



## The John Fisher School

### Teaching, Learning & Standards Committee minutes – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024

<b>Governors:</b> Mrs J Cole (JC) Ms G Grabowski (GG) Mr R Lawton (RL) Father F Murphy (FM) Ms S Nasser (SN) Mr T Richmond (TR) Mr R Teague (RT) Mr A Theobald (AT) Mr A Tierney (ATi) Mrs N Walsh (NW)	Parent Governor Foundation Governor – Chair Staff Governor Foundation Governor LA Governor Co-opted Governor Headteacher and Ex-Officio Foundation Governor Parent Governor Foundation Governor	Present Present Absent Absent Absent Present Present Present Present Present
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Attendees : Mr N Owen (NO) – Assistant Head Teacher  
Mrs Y Epale (YE) – Education Commission Observer  
Mrs J Beeson (JB) – CEP Governance Clerk

#### MINUTES

1.	<b>Apologies for absence &amp; declarations of interest</b>  Apologies for absence were received from RL due to a house move, from FM due to diocese duties and from SN due to work commitments - these were accepted.  The Chair welcomed Mr Aidan Tierney an existing governor who has joined this committee.  The meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of interests.	
2.	<b>Minutes from the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>  The document was taken as read. GG went through page by page. There were no further comments or questions.  The minutes of 20.2.23 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and approved by all governors.  The outstanding action remained for JE to forward Austin's Butterfly from November meeting – RT said he would prompt JE to follow through with this.	
3.	<b>Year 11 PPE data and analysis, including all groups (SEND, more able and PP) Comparison with 2023 PPE results</b> <i>(Presented by NO)</i> <i>(papers distributed)</i>  <b>3.1</b> NO outlined the first sheet which gave a summary of the departmental key headline figures, whole-school data and specific groups. He said the data was based on professional predictions informed by the second round of mocks just before half term. These had included 1 paper for each option, 2 in maths, 2 in English, 1 in each science and 2 in RE. The reason for not giving more papers was its impact	

	<p>on teaching time. The timetable for mocks is broken down as 2 papers per day which allows for a good length of paper and a break in between, including accommodating the different access arrangements for certain students. Whilst they could use a shorter paper format this would impact the quality and validity of the mock exam, hence would be counterproductive.</p>
<b>3.2</b>	<p>The second sheet compared the mocks this time last year and compared with predictions. It looked at the percentage of 4+, 5+ and 7+ thresholds. There was further breakdown of the 7-9 grades.</p>
<b>3.3</b>	<p>It was felt that in this year's PPE departments had done better and created a more accurate format. If they just give the previous year's paper then the pupils over-perform as they have practised it.</p> <p>The science departments have invested in programmes which will pull questions from several years papers, which leads to a more challenging exam.</p>
<b>3.4</b>	<p>A governor asked how confident the school is on the data?</p> <p>NO responded that they use the national government standards of previous years, therefore the school is working a year behind. In 2023, the real Progress 8 figure of -0.04 exceeded the predicted figure of -0.18 because of the change in grading standards from 2022 to 2023. This is unlikely to happen in 2024.</p> <p>There is a general confidence that they would be accurate on outcomes.</p> <p>In terms of progress, English was consistent, EBacc was higher than last year, The overall Progress 8 score will rely heavily on English and Maths because they are double-weighted. Maths are predicting there will be a big improvement.</p>
<b>3.5</b>	<p>A governor asked what was an 'open subject'?</p> <p>NO clarified that open grades were any grades that had not already been counted in the English, Maths or EBacc buckets. These were more subject to variation.</p>
<b>3.6</b>	<p>Those highlighted in yellow e.g. maths was 64% accurate in predictions last year, which was the highest in the school in subjects without coursework (where the predictions can take account of marks already achieved). However, this can be because maths is a more predictable subject – 'if you can do it, you can do it', whereas essay-based subjects are less predictable.</p> <p>The colour code designates the trend over the last normal years nationally – 2018, 2019 and 2023. However, it should be taken into account that since this time there have been changes in staff and the impact of Covid. Also there is no idea of the provision prior to those students being in our care. Some students did not sit SATs and are not counted in Progress 8 calculations. Red = the percentage of students abnormally high or low. Green = in line with the 3 year trend.</p> <p>Most subjects are close to the 3 year trend. Some with smaller cohorts can have greater fluctuations. There are very few reds – drama is red due to staff sickness in this subject, which was addressed by bringing in a specialist to mark the exam. Business studies – they did not adjust their boundaries for the PPE but their predictions are more sensible. History was a difficult paper, therefore they could have been more generous with grade boundaries. Both of these are new subject leaders to the school therefore this requires some CPD.</p> <p>NO hopes to have fortnightly time with each of the subject leaders in the future.</p> <p>This year's Y11 are better motivated than those in 2023 and take on the challenges of exams better. This is an indication of why the results should improve.</p>
<b>3.7</b>	<p>NO said when RT had asked him where they should end up, he had responded somewhere similar and</p>

