

MINUTES OF THE ST JOHN'S SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2024

Attendees	
Lt Col P Francis (PF) Mr C Guyton (CG) Mrs P Demetriou (PJD) Ms N Robertshaw (NR) Mrs E Ballard (EB) Mr S Atkin (SA) Mrs C Turner (CT) Mr S Rai (SR) Mr D Donaldson (DD) Mr J Crowther (JC)	Chair Headteacher Secretary to SGC Teaching Staff Rep Sub-Committee 1 Lead Parent Rep Episkopi Parent Rep Akrotiri UWO 1PWRR School Improvement Advisor, DCS SGC Observer
Guests	
Mrs K Parkinson (KP)	Pastoral Manager, SJS
Apologies	
Mr R Cowin (RC) Mr P Dakin (PD) Mr A Richards (AR) Mr D Taylor (DT) Mr R Roberts (RR)	Vice Chair Sub-Committee 2 Lead Independent Rep Akrotiri Independent Rep Support Staff Rep

Ser	Agenda Point		Comments	Actions
1	Welcome and opening remarks by Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PF opened the meeting at 1000 hrs and welcomed everyone present. PF thanked CG for his Headteacher's Report and for a successful start to this new academic year with very good exam results from the summer term. PF introduced SR, the new battalion UWO, and JC, new SGC Observer, to the SGC. Although new to working with a battalion, SR advised that he has had 27 years of experience of working with units and families and is looking forward to working with our SGC. JC advised that he currently works in the BFC Planning department, is the PMC of the Officers Mess and organises Children's Cricket for BFC. PF thanked SR and JC for working with the SJS SGC. PF conveyed his thanks to leaver Kate Morgan (KM) for all of her hard work and commitment. Due to new commitments in the UK, KM has now declined the offer to work remotely with our SGC. PF advised that the structure of our SGC and its subcommittees is currently being worked on by RC. PF said that they have decided not to change much, although Finance can sit with an individual governor instead. 		

OFFICIAL

Ser	Agenda Point		Comments	Actions
1	Welcome and opening remarks by Chair	•	PF reported that he has been working with Gareth Fleming (GF) on the SGC TORs over the summer. PF said that GF has also been working on SGC training, refined to suit both the educational and MOD environments, and hopes to share this with the SGC over the next 2 weeks.	PF
2	Matters arising from previous minutes	•	PF confirmed that there were no matters arising from the previous minutes.	
3	Headteacher Report Summary	•	<p>CG informed the SGC that we have made significant progress in eliminating educational disadvantage caused by mobility. CG stated that our moral purpose has not changed for this academic year and that our key school improvement policies remain the same as last year.</p> <p>CG stated that 1 PWRR joined us in Sep 24 and advised that the majority of our students currently now come from Akrotiri.</p> <p>CG said that he was delighted that KP has now been appointed in her substantive role as Pastoral Manager and said that we have had permission to recruit a Drama Teacher. However, we still face challenges around Civil Service recruitment.</p> <p>CG reported that we have still not been given permission to recruit an Assistant Headteacher, despite several attempts. CG added that a Business Case has been submitted to HQ DCS for a Teacher of Science and Maths to replace Tina Chilman but has not yet been approved. Also, we lost our Head of KS4 at the end of last academic year and now have an Acting Head of KS4, non-teaching staff, until Easter 25. Although this arrangement is going very well, CG said that we need this to be a permanent role.</p> <p>CG announced that SJS continues to operate in a significant financial deficit that will likely exceed £1 million this financial year. SJS has made a range of financial cost savings and CG feels that no further cuts can be made. CG said that students are not seeing cuts in the classroom, we are still spending but are trying to be sensible. EB asked if CG is financially able to provide what the school needs? CG confirmed this, however it is dependent upon operating in a deficit budget.</p> <p>CG added that in Oct 24 we are already expecting the 5.5% teachers pay rise and NI rise to affect our budget.</p> <p>EB asked what happens at the end of this financial year regarding the budget? CG replied that we have already been given a 5 year forecast for the SJS budget.</p> <p>SA said that Regional Command fund DCS and added that DCS is a government department with a set of roles and responsibilities with a Service Level agreement.</p> <p>JC asked what is the current budget? CG replied that it is £2.4 million with a £1 million overspend.</p> <p>PF said that it is the role of the SGC to help to assist where we think that our children may be disadvantaged.</p>	

