the pupils at the school, who have conditions such as Dyspraxia, incidents of slips and trips will always be that bit higher. VP confirmed that health and safety incidents are always logged and reviewed to improve the school site, and the school continues to adapt to ensure that it is compliant and a safe environment for pupils.

### FINANCE PORTFOLIO REPORT

The LGB received and noted the management accounts for each school, circulated as:

- **Enclosure 07i B**, *Grafham Grange School Management Accounts*
- **Enclosure 07ii B**, *Brantridge School Management Accounts*
- **Enclosure 07iii B**, *St Dominic's School Management Accounts*

HM presented a summary of the management accounts, along with key points in the Finance and Resources portfolio report, circulated as **Enclosure 07C\_PF4**. Having asked questions, governors noted that:

- The end of year budgets for the three schools have been RAG rated in line with their financial position. Currently, the financial position of Grafham Grange and St Dominic's schools is good, with ratings of yellow and green, respectively.
- Brantridge has been rated as red, which is a cause for concern. This will require close financial monitoring by the LGB to ensure that the position does not worsen over the course of the year.
- The current projected end of year deficit for Brantridge is £236k. Most of the deficit is attributed to increasing staffing costs. Financial reserves at Brantridge sit at 17 days for 2022-23, a reduction from 57 in 2021-22. This is considerably lower than the target set by OHCAT of a minimum of 45 days financial reserves.
- Agency costs at Brantridge sit at 10%. This figure is less at St Dominic's and Grafham schools, where agency costs have been reduced this year to below 5%.
- All three schools have been impacted by increases in salary costs for support and teaching staff, as well as a rise in the cost-of-living allowance. This allowance alone equates to a 5-8% rise in staff costs depending on where individual staff members sit within the salary scale.
- Brantridge is working with the OHCAT Finance Team to mitigate the negative financial position. The school budget for 2022-23 is based on 72 pupils on roll, however the actual number of pupils is 74 and rising.
- The impact of the Surrey County Council SEND Funding Review is not yet known. The OHCAT Finance Team are working on an analysis of 5

year projections for each school and what each funding band might look like. JS noted that an analysis of funding bands 1, 2, and 3 per student is essential to each school having a full understanding of the implications of future intake of pupils and having a transparent negotiation with each local authority. ML agreed to follow this up with Sharyn Purewal to ensure that the LGB have appropriate financial information to review calculations for each funding band. **Action: ML**

- The funding review outcome will have significant financial implications for each school given that budgets are closely aligned to student numbers and are intrinsically linked to funding from each local authority.

Governors discussed the use of agency staff to fill vacancies across the school and noted that it would be beneficial for the OHCAT Finance Team to investigate viability for schools to be refunded the 'finders fee' for agency staff who are appointed on a permanent basis and then leave the school after a given period of time. Collective negotiation of agency fees through a centralised procurement approach should also be explored to reduce agency costs for each school. **Action: ML.**

### **SAFEGUARDING PORTFOLIO REPORT**

The LGB received and noted the Safeguarding portfolio report, circulated as **Enclosure 07C PF4**. LE highlighted key aspects of her report, which governors noted as follows:

- LE has visited St Dominic's school and Grafham Grange school this term; this has included meeting with relevant safeguarding leads in school and conducting a thorough review of safeguarding practices.
- The single central register has been reviewed and all details are current and accurate. Staff safeguarding training records have been viewed and these are up to date.
- Behaviour incidents at Grafham Grange have risen in line with the implementation of a new Behaviour Strategy. There has been one permanent exclusion and 23 fixed term exclusions issued this term.
- Safety has massively improved at Grafham Grange school with the installation of new perimeter fences around the school site.
- A visit to Brantridge school is planned before the end of term.

The LGB received and noted the following school safeguarding documentation:

- Grafham Grange Safeguarding Audit, circulated as **Enclosure 07C\_GG**.
- Brantridge School Safeguarding and Wellbeing Offer, circulated as **Enclosure 07C\_BRT**.



- St Dominic's School Safeguarding and Wellbeing Offer and Safeguarding Audit, circulated as **Enclosure 07C\_STD**.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING PORTFOLIO REPORT**

The LGB received a verbal report from MW, and as part of this summary, governors noted that:

- Two half day visits have been carried out at Brantridge and St Dominic's schools. A visit to Grafham Grange school is planned for the spring term.
- Phonics and Reading are the key focus areas for Brantridge school; this has been identified and reviewed by teaching leads and a strategy has been implemented to improve in these areas.
- A sound mechanism for teaching observations has been developed at Brantridge and learning walks and drop in's are being widely implemented.
- The visit to Brantridge was largely positive, with the key highlight being the strength and depth of curriculum.
- The current focus for St Dominic's is around staff morale and developing well-being strategies to support all staff. The school has introduced a coaching and mentoring programme to aid staff well-being through group supervision.