	<p>more in line with where we were historically.</p> <p>RT added that they had done a lot of work on the accuracy of predictions,</p> <p>NO said that using spreadsheets allowed them to enforce trend data on the students e.g. 5 students with a grade 9 so it resulted in bending the students to fit the data. Now the validity and reliability of the PPE papers was required to ensure where the students are and adjust the grade boundaries to fit.</p>	
3.8	<p>A governor commented on the history results and suggested this potentially needed some adjustments. He also asked about the science results, commenting the combined science was generally low and the individual sciences better. He asked whether there was any way to close the gaps to get more 4+ grades?</p> <p>NO explained that the Science Department has written to parents to recommend that their sons sit Foundation Tier, rather than Higher Tier, so as to give them a greater chance of success. They have moved 3 sets onto combined science in the hope it will lift the top end or sit foundation in biology, physics and chemistry.</p> <p>RT added that they can still do science A level with combined science.</p> <p>NO said they have to have the background of data to convince the students which is why they choose the tier of entry at this time.</p> <p>NO added that he did not know the information about history so would have to find this out. It was the Year 9 paper that the boys struggled with and that's where the low grade came from – <b>ACTION</b>.</p>	
3.9	<p>RT added it was curious that the high-achieving pupils performed better in the first PPE than in this one.</p> <p>A governor asked whether this group was above average at KS2?</p> <p>NO said they had not yet looked at progress averages.</p> <p>A governor said that governors needed this sort of data :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. because 51% of the more able did not achieve, so governors need to know how the school is meeting those students' needs.</li> <li>2. the data needs to be broken down by separate groups – ethnic, disadvantaged etc.</li> <li>3. English did not perform well last year and it looks like the same this year. She added that the 3 year trend in maths they have achieved above, so are they using a model for students which could be used elsewhere in the school?</li> </ol> <p>The governor's main worry was that last year only 12 students achieved their target, so how many of the current cohort are on target generally? For example, the more able? This would give some benchmark. She is concerned that Progress 8 is broadly average. Governors also need to know what interventions are being done for English so that all students achieve their target and beyond?</p>	1.
3.10	<p>Another governor commented that governors had been given comparisons but not consistent comparison year on year which makes her cautious when looking at data. Her general impression was the results do not seem to be moving forward, just stagnating. Governors have been given reasons why that might be but ultimately the school is judged on outcomes compared with other schools and JF is not moving off the low threshold. She asked what JF can do to give better outcomes?</p>	
3.11	<p>A governor added that they cannot judge the results if they do not know what the students came in with at KS2.</p>	

	<p>A governor commented this was broadly in line with previous years, but not showing a trend of improvement and asked why we have not yet cracked this? She felt the school is coasting.</p> <p>A governor asked RT what Progress 8 would reflect as a realistic aspiration?</p> <p>RT responded that the current prediction was for 0.2 but that this might change if national standards differ from 2023.</p>	
3.12	<p>NO said he was confident of 0.2</p> <p>NO added there was a change in the national standard in 2023, so it was unlikely to get improvement again.</p> <p>A governor asked what was the more reliable trajectory?</p> <p>NO said 0.2 equates to 2.5 grades increase for each student.</p>	
3.13	<p>RT commented that some problems such as instability in the school, changes of staff, attendance etc were more amenable to a quick fix,, but rapid improvement is more difficult where the roots of underachievement were more baked in.. The key issue is culture and behaviour which affects every aspect of school life and has impact on results.</p> <p>NO said the historic decision not to move certain students was a mistake in his opinion, because they were disaffected and this would have taken out 5 of the bottom 10 and would have had a positive impact. If you do not impose the ultimate sanction this has a knock-on impact because of the effort required to be put into those students.</p> <p>RT added that the culture had also meant that even the most able do not want to appear diligent and clever. It takes time to change this culture; in the younger age groups they are working on it and streaming from next year will help. Covid had hit this school particularly hard.</p> <p>A governor commented that it was the way we dealt with Covid, the approach to teaching and learning during that time. Whilst we can give reason for each group's underperformance the key is to establish what to do differently.</p>	
3.14	<p>A governor said that we should be optimistic if the predictions occur but it was important also to understand what to do more of and what to do less.</p> <p>A governor commented that the maths department appear to have already understood that.</p> <p>A governor added that in the case of English this was the national picture and also was the case in primary schools. Being given the experience to write is different whereas with maths there are definitive answers.</p>	
3.15	<p>RT added that the individual sciences attract the more able students. Progress 8 for boys nationally is usually -0.5, as boys are generally doing worse in every subject and in English worst of all.</p> <p>A governor commented that this is going against the trend of doing well in maths.</p> <p>NO commented that the gender gap tempers that.</p> <p>The Chair asked for follow up action on data – the targets for this year group, what APS, split by groups and ethnicity – <b>ACTION.</b></p>	