Ser	Agenda Point		Comments	Actions
3	Headteacher Report Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● JC said that the challenge is that once cuts are made that you are never able to get that back. ● CG said that we keep trying to appoint a new AHT despite many setbacks. CG said we are also trying to push for an update to our ICT infrastructure, which is very much needed. ● CG announced that our staffing structure has not changed but SLT support is being provided by NR and now, Christos Christofi, for which SJS is very grateful. ● <u>Attendance</u> ● CG reported that student attendance currently stands at 96.6% (almost 5% higher than the current UK rate) and is a very good start to this academic year. ● <u>Educational Offer</u> ● CG reported that overall the teaching is currently at the lower end of 'consistently good.' We are equipping our students to upskill in terms of self-regulated learning and developing metacognition, to increase their independence. CG advised that this is a challenge for a lot of students as well as a challenge nationally. ● CG reported that significant improvements have been made surrounding our educational offer and there is far greater consistency in the quality of education provided. CG added that we are now building upon these examples of best practice as we look to learn and adopt strategies that promote metacognition. ● CG reported that this year tutors have been given a 1 hour protected time each week dedicated for their tutor group admin. ● CG advised that recent NGRT reading screening has been very worthwhile and has shown that our students read better than their peers in the UK. However, 12 students have been identified as having quite low reading ages and strategies are being put in place to help support them. CG confirmed that SJS will do these tests every year from now on. ● CG reported that our Y11 students new to school have a reading age of between 4 and 8 years old, something that SJS was not aware of in advance. JC said that it is known that people sometimes hide information ahead of posting. DD added that some parents also do not want to engage with the process. ● EB asked if there is a way that students can be assessed before arrival for the school to be prepared? KP said that the issue we have is for these tests to be conducted under exam conditions and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of the data provided. ● DD said that the problem is that we may need to arrange a different curriculum for an underachieving student and asked if this can be supported by the school? PF added that if there is a reason why a student should not be here, this needs to be a supportability issue. SA said that supportability assessment is a very big issue. 		

Ser	Agenda Point	Comments	Actions
3	Headteacher Report Summary	<p><u>Student Mobility</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CG advised that SJS hopes to be in the top 10% of UK schools this academic year. CG said that this summer's exam results once again exceeded the national average in every measure. It is expected that our progress score will significantly improve and this will be shared with governors once received. ● DD said that the government has advised that schools will not be held to account for the affect of Covid on progress scores and is encouraging schools to decide themselves how to progress. SA asked what is SJS's stance regarding this? CG replied that it is about giving students the information they need in Y11 to be able to make a decision regarding Sixth Form. ● SA asked if there is a way that SJS can inform prospective parents regarding the challenges of our Sixth Form, eg no guarantee of being able to study A Levels? DD confirmed that there is only a narrow choice for Sixth Form students in BFC and said that careers advice needs to address this, parents need to be aware. DD said that we are failing these students, especially as we do not currently have an on island Careers Advisor. CG agreed that we are not getting it right with Y10 and Y11 at the moment. ● NR said that for SJS to be able to offer more Sixth Form courses there will need to be more teachers. Also, it is a problem when a specialist teacher is absent. <p><u>Staff Wellbeing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CG reported that the staff are very positive, doing a good job, and that there is now a real collegiate feel at SJS. <p><u>Student Satisfaction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CG reported that following the results of the recent PASS assessments for all students, that Cheryse Shephard (CS) has been doing some work on students' views. CG advised that differentiation of lessons is not working as well as it could and the issues with our girls' dissatisfaction towards themselves and school remains, despite changes of students. ● EB asked CG what did you do to try to change the attitudes of students? ● KP replied that, as a school, we are trying to be a bit more understanding to try to improve the girls' attendance, eg we now have some sanitary products in the Pastoral Hub for when they need them and are being more sensitive regarding swimming and periods. ● KP added that CA wants to get to the bottom of girls' feedback. CG said that they believe that some of the girls are just not happy being in Cyprus. EB added that it would be worth checking how many of these girls are here long term. CG added that we need to come up with strategies and evaluation to test impact. ● CG advised that, as a school, we have also done a lot to try to address parental views re attendance. 	CG