### **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO REPORT**

The LGB received and noted the portfolio report from TD, circulated as **Enclosure 07D**. TD gave an additional verbal summary of the key outcomes of the website compliance review for all three schools, and governors noted that:

- Each school website is compliant, however, there are opportunities to improve links between each school to reinforce the shared governance arrangements.
- Consistency in web appearance and sharing best practice is strongly recommended, as is promoting individual school recruitment activity on the OHCAT social media platforms.
- TD is investigating a trial of virtual suggestion boxes for the SAS Hub schools, starting with Brantridge. Appropriate wording and context is being explored to generate meaningful feedback.
- Transition questionnaires for new pupils are also being explored, with the aim of gathering feedback from pupils and families on the initial transition into school and reflective feedback after the first completed year at school to obtain comparative data.
- The profile of governance and the SAS Hub LGB needs to be promoted and raised at all three schools to engage each school community more widely. Mechanisms for achieving this include governance updates in each school newsletter.

## **8. PUPIL PREMIUM STATEMENT**

The LGB received the draft Pupil Premium Statements 2022-23 for Brantridge School and St Dominic's School, circulated as **Enclosure 08B** and **Enclosure 08C**, for publication on school website by 31 December 2022.

The LGB noted that the Pupil Premium Statement 2022-23 for Grafham Grange School will be circulated on Governor Hub once finalised. **Action: RB/Clerk.**

## **9. GOVERNOR VISITS, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

### **A. Portfolio management**

The LGB received and noted governor portfolio reports, which were taken at item 7, and incorporated into aspects of the Principal's report(s), as appropriate.

### **B. Other visit reports**

Governors to give verbal or written updates on any other visits undertaken.

### **C. Governor training and development**

The LGB noted that there were no additional updates on training and development, other than mandatory Safeguarding training noted at item 12.

## **10. PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The LGB noted that the SAS Hub Pay Committee met on 31 October 2022 to consider and approve pay recommendations for eligible teaching staff.

## **11. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- i) The LGB noted that the following policies and procedures were approved by the OHC&AT Board at their meeting on 1 July 2022 and are available to view on the [Policies pages GovernorHub](#)

Appraisal Procedure

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Freedom of Information Policy

Pay Policy

Supporting Students with Medical Conditions in Education Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Delegation of Duty Policy

First Aid Policy

Information Security Policy

Menopause Policy

Modern Slavery Statement  
Reorganisation, Redundancy and Redeployment Procedure  
Subject Access Request Policy  
Student Mental Wealth, Health & Wellbeing Policy  
Substance Misuse Policy  
Traffic Management Policy  
Vaccination Policy

- ii) The LGB noted that there were no local policies and procedures for final approval.

## 12. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION SEPTEMBER 2022

The Chair reminded Governors that 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' has been updated with effect from September 2022. The latest version is available on [GovernorHub](#) and should be read in its entirety. Governors should therefore confirm completion of this via their declarations tab on their profile page on GovernorHub. **Action: All governors.**

In addition, the Chair reminded all governors to complete one of the three pieces of Safeguarding training by the end of term, as circulated by the Clerk on Governor Hub, as follows:

- Watching the Safeguarding presentation given by Jackie Van West at the recent OHCAT Governance Conference on 6 October 2022.
- Completing the online Safeguarding training module on the Key website, which can be accessed via Governor Hub.
- Completing the online Safeguarding module on the NGA website.

Governors noted that following completion of one of the above, they should note this and upload any associated training certificates on their training log on their profile page on Governor Hub. **Action: All governors.**

The Chair requested that the Clerk review governor safeguarding training completion and report completion numbers to JS in the new year. **Action: Clerk.**

## 13. ACADEMY TRUST HANDBOOK

Governors noted that the Academy Trust Handbook has been updated with effect from September 2022.

Academy trusts must comply with the handbook as a condition of their funding agreement. It provides an overarching framework for implementation of effective financial management and other controls, consistent with their obligations as publicly funded bodies. The Handbook is available on [GovernorHub](#).

#### 14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The LGB noted that there were no items of other business to be discussed.

#### 15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Governors noted future meetings of the LGB as follows:

- ***LGB Meeting 2: 23 March 2023, 4.15 pm, virtual***
- ***LGB Meeting 3: 29 June 2023, 5.00 pm, in school***

#### 16. CONFIDENTIALITY

The LGB noted that there were no items or discussions that should be deemed confidential and excluded from the published minutes and papers.

Meeting ended at 7.00pm.

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
<b>03ii</b>	Annual declaration of interests to be completed on Governor Hub by the end of the autumn term	All Governors
<b>07 (Finance)</b>	SEND funding band projections to be provided to the LGB	ML/Sharyn Purewal
<b>07 (Finance)</b>	Central procurement arrangements and collective bargaining for agency staff to reduce individual costs to schools to be explored.	ML/Sharyn Purewal
<b>07 (School Improvement)</b>	Grafham Grange Ofsted action plan to be shared with St Dominic's and Brantridge school Principals.	RB
<b>08</b>	Grafham Grange School Pupil Premium Statement 2022-23 statement to be circulated to governors for information.	RB
<b>12</b>	Governors to read Keeping Children Safe In Education September 2022 document in its entirety and complete Safeguarding training as directed on Governor Hub.	All Governors
<b>12</b>	Clerk to provide safeguarding training completion numbers to Chair in the spring term.	Clerk