

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

Item and Description	Notes
<p>1. Welcome, apologies and quorum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introductions and welcome b. Receive and agree whether to accept apologies c. Confirm whether the meeting is quorate (this can only be a quorum of designated PEF members) d. Confirm resignations or term of office end e. Elect a chair f. Declaration of Interests and/or Conflict of Interests 	<p>Attendees: David Marchant, Joe McGraw, Maggie Robson, Neil Ruddick, Natasha Marshall.</p> <p>Apologies: Owen Price-Jones, Chris Pyle – still quorate.</p> <p>Sarah McGrath was not in attendance and has not been in touch with anyone so far.</p> <p>Resignations: None.</p>
<p>2. Approve – Minutes to be approved from previous meetings held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25th September – Full Governors 2. 16th October – Pay Review Meeting 3. 16th October – Full Governors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25th September – Full Governors: All agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the discussions, questions and answers. BJ to ensure this document is published on the school website. 2. 16th October – Pay Review: Minutes approved by DSM/JM/MR. CP still to confirm for final sign off. 3. 16th October – Full Governors: All who attended agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the discussions, questions and answers. NR asked to add the reason for his absence. MR added... “Neil will not be joining today because he objected to the lateness of paperwork, for which DSM had apologised when they were circulated.” As agreed, BJ to ensure this document is published on the school website.
<p>3. Policy Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access Arrangements 2. Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School 3. NEA 4. Malpractice 5. Positive Handling Procedures 6. Pupil Premium Strategy Plan and Review 7. Special Educational Needs 8. CLLT Accessibility Plan 2024 – 27 – see QEGS appendices 9. Admissions – 2026-27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Arrangements <p>Factual updates and changes have been tracked.</p> <p>MR – What is a qualified accessor?</p> <p>DSM – Someone who has a L7 qualification CPT3A, CM has a qualification of this level called PAPAA (Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements). It’s either someone known at centre or someone you buy in.</p> <p>NR – Can we change the title from “Access Arrangements Policy” to “Exams Access Arrangements Policy”.</p> <p>All agreed that we could change the title then BJ to format/add to the website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School <p>DSM – CM has queried no reference to Cumberland Council as some of our children live in this council not Westmorland & Furness.</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

This creates a weird position as we would report to W&F but sometimes (dependant on address) CC would have responsibility.

NM – Lets change so it reflects the students home address. Referrals have to make it to the correct council and we have to be very mindful of this.

MR – Are we allowed to say what we will do?

DSM – It has to reflect legal responsibilities so they have to do this. Where our responsibilities end the LA's start.

All agreed to change wording on page 3 to "By law, Westmorland & Furness County Council should not..."

All agreed that the changes mentioned above would be updated then BJ to format/add to the website.

NEA & Malpractice – These two policies were shared after the original documentation; apologies were given by DSM. PRC shared the following note - *They are the latest versions from the Exam Office (we subscribe to this service). There is no "exams" policy per se anymore, they are broken down into separate entities. The two we need passing off are the NEA and Malpractice.*

- **NEA**

MR – this is very detailed and useful.

All approved and agreed for BJ to format/add to the website.

- **Malpractice**

JM – Very timely.

All approved and agreed for BJ to format/add to the website.

- **Positive Handling Procedures**

DSM - JEL's name should be on as the author not DSM.

3 members of staff are currently trained. Good practice/part of risk management to have multiple people trained/on board.

We are legally obliged to keep a current log and will be doing this going forwards as the log is currently blank.

The policy is pretty generalised however backs other school policies well.

NM – Following the last health and safety meeting we now log on CPOMS as a category and store securely.

NR – I don't like section 7 and think it is best to stick to reasonable force. Extreme situations may be reasonable in those circumstances. This feels a little contradictory. The 'seated double

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>embrace' who will know what this is/I don't? These could be reasonable depending on the circumstances.</p> <p>DSM – I hear your point.</p> <p>NR – Justifiable being proportionate?</p> <p>DSM – Remove the full section? Or change what is not generally acceptable use of force?</p> <p>JM – This is good practice and guidance but NR has a point.</p> <p>MR – Agreed, but I worry some may go overboard and we need to be clear.</p> <p>NR – It's policy. Staff untrained may end up using force. Could be incorporate in the training instead? Think about litigation.</p> <p>DSM – Are we all agreed to take the bullet points out of section 7?</p> <p>All agreed.</p> <p>NM – I can see both sides of it.</p> <p>JM – More guidance should be given in training.</p> <p>All agreed that the two changes mentioned above would be updated then BJ to format/add to the website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil Premium Strategy Plan and Review <p>PRC created this but thinks this isn't a true reflection of where we are now and the next 3-year plan needs reworked.</p> <p>This is a report into what we have spent the money on which is factual.</p> <p>MR – Is this published on the website?</p> <p>DSM – Yes.</p> <p>MR – In the challenges section, point 3 "potential lack of access" – implied criticisms here? Trying to cover?</p> <p>DSM – This is exactly with PRC means, this isn't where we are now, we are in a different space. Short term review change going forward.</p> <p>NR – It just says potential.</p> <p>NM – Agree needs rephrasing when we come to rework (as mentioned above).</p> <p>MR – Page 4, and equal access to... - to what?</p> <p>DSM – need to double check but think this should say wraparound. Wil check with PRC.</p>
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Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

MR – Is this cheap in terms of the budget, the figure seems low for all the staffing?

DSM – The school supplements the PP pot to support staffing for wider school.

All agreed that the changes mentioned above would be updated then BJ to format/add to the website.

- **Special Educational Needs**

DSM - CM's name should be on as the author not DSM.

No big changes it's the information report which has been included within.

JM – Section 5, keep the flow of questions; some are statements, let's make it consistent.

DSM – Judith is looking at a trust wide alignment regarding SEND. The next reiteration will be from the trust centrally.

All agreed that the changes mentioned above would be updated then BJ to format/add to the website.

- **CLLT Accessibility Plan 2024 – 27 – see QEGS appendices**

This policy is owned by the trust and appendices have been edited with CM/QEGS Facilities. This is an iteration and a good first step. This is part of the work Judith wants to do, currently inconsistent.

We need to respond to the needs of the children now and then make this future proof.

MR – What about the funding?

DSM - This is specific to the children not access per say. It can be challenging e.g. we have one music room on the top floor.

NR – When a child is identified is there an individual plan setup? Does H&S get to know about this?

DSM – This depends on the nature which we need to feed into the accessibility plan and their own individual plan. Students are currently relatively self-sufficient.

NR – Who writes the care plan and what stage are H&S told about it? How is it managed in practice?

DSM – CM/HoY create the care plan and then this is added to CPOMS. Key details/care are shared on SIMS. The trust gets involved from a procurement perspective e.g. painting is a nice aesthetic but they have to think of other things such as any visual problems of staff/students.

JM – Is the date of the next review to change and on the appendices?

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>DSM – I will check.</p> <p>JM – Challenge, the table with targets/ strategy/ achievements – how are we measuring achievements?</p> <p>DSM – CM to add specific and measurable actions (achievements/smarter outcomes) and then BJ to recirculate policy for comment/approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admissions – 2026-27 <p>We only had 2 responses from the consultation. We have made a minor amendment from the previous policy.</p> <p>NR Had queries about the catchment area and new admissions arrangements. It was agreed to have a wider discussion about admission arrangements before next September</p> <p>Before the 31st January we have to agree the Admission Policy for 2026-27, which was put out for a statutory consultation period. No concerns or queries were raised we just had two things to clarify which we have shared with all Governors and all justification has been provided.</p> <p>All agreed to approve and BJ to add to the website.</p>
<p>4. Content - All</p>	<p>DSM/PRC/NM have been supporting WLA across the Autumn Term where at all possible with leadership capacity due to illness of the interim Headteacher.</p> <p>Since we returned in January, we have been running with a man down as PRC has been seconded to WLA whilst the interim headteacher undergoes medical treatment.</p> <p>We had two employees in data and exams, one has left and the other is about to leave. PRC oversees this area so this is a very delicate point as we are very light on the ground. Pressure is coming back this way – a real challenge.</p> <p>MR – I would like to log this on behalf of Governors. I am concerned about the SLT team in these circumstances. You are all so hardworking and just get on with it but there also comes a point we need to speak up for you.</p> <p>DSM – We have shared these pressures with JS and presented the risk to abilities to go after our improvement plans at pace. Quality assurance work has not had capacity. Sickness has also impacted areas.</p> <p>MR agreed she would write to JS.</p> <p>NR – What are the front office issues?</p> <p>DSM – The exams and data team, which we mentioned earlier.</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>NR – There is no easy solution to it, an area understaffed.</p> <p>DSM – Gaps are a big worry in general. Plus, the launch of CR and navigating this alongside the impact on staff morale. Colleagues appreciate the transparently and have been understanding but it makes this no easier.</p>
<p>5. Attendance</p>	<p>Governors asked for comparative data which I have pulled out. Broadly speaking we are tracking above national and we are really pleased with all the hard work from our Attendance Officer.</p> <p>Attendance is higher at this time of year than the end of last year which is perfectly normal.</p> <p>Our area of concern is relatively small – Some FSM and SEND students have skewed the data. In some situations, we are exploring alternative provisions, to provide positive engagement in school.</p> <p>NM – We have looked at the Alternative provision for some hard to engage EBSA students, which has marvellous plans but still in infancy/setup. They don't offer traditional GCSEs and sometimes this is not the right decision academically. This is more to get people back into schools so we have to think about how we use this.</p> <p>MR – Has there been any pushback from parents regarding absence requests and fines etc?</p> <p>NM – Some are happy to take them out and get a fine as it is cheaper than a holiday in the school holidays. Others are direct "I'm not asking, I'm telling...". AC is amazing with her facts and how she communicates with parents.</p> <p>NM – We sometimes find that when a student are absent, they have been struggling with something, which has led us to supporting them.</p>
<p>6. Behaviour (inc. Suspensions / Exclusions)</p>	<p>We have seen a massive improvement in terms of suspensions. Pretty general up to Christmas but half on last year.</p> <p>We have also started to track toilet visits in lesson times, which has shown frequent flyers. HoYs can pick up with these students and support them where necessary. We can follow up on these and parents can see. These are not negative or bad points it's just a log.</p> <p>So far this term we have had three suspensions. All have been isolated but need to do more work in PD. Some have been expected/there is a patter.</p> <p>NM – I have contacted out police officer link who has agreed to come in and do presentations to students e.g. online safety, hate crime.</p> <p>NM – I would like to propose a wording change to the behaviour policy to try and pre-empt something. Here's why... Snus is a tobacco/or tobacco free teabag look alike. You put it on your gums and a high level of nicotine gets released into your blood stream. It's accessible from supermarkets. I have spoken with some sixth form students about awareness.</p> <p>JM – What does snus mean?</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>NM – It is just a name. A business card was found a few weeks ago which a QR code on to these products. They are legal to anyone over 18. Wording in the policy needs to reflect accordingly. Mouth cancer, heart problems and other things are associated with taking this. Tobacco free would not be covered in our current policy.</p> <p>JM – Where can you buy this?</p> <p>NM – Anywhere, online with no real age restrictions. Sainsbury's tobacco counter. Nothing on the packaging suggests this is harmful. It is very much out there. We also need to get this added to our filtering systems with IT.</p> <p>All in agreeance. NM to adapt and BJ to add to the updated version to the website.</p>
<p>7. Personal Development</p>	<p>PD has been flagged as an area of improvement.</p> <p>SN met with a group of parents who raised concerns on the curriculum and showed them the changes.</p> <p>MR – Are parents more accepting now you have moved to staff delivering this?</p> <p>NM – We have been doing this for a year now and change takes time. The difference in resources this year has made a big difference. It's much more positive now and resources are easier to understand and deliver. This is also a shorter amount of time which they like – it's the same amount of content being delivered in a better/more concise way.</p> <p>MR – I appreciate that, mathematicians/scientists would have a completely different approach.</p> <p>SN is continuing to work with KJD on curriculum planning and development. Ensuring a robust QA on the delivery of PD is a focus point.</p> <p>NM – KJD has been delivering more tricker content, but we support each other with content.</p>
<p>8. Quality of Education</p>	<p>We have a new Head of Drama in place and this has led to a fresh direction for the subject to better suit our students' needs.</p> <p>Y11 interventions are now in place for those not doing as well as they potentially could.</p> <p>The bigger issue we have is some students with lower reading ages, meaning they don't read as well as they should. We have broken this down and have taught active reading strategies e.g. nonsense poem and return answers – what have you learnt from this piece? This all comes back to teaching and learning and how students move up.</p> <p>MR – A lot of work has gone into formative assessment. Are you noticing a difference in the classroom on learning walks?</p> <p>DSM – Assessment is a journey. Restricting of assessments is gradually moving forward in all areas. PRC is moving forwards with</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>reporting, it's not perfect we know but we are revising as we move forwards. HoDs have been asked to do two milestone assessments a term and everyone does. This makes it more meaningful when looking at focused areas so we can see areas of development.</p> <p>NM – Making them look more like the real thing. Fitting assessments to data deadlines don't always work in practice, you need to do the assessment when ready. It should stay open as a continual piece of work.</p> <p>NR – Do things keep coming up to keep topics in the child's mind?</p> <p>NM – Yes, discreet topics with the same skills coming through. HoDs brought up the timings of assessments - milestone assessments give more flexibility.</p> <p>DSM – Where practice is weaker, we know where there is more to do. We have more people on the bus moving in the right direction.</p>
<p>9. Culture and Leadership</p>	<p>The response to the whole staff welfare survey has been share with all staff alongside detailed feedback to each point.</p> <p>Everyone has been flexible around the building works going on.</p> <p>Our Jan INSET as focused on staff-wellbeing.</p> <p>Attendance at STEAM meetings has been low.</p> <p>NM – The first one was good and then it has slowly dwindled down. We also had one for support staff. For the next full staff meeting we will set a brief agenda to begin with to encourage staff to bring their own views and opinions. It maybe has been too open and we need some structure to this so I am happy to try something else and in a different way.</p> <p>JM – Well done, keep going.</p> <p>DSM – Understandably, I think VR has made staff nervous. Hopefully our position will be clearer soon.</p>
<p>10. People Strategy</p>	<p>Drama has been an area of challenge. Dr James Issitt has been appointment on a permanent basis as a full time Head of Drama. Last term he was with us on supply and students responded exceptionally to him.</p> <p>Beth Osbourne joined the Sixth Form Team in October 2024 and has made a positive impact working with students and bringing new ideas.</p> <p>As we mentioned earlier, we have concerns around the data and exams department.</p> <p>We have one member of staff currently under investigation which could lead to disciplinary action.</p> <p>We have received five VR applications totalling 3.2 FTE and some resignations totalling 3.5 FTE. Broadly speaking this now mean we may have to consider compulsory redundancy as we are still 1FTE overstaffed/ 1.8 FTE where people have specialisms. We are working</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>with the trust on next steps and hope to have a further update very soon.</p> <p>We will look at scope for potential secondments. JS is going through the curriculum model with the Headteacher at Settlebeck so there may be scope here and with other local school, which we are happy to contact.</p> <p>NR – How does secondment work in other schools?</p> <p>DSM – We continue to pay the member of staff but then the other school pays us.</p> <p>JM – It means that their post remains open at QEGS and they remain employed by QEGS.</p> <p>DSM – This would give people longer to think. Could launch on 10th February with a 5-week window. We would still be able to accept new VR applications. Waiting for trust approval. People may start to look elsewhere which is not the ideal scenario.</p>
<p>11. Finance</p>	<p>November 2024 showed a deficit position of £6.5k for the past three months against a positive surplus forecast. December's numbers are coming in tomorrow.</p> <p>Staffing costs have impacted this with money being spent on supply (£12k) and also for the entrance test day (£15k). This was not budgeted for.</p> <p>A number of things haven't been properly budgeted for when we moved to the trust – not enough detail.</p> <p>Indirect expenditure – lots of CPD earlier in the year, premises later in the year.</p> <p>In December we saw increases going through and pensions. We still expect to be overspent but we may balance with some vacancies – TBC.</p> <p>MR – OPJ has asked for more clarification on repayment to the EFSA. We went into the trust with surplus and we owe the trust what we owe. Why do we still have this deficit?</p> <p>DSM – As I have mentioned before 1.5 million was owed originally and ESFA paid some off.</p> <p>MR – OPJ's point was why do we need to find savings now if we need to pay 'x' in year 6?</p> <p>MR – If we don't make enough progress does the trust need to do more to stop us spending?</p> <p>DSM – We are trying to deliver a balanced budget, we need to be careful here, the deficit could be we just haven't made the full repayment.</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>MR – Not a happy situation.</p> <p>DSM – We need to save 100k with a 5.5million budget which is a relative amount. There is so much we could do which could make massive impacts.</p> <p>NR – ESFA closing?</p> <p>DSM – They are transferring over; we spoke about this at the last meeting in more detail.</p>
<p>12. Safeguarding, Welfare and Inclusion</p>	<p>NM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officially I took this on in September 2024 and it has been a huge learning curve with lots to do.• The LA have provided training to me and LAW. We have a wide safeguarding team which is amazing!• We have made some changes to training for the rest of the school and we include a safeguarding section in the weekly staff bulletin with my name on.• The LA came in and provided training to all pastoral staff, HoYs on how to lead/engage with Early Help Assessments.• At present we have 14 students with an open EHA.• I have been having half-termly supervision sessions with the LA, these have been very helpful as i can talk through anything that has happened and get further support regarding next steps.• A new half-termly meeting has been setup for safeguarding. This allows SLT, DSL, SENDCo, Attendance Officer etc to group together and provide updates on cases and ensure information is being shared/reviewed. Ensures nothing is missed and everyone clear on actions/responsibilities.• Reporting has been a key area of focus for the team. A passion project for me and its not war and peace reading. It's better and centralised with a comprehensive overview f what we need to know.• EA has completed her ELSA course. EA will now work with HoYs to identify students for proactive and preventative interventions and tailor sessions to their needs. Hopefully this will lower reactive 1-1 work.• Starting to see a trend with self-harm across schools. In comparison we are not in a bad position but we now have a new process for risk in place.• Have been working with Barnardo's.• There are changes coming in at April for keeping children safe. We are embracing for this. <p>DSM – We are now in a much better position and feel confident, thank you to NM for everything that is now in place and all you have achieved already. The work that has been done around record keeping has stopped duplication of responses to one incident. Well done NM.</p> <p>JM – This is really positive.</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>NM – I want to setup a review system, so we can get back together to evaluate what could be done differently next time (constantly evolve/reflect/improve).</p> <p>NM – Want to look at how the police want things to be/look when handed over to them.</p> <p>JM – You can't know everything, do what feels right.</p> <p>MR – It sound like the LA are giving good support.</p> <p>DSM – It has been mixed.</p> <p>NM – They are providing opportunities for us to attend things. Things are getting fed back. We are progressing well and on the right track.</p> <p>NR – Prosecution requires statements.</p> <p>NM – I don't know what happens after a handover to the police. I just need to know what to worry about/not.</p> <p>NR – The courts will want it in a particular format. Safeguarding hearsay evidence. Don't worry too much, just make sure they have all the information and keep a record of what you have provided/told them.</p>
<p>13. Health and Safety</p>	<p>Staffing issues – wellbeing.</p> <p>Roofing work was completed in mid-November.</p> <p>Fire Risk Assessment completed.</p> <p>Electrical re-wire is ongoing and they are doing a great job. Currently ahead of schedule and due to complete in June. Even supported to create a ramp to the mobile classrooms with the woodwork tools out – amazing.</p> <p>Gutter clearing is needed twice a year, will be contracted.</p> <p>Main gate needs whole new mechanics and electrics. Quotes have been received and contractor to be booked in, hoping for half-term but TBC.</p> <p>Careful longer term planning required with budget concerns but we are certainly managing risk.</p>
<p>14. Successes</p>	<p>Awards evenings for successes in the summer exams.</p> <p>We held our first Y7 vocal festival, which was a great opportunity for parents to meet their child's tutor.</p> <p>Christmas run up was very busy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSMA carol evening • Grandparents Christmas Party • 9 Lessons & Carols • End of service • So much more!

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>The newsletter shares successes/ key events/activities each term. We will share with governors moving forwards.</p>
<p>15. SDP</p>	<p>Red – Around the quality assurance of the quality of education.</p> <p>Blue identifies where we have exceeded what we said we were going to do.</p> <p>Very self-explanatory, does anyone have anything to add or have any questions?</p> <p>NR – Line two change to say... “No last-minute issues which are uncontrollable.”</p> <p>DSM – This only reviews up to November, our next meeting will show further details.</p> <p>DSM – It can feel frustrating with ambers and reds however it shows a realistic reflection of where we are and the progress we are making.</p> <p>MR – Given where we are with the bigger picture of things going on, we can't expect anymore.</p>
<p>16. Ratify actions taken since the last meeting</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>17. Note – correspondence to The Chair</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>18. Confirm – actions/information for other committees of the Academy Board and Trustees from this meeting</p>	<p>Policies to be tweaked with the discussed and agreed amends and then added to the website once formatted.</p> <p>CLLT Accessibility Plan – SD/LB/CM to pick up actions and recirculate with this group for comment/approval.</p> <p>MR to create a letter to be shared with JS.</p>
<p>19. Other Diary Dates</p>	<p>23th March – Full Trust Day</p> <p>7th May 12.30 at QEGS – Full Governors Meeting.</p>
<p>Year 11 Mock Analysis</p>	<p>DSM – Broadly I am pleased with the results.</p> <p>NM – There are only a couple of surprises and we have been able to target these issues. The mocks have achieved what they are meant to.</p> <p>DSM – This encompasses all children not just the low marks.</p> <p>MR – You're not just focusing on grades 7-9?</p> <p>DSM - Yes there is a lot of this going on but we need to push and move others alongside.</p> <p>The cohort is weaker at the bottom end than the last (relates to English and Maths). We have eight students who have dropped a subject for interventions. They receive five extra hours a week to pass English and Maths. We are doing lots of practice and skills work over 12-15 weeks.</p> <p>We still have a gap to close in disrupted subjects.</p>

Full Governors Meeting

22nd January 2025 at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

	<p>For double award science we have 30 children working at higher tier and 12 for foundation. There is a bigger impact with the tier split.</p> <p>PE practical assessment grades were appealed, this will be fed into practice this year.</p> <p>In one subject, the grade 5s are a big concern and a weaker zone for us to look at as an area of risk which needs addressing.</p> <p>We are working with the SENDCo office to support the students who are not coping with the number of GCSEs. We are creating a pathway for what the children need.</p> <p>MR – Is that an argument for cohorts of kids?</p> <p>DSM - Next year we will start with this current year in year 10. With the introduction of business studies, we may have too many people wanting to do it. Y9s are similar to Y11s in terms of profile. Should some of the Y9 students have similar conversations as Y11 then we may be having conversations around combined science. We need to do things according to need and have support groups.</p> <p>Art is in the top 5% of the country.</p>
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