Ser	Agenda Point	Comments	Actions
3	Headteacher Report Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PF asked CG if he has the support he need? CG said that it would be worth forming a small subcommittee to work on this area. SR advised that 1 PWRR have decided to come to Cyprus due to the schools. DD reported that SJS was ranked highly in this week's Town Hall Meetings. 	CG,PF
4	DSL Safeguarding Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KP reminded governors to please have read KCSIE by the end of Oct 24 and to inform PJD regarding this. KP advised that the definition of safeguarding, early help, abuse and neglect, indicators of abuse and neglect and safeguarding issues have all been updated. 	All
5	DSL Promoting a Positive Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KP advised that early help is a very important support mechanism which has been very successful for SJS. KP said that children are often unaware that they are being abused or neglected and advises staff to report things to be sure. KP said that those students who do not attend school are more at risk of being abused/neglected and stressed and said that school is a safe environment for them. 	
6	Policy Approvals	<p><u>Rewards and Behaviour Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies were provided in advance of the meeting for SGC members to familiarise themselves with content and prepare questions. The Rewards and Behaviour policy was discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KP reinforced how the new behaviour system works and escalation through behaviour pathways. - At stage 3 there is opportunity for the SGC to involve themselves to reinforce expectations and to provide escalation. KP also explained that positive behaviour points are now put on Bromcom, which is linked to the MCAS App, and that this is also linked to the Pedagogy Wheel. KP added that these are linked to rewards and celebration of positive behaviour points. KP said that positive points are also linked to House Points and the House Cup. JC commented that there is a lot of focus on controlling negative behaviour and not so much on rewards. KP said that parents receive an email each week to celebrate their child's positive points. KP added that a Key Stage assembly is also held each term to celebrate student successes. KP said that students with the most points are allowed to have a weekly treat in school. CG added that we also have the Headteacher's Commendation and the end of term Rewards Trip. JC said it would be good to add even more incentives/ rewards to this policy to encourage students further. JC asked KP if Susan Coole (SC) has made a difference since arriving in post? KP confirmed that SC had indeed been a great help, being directly responsible for safeguarding in BFC. <p style="text-align: right;">Unanimous SGC Approval CG/PJD/KP abstained</p>	KP

Ser	Agenda Point	Comments	Actions
6	Policy Approvals	<p><u>Internal Staff Communications Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rationale for the policy was shared by CG and said that it had been introduced to help to clarify and detail the expectations that surround all forms of staff communication, e.g. verbal and email communication, agendas to be published in advance for all staff meetings, a weekly communication email to all staff from the headteacher and communication between a colleague and another who is a parent of a child at SJS. <p style="text-align: right;">Unanimous SGC Approval CG/PJD/KP abstained</p> <p><u>Homework Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rationale for the policy was shared by CG who outlined the need to ensure students are adept at learning independently and are provided with the tools to learn how to learn (metacognition) as evidenced in educational research. <p style="text-align: right;">Unanimous SGC Approval CG/PJD/KP abstained</p> <p><u>Student Uniform and Appearance Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rationale for the policy was shared by CG who stated that the policy had not been revised since 2015 and required updating. In doing so there was a need to raise expectations following concerns from community stakeholders with regards to the appearance of some of our students and their uniform. The policy has been shared and enforced with students and parents. One aspect of the policy has been questioned which links to the wearing of necklaces with religious symbolism. The school has enforced this to date and the parent concern has been understanding, however would Governors like the school to continue to enforce this aspect of policy? CG introduced this revised policy, in particular the rationale for implementing our particular school uniform: overall to create a positive and inclusive school environment that prioritises safety, equality and academic success. CG discussed the expectