

Full Governors Meeting

7th May 2025 at Sunbeams Music Centre, Penrith

Item and Description	Notes
<p>1. Presentation on new appraisal (PPD) policy with school leaders</p>	<p><i>Governors joined Subject Leaders for a presentation around 'Supporting Personal Professional Development Conversations'.</i></p> <p><i>JS (CEO, CLLT) will be taking this to Trust Board on the 20th May 2025 with the proposal to launch in September 2025.</i></p>
<p>2. 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: Peter Croft, David Marchant, Natasha Marshall, Sarah McGrath, Joe McGraw, Owen Price-Jones, Maggie Robson, Neil Ruddick.</p> <p>Apologies: Chris Pyle</p> <p>Quorate: Yes</p> <p>Resignations: None</p> <p>Declaration of interest: No</p>
<p>3. Approve – Minutes to be approved from previous meetings held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16th October – CP to confirm final sign off of pay review minutes 2. 22nd January – Full Governors 	<p>16th October – MR has emailed CP for sign off.</p> <p>22nd January – Approved, BJ to ensure this document is published on the school website.</p>
<p>4. Policy Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive Handling Policy – Jemma amended from the feedback in January 2. CLLT Accessibility Plan 2024 – 27 – Colin/Sue/Lyn amended QEGS appendices only from the feedback in January 3. Cared for Children – Trust/Jemma 4. Educational Visits Policy – Trust/Jemma 5. Provider Access Policy – Jemma 6. RSE Policy - Sarah 7. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions - Colin 	<p>1. Positive Handling</p> <p>This policy has been tweaked based on the feedback from January's meeting.</p> <p>NR – I am still not happy with a lot of the policy. The whole things is very prescriptive.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Questions were raised around; the need to move students with force, witnesses, removing the class or the individual from the situation, keeping options broad or specific.</i></p> <p>PRC – We need to follow the government guidelines > https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools and the Department for Education's advice > https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a819959ed915d74e6233224/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf</p> <p>OPJ – This does not relate to the points shared in our behaviour policy/potentially others. We need consistency.</p>

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SM – I agree these are all good points being raised. It needs to be rewritten for QEGS as this feels like a completely different institution.

DSM – NR/OPJ to work with JEL on a fresh draft/make this QEGS specific and work alongside all other policies.

2. CLLT Accessibility Plan

Approved, BJ to ensure this document is published on the school website.

3. Cared for Children

Approved, BJ to ensure this document is published on the school website.

OPJ – Who is the nominated Governor?

DSM – The SEND Governor. MR is not named like other policies as things can easily become outdated.

4. Educational Visits

OPJ – On page 5, section 4 it mentions seeking approval of the governing board for activities over 24hrs, do we do this? Residential visits are also mentioned on page 9, section 10.

DSM – I will find out more detail about this.

MR – We only meet once a term now so we need to look at this.

DSM – We are becoming increasingly better at the evaluation of trips. The evolve system has space for evaluation and we ensure we are looking at Finance, Insurance, Planning, QA etc.

MR – Page 8, section 8 “smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting...” this is vague on what this is?

DSM – External reporting is anything needed to be reported in line with HSE guidance.

DSM – JEL to make the necessary amends and circulate to Governors for final approval.

5. Provider Access

MR – Page 2, procedure & granting and refusing access are repetitive.

DSM – JEL to combine and remove any duplication.

6. RSE

DSM – This is in draft as we need to go out to consultation.