	<p>NO said this was skewed by numbers in each grouping.</p> <p>A governor commented that if there was a case where there were only 2 students in a group then they could still look at that.</p> <p><b>3.16</b> A governor said it was important for governors to do due diligence and ensure that intervention was taking place per child.</p> <p>A governor commented there was a high number of SEND children, given this was a welcoming Catholic school that was fine, but asked what bearing this had on the data set compared with other schools?</p> <p>NO confirmed there was a bigger impact with the Catherine class in terms of what they access, but this was known when it was introduced. The expectations will be lower, e.g. dealing with boys with reading age of 7 when they arrive at JF, so they are below the bottom level and there is a lot of work to get them to the baseline.</p> <p>A governor commented it would be good if governors nonetheless had the data of where these students were then and now.</p>	<b>2.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Year 11 predictions including 7-9 grades</b></p> <p><b>4.1</b> A governor also commented there needs to be a breakdown of the number of grades 7, 8 and 9 achieved.</p> <p>A governor said the data showed that JF is doing the higher prior attainers a disservice and therefore those were going elsewhere for 6<sup>th</sup> form. Governors cannot be sure how the school is identifying and resolving the issues to meet their needs. She asked what data do governors need to have to help them identify where the school needs to put its energies. What can we do for them? What do we do to intervene? It cannot be a one size fits all approach. Culture takes 2-5 years to change, so the school needs to establish some quick wins.</p> <p><b>4.2</b> RT responded that there has been a strong focus on promoting high expectations. Some problems are easier to solve than others which is why behaviour is so key because it has an impact on all things. All departments have to improve and some departments are doing better than others.</p> <p>A governor commented it is quality of teaching and learning, having the relevant curriculum, behaviour management, meeting EAL &amp; SEND needs, plus more aspirational things like trips etc.</p> <p><b>4.3</b> RT agreed there was lots to do and lots of ways to raise expectations. Whilst in sport it is clear that it matters what is achieved, there will also be subliminal messaging about learning. Streaming will allow the teacher to differentiate more effectively. If they try to change the direction of teaching and learning before they had done the behaviour changes, it could be counterproductive. Once this is fully introduced, then they will review the teaching and learning.</p> <p>A governor asked if there was any way to do streaming at Y10 and Y12?</p> <p>NO confirmed that they already set in Y10 for English, maths and science, but it is not possible for option subjects.</p> <p>RT added that the system was not perfect and was science-led in the sense that sets are dictated by whether students are taking double or triple science. English can only set in different ways because of which sciences are being done.</p> <p><b>4.4</b> A governor asked were there any cases for the Y11 boys to drop a subject to allow more time to</p>	

	<p>concentrate on the remaining subjects?</p> <p>RT said only in a few cases where it had been a battle bringing them into school, so was as much for their welfare and after conversations with their parents.</p> <p>NO added that it should be recognised this had an impact on the school's overall score.</p> <p>The governor replied she felt it was nonetheless the right thing to do.</p> <p>Another governor commented that otherwise they might not come in for the exam anyway.</p> <p>NO said was the balance of whole-school targets and the individual circumstances, which has to be decided on a case by case, student-centred basis.</p> <p>RT added that they try to focus on boys lower down the school to head off those problems.</p> <p>NO said that the SEND children were not filling all their subject buckets e.g. BTEC sport does not count towards the overall number. Some SEND children are only doing 8 out of 10 subjects, therefore they look lower.</p> <p>RT added that they are worried that Y10 lost Y9 GCSE teaching because of the switch to a two-year KS4, but the culture of that year group is very positive.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Planned interventions post PPE results</b></p> <p>A governor asked about the interventions (<i>a summary sheet was distributed</i>) and things being done.</p> <p><b>5.1</b> NO outlined that the Y11s received their results last Friday. Catherine Butcher was working on study skills and they had a system of recording revision sessions.</p> <p><b>5.2</b> The subject level summary had just got this data. Maths has an issue with set 3, the teacher went on maternity leave at a key time and they have been trying to mitigate some of that impact.</p> <p><b>5.3</b> RT added there had been some key interventions with specific individual students being targeted. Also, departments were running open door sessions but these were general and might not be targeted at their weaknesses.</p> <p><b>5.4</b> A governor asked whether there was the option to do more with lunchtime sessions now with the new lunch arrangements. How would it work if they had then missed their lunch slot?</p> <p>NO confirmed that Y11 have their own servery.</p> <p>RT clarified that even if a student misses his year group's slot he does not miss his lunch, just the option to queue jump. There was plenty of time. Teachers had commented with the single lunch break they can teach interventions better because all the staff and all the students are off at the same time. He is not aware that any student has not eaten due to lack of time.</p> <p><b>5.5</b> A governor queried how many subjects were running Easter school as RE were?</p> <p>RT said it was very few because they were asking boys to focus on independent study. If a student comes in for one session, they are then meeting friends, travel time etc, therefore reduces the study in general. Rather the school is focussing on before and after school sessions, as opposed to them gathering in school.</p> <p>A governor also pointed out there were online options.</p>	



<b>5.6</b>	<p>A governor asked what about students who had not got the provision to study at home?</p> <p>RT said they would look into having something where they come in for sessions across the whole day.</p>
<b>5.7</b>	<p>NO pointed out that when there are boys on site over the holidays there are first aid and safeguarding considerations, therefore it is affecting the same staff who provide these.</p> <p>A governor commented that many schools do just 2-3 days which concentrates it for both staff and students.</p> <p>A governor advised that they would have to do a timetable with the days blocked.</p> <p>A governor asked if the caretaking staff who were already on site were also first aid trained?</p> <p>NO said the premises staff were usually involved in building works over the school holidays therefore could not be take away from that.</p> <p>A governor proposed that they focus on the more able, less able, SEND groups.</p> <p>A governor asked if the sessions were by invitation?</p>
<b>5.8</b>	<p>NO explained that last year the funding was available because of the catch-up grant so departments could select particular students. It was a big project, subject-specific over 9 days.</p> <p>A governor commented that for her son the science departments had been very precise and explained what is covered and when; it was all made very clear.</p> <p>A governor asked if Pupil Premium money could be used for interventions?</p> <p>RT said it was used for tutoring – Tutor Doctor.</p>
<b>5.9</b>	<p>A governor asked whether parents are advised about revision sessions in general?</p> <p>A parent governor confirmed they were advised with a timetable sent home several times and reminders on the day.</p>
<b>5.10</b>	<p>A governor asked whether they had ever considered moving the mocks?</p> <p>RT said subject leaders feel the mocks are too early and November/March would be preferred.</p> <p>NO added it was done for best fit in that if they are pushed back to March, this means that multiple papers (30x each exam) had to be fitted in.</p>
<b>5.11</b>	<p>A governor asked about study leave.</p> <p>NO confirmed that the boys stay in school until the first exam, but this is still up for discussion for this year. The administration of it is difficult and the staff supervision involved. They have to accept that they cannot please everyone.</p>
<b>5.12</b>	<p>NO added that interventions push what is going on in the classroom. Teacher targets in performance management based on which groups they are set. They will have other pedagogical strategies happening on a daily basis which are not captured in lunchtime sessions.</p>
<b>5.13</b>	<p>A governor said a move to 3 PPE blocks but shorter format would not help learn exam technique and timing; she agreed that keeping the length of exam realistic is helpful.</p>

	Another governor agreed that their understanding of the full length and exam conditions led to less anxiety when the actual exams happened and it was important to help the boys manage any anxiety.	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The committee Chair commented on the revised way that policies were being reviewed. It was explained that the TL&amp;S committee had formed a working party to review the statutory ones and these would be split out between committees.</p> <p>The Chair of governors confirmed that the policies would come to the main committees to then be presented at the FGB for recommendation. SLT will look at the statutory policies and bring those to the joint working party of TL&amp;S and Resources.</p>	
	<p><b>TLS committee meeting dates this academic year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024</li> <li>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Closure of meeting</b></p> <p>GG thanked NO for his work in preparing the data and presentation.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7pm</p>	

### Actions list:-

	Action	For	Date	Comments	Status
<b>Meeting of 21.11.23</b>					
1	JE to send link to Austin's Butterfly to governors	JE	a.s.a.p.	Cf – again 12.3.24	open
<b>Meeting of 20.2.24</b>					
1	DJ to check on toilet door locks and report back to governors	DJ	a.s.a.p.	Response by email 21.2.24	Completed
2	Impact assessment of the enrichment programme	RT	July 24		open
<b>Meeting of 12.3.24</b>					
1.	NO to find out further information on the history results and feedback to governors	NO	a.s.a.p.		Open
2.	Data to be broken down by groups, ethnicity etc	NO	Next meeting	Ongoing	Open