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	<p>OPJ – I believe SN has received some feedback already from parents. We need to think about religious beliefs as some students are against.</p> <p>DSM – I am glad you have brought this up. SN now needs to work with parents to get their backing with our approach/principle – they are a good sounding board.</p> <p>NR – On page 13, what is dual coding?</p> <p>DSM – Words and pictures. This supports students to understand a particular topic/idea. It brings clarity to some ideas. Dual coding can be great for SEND students.</p> <p>7. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions</p> <p>MR – It mentions governors checking the record keeping, who is doing this?</p> <p>DSM – There is a H&S audit next Wednesday, a report will be shared following this, which we can bring to the next governors meeting.</p> <p>JM – We need to tweak this when there is clarity.</p> <p>DSM – I will check on the schemes of delegation - Trust board vs governor board. My hunch is Trust but I will confirm.</p>
5. Content - All	<p>DSM – The Trust have steered to a slightly different reporting structure with the table and numbers. Next year their aim is to have less narrative and make it a tabular format with annotations where appropriate and show exceptions and the anomalies. I will explain more in our next meeting in July around what this will look like. Numbers/statistics is what you should expect.</p>
6. Attendance	<p>DSM – Please see the FFT report attached. The SEND data is skewed due to a small number of students in these categories. Persistent absence is skewed again by a small number of students in Y7, 10 & 11 – all of which have action plans but it is hard to get children back into school when they stop attending, we need to try and stop children going down this route. Y11 is likely to rise next year due to study leave.</p> <p>PRC – Our dips are in line with the national trend, which are around the holidays or at the end of a long term.</p> <p>NM – This sits closely with Safeguarding and I work closely with AC, our Attendance Officer. AC attends the W&F Attendance Officers' meeting and has received training from One Education around attendance. We have a number of students on early help plans. W&F have some pilot trials with some of our parents. The things that are going on will move us forwards. We have a number of students on part-time timetables for medical and mental health reasons. We are working closely with W&F and we do work with Cumberland if a child lives in this area.</p> <p>MR – What is the split between the councils?</p>

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	<p>DSM – 60 Westmorland & Furness and 40 Cumberland.</p> <p>OPJ – Are there any outside of these LAs?</p> <p>NM – There are some in Scottish systems. We always have to be mindful here as the processes can be different for different topics.</p> <p>NR – Why are the SEND numbers in Y7/8 lower than other years?</p> <p>DSM – Access arrangements for Y9 exams may lead to other SEND assessments. This is part demographic but my hunch is that more students are identified later through school alongside a number of factors.</p> <p>PRC – It also depends on how a child is assessed at primary school. Some don't have all needs diagnosed, this is not uncommon as they get older – A national trend.</p> <p>NR – But it doubles?</p> <p>MR – We are looking at low numbers.</p> <p>DSM – Concerns are flagged more in Y9 and Y10. We need to look at how we identify things earlier. When individuals hit puberty, they change e.g. behaviourally / general needs etc.</p> <p>PRC – Why does SEND drop lower?</p> <p>SM – Any analysis here? Entry requirements may be a big impact?</p> <p>NM – We are trying to identify students here that are at risk. DJC is doing more with students now than ever before. DJC meets with students so they/we know if they want to go to Sixth Form or choose an alternative career path. For the Y11 data analysis meeting, DJC (Careers Advisor) and CM (Inclusion Lead and SENDCo) came along, which helped us to set up intervention groups for those that wanted to go to Sixth Form but were not on track to hit the entrance requirements. We appreciate some students want to go on to do other things and go elsewhere.</p> <p>SM – Perhaps they feel the school is too academic for them? Or too academic for what they want to do/achieve?</p> <p>DSM – A large number of students go to do college courses.</p> <p><i>NOTE: A couple of examples were shared with names redacted.</i></p> <p>NR – Individuals with SEN find things much harder. We all like things we are good at/in our comfort zone.</p> <p>DSM – As we know we are trying to broaden our subject offering and curriculum reviews are ongoing.</p>
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	<p>SM – Which is great and students are accepting what the school is right now.</p> <p>NM – We encourage students to go to the place that is right for them and we support them to find this.</p>
<p>7. Behaviour (inc. Suspensions / Exclusions)</p>	<p>DSM – Suspension rates remain consistently lower than last year. Other behavioural issues remain low and work has begun on introducing ‘Unconditional Positive Regard’ across the school.</p> <p>PRC – SIMS tracks this data; we have no system tracking internal isolations.</p> <p>MR – This is great news on external. Lots of schools are still suffering with post covid behavioural problems.</p> <p>DSM – Permanent exclusions have been avoided but two students are on extended study leave as a precaution and so they can sit their exams.</p> <p>NR – How do you then risk assess for exams?</p> <p>DSM – These individuals have to be dropped off in Reception, they then meet a member of staff who has done positive handling training and they are escorted to the exam room. There are reporting measures for exam invigilators and more...</p> <p>SM – Do you have the same legal access requirements for Y7 and Y12? I’m surprised there isn’t more flexibility at Sixth form.</p> <p>DSM – Yes, I will look at this with NM as we could look to put into the policy.</p>
<p>8. Personal Development</p>	<p>DSM - Almost all year groups’ PD this term has been part of the ‘QEGS Learner SOW’ which focuses on developing wellbeing and on developing study skills. The focus of the wellbeing sessions is to use positive psychology to give students practical tools to support their own wellbeing. PD has landed much better this year with staff and students.</p> <p>OPJ – Yes, I think so for sure. Staff have been positive.</p>
<p>9. Quality of Education</p>	<p>DSM – There have been a number of areas that have not made progress, but can be made next year.</p> <p>DSM – A subject review on History was carried out by Sarah Campbell. She also did a review of Sixth Form only subjects. This was really helpful and we are feeding this into personal development conversations and other focus areas.</p> <p>MR – What about an English review?</p> <p>DSM – Rebecca Smith came in to do a one-day snapshot. There were very positive conversations taking place and lots of questions came back with an action plan on what we needed to do.</p>

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<p>10. Culture and Leadership</p>	<p>DSM – We have finished the redundancy programme and we were fortunate for this to be concluded at the voluntary stage, which has left a more positive feeling around school, albeit it is still an odd sensation.</p> <p>MR – What about teaching out of specialism?</p> <p>DSM – We need to recruit in food for a specialist, now we have our numbers right. There are no other impacts.</p> <p>PRC – Head of RE has now been solved/slotted in - as they can teach other subjects and are specialists.</p> <p>MR – It is good for things to have worked out this well considering.</p> <p>DSM – The transfer season is still open.</p> <p>OPJ – Staff can still be negative at times. A number of individuals have said “I am glad it has finished this time; will it happen again next year?” People are worried about the next few years and moving forwards in general. It is not as positive on the ground.</p> <p>DSM – Government funding will always be something we need to consider.</p> <p>OPJ – They understand they have read the news. 1.2% wipes out the 300k saving.</p> <p>PRC – Class sizes are maxed. PPA is at 10%. We understand the worry but I’m not sure where else we can make a saving.</p> <p>NM – Are they worried for QEGS or for the profession as a whole?</p> <p>OPJ – A mix. They know it is not just QEGS but it is their livelihood. There are national issues with finances but this doesn’t reassure the staff. It is not all doom and gloom but you need to be aware of the undertone.</p> <p>DSM – I think people are more content than they were. A concern for the sector is the biggest worry at the moment.</p> <p>NM – In the past there was mistrust towards governance and the senior leadership team. We need to build trust back up with them and change for the better.</p>
<p>11. People Strategy – TLR Structure</p>	<p>DSM – We are about to launch the new appraisal system which is Trust wide. This was presented prior to this meeting. The focus is more on research and CPD for staff rather than tick boxing.</p> <p><i>NOTE: DSM shared the Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) structure.</i></p> <p>DSM – This is consistent but has two debt anomalies. The summaries and descriptions are on the following page. Nothing will be shared with staff until after may half-term. We need to share understanding/clarity around the structure for all staff.</p> <p>NR – Does value equals pounds?</p>

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	<p>DSM – Yes. 1C is the highest then 1B then 1A (its backwards). You will see current pay and proposed pay across the Trust. Job evaluations are included. The anomalies may be recruitment and retention. It should be a percentage for the first three years then it reverts back or you will have to repay a lump sum payment.</p> <p>OPJ – Will this work for HoYs?</p> <p>DSM – Yes, but not like for like. There are agreed ranges but it all depends on a number of factors.</p> <p>OPJ – I think it would be good to explain the differences to staff and get them on board/provide justification.</p> <p>OPJ – Are all HoDs the same? For example, the Head of Music also has concerts etc. surely that has to be taken into consideration.</p> <p>DSM – No, they have not been graded differently. There will always be a scenario where this will happen but we can't put everything in a box.</p> <p>DSM – Anyone moving down has three years pay protection.</p>
<p>12. Finance</p>	<p>DSM – Due to the additional post 16 funding, we now have a positive 20k forecast for the end of the year. It will look even better once we have also processed PRC's time at WLA. We also have to consider some of the unbudgeted costs, which we are working through with the predication of a balanced position by the end of the year.</p> <p>DSM – We will soon be working on next year's budget and should have the flexibility to look at priority areas, which were reduced this year due to finances. We also need to see what will be funded by the government; this is TBC.</p>
<p>13. Safeguarding, Welfare and Inclusion</p>	<p>NM – We have seen an increase in students with eating disorders, an area which we will continue to monitor closely. We held a meeting with Cumbria's Eating Disorder Team yesterday and we looked at examples of good practice on how to support and tackle situations. They advised against tacking it at a whole school level, instead we must try to deal with what comes in and be more flexible with support. It would be good to have someone working with a number of our students with regular contact. The first internal case review brought together Safeguarding and SLT – A good way of reflecting, having good discussions, looking at record keeping/logs (and the options available so we can pick up on trends) etc. From this I reached out to other DSLs and was able to clarify some of the areas where questions had been raised.</p> <p>JM – Do you know where this is coming from?</p> <p>NM – We have a mixed picture of where the eating disorder increase is coming from.</p> <p>NM – A data cleanse has taken place with all Safeguarding files. Our longer-term plan is to have no paper and store everything electronically on CPOMS. This will happen over time.</p>

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	<p><i>NOTE: Numbers were shared (no names for confidentiality) around students with a Child Protection Plan, Child in Need, Early Help Plans, Hub Referrals, Prevent Referrals, Child Centred Policing Team Referrals, Operation Encompass Calls etc.</i></p> <p>SM – Are you still working with Every Life Matters?</p> <p>NM – Yes, they are coming to Sixth Form next week and will provide lots of information/documents which can be shared. We are also looking at trials & feedback for interventions and orange button training for the pastoral team in Sixth Form.</p> <p>DSM – The student magazine had a nice focus on this. CM also went to the conference.</p>
14. Health and Safety	<p>DSM – MD is now our interim Facilities Manager and a Senior Assistant is starting in a weeks' time.</p> <p>DSM – Due to leavers and absences SD has been covering Exams Officer, Admissions and Trips.</p>
15. Successes	<p>DSM – There have been so many successes in recent times, including extensive success in the Carlisle Music and Drama Festival and across many sports/subjects. See the spring term newsletter on our website for more > https://qegspenrith.education/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/QEGS-Spring-Term-Newsletter-2025_compressed.pdf</p> <p>MR – Governors want to thank all staff for all the enriching opportunities for QEGS students. DSM, please mention this in briefing or writing. RA assessments must take up so much time especially when you have children with additional needs to consider – well done.</p> <p>DSM – With the Headteacher's report I shared the RAG rated document, which is part of the new report format for the Trust.</p> <p>SM – It is very positive, is anything flying under the radar? Everything feels very green. Subjective?</p> <p>DSM – Iterative also. Amber highlights things you need to be aware of.</p>
16. SDP	<p>DSM – We are working on building capacity to be able to deliver this as we go into next year. Staff generally acknowledge capacity issues and we are doing our best to support them. Answers have not been as forthcoming.</p> <p>OPJ – Staff are understanding of the PRC situation but have felt frustrated.</p> <p>DSM – We need to work on staff not becoming frustrated with our support to the Trust.</p>

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	<p>OPJ – How are we benefitting from the Trust? Staff need to see/hear this. What are the other two documents that have been shared with the SDP?</p> <p>DSM – You can ignore SEF and the OFSTED ones. These are tools we could use if we wanted to, they are just templates not related to us specifically.</p> <p>SM – What is the behaviour and attitude number on page 6 > ‘30’?</p> <p>DSM – The full report has been cropped on the pdf version. BJ to share the full excel document.</p>
<p>17. Ratify actions taken since the last meeting</p>	<p>MR – I met with the Trust and they listened to our concerns. They offered certain things but timescales were not on our side.</p> <p>DSM – PRC will be back with us after the half-term; however, he will support the transition with the new Headteacher at WLA.</p> <p>MR – We have lots of praise for what you have achieved in two places PRC, well done.</p> <p>DSM – They certainly have more stability now.</p> <p>MR – A big well done to the team here for being short staffed. I understand how hard it has been and why some of the ambers/reds have not been done – simply no time.</p> <p>DSM – We can offer time to support WLA but not at the detriment of QEGS. There are lots of examples which show this has been done well. PRC has been a big loss.</p> <p>MR – All policy updates as discussed earlier. Plus, the letter mentioned from DSM.</p>
<p>18. Note – correspondence to the Chair</p>	<p>MR – No.</p>
<p>19. Confirm – actions/information for other committees of the Academy Board and Trustees from this meeting</p>	<p>MR – Policies and clarity around governor roles on some of them mentioned earlier.</p>
<p>20. Other Diary Dates</p>	<p>DSM – 2nd July is our last Governors meeting this academic year. At this stage we can share a draft development plan and discuss what we are doing.</p> <p>MR – I will confirm if Governors want to update on anything.</p> <p>DSM – Note, there is one Headteachers report per term, not two.</p>
<p>21. AOB</p>	<p><i>All – None.</i></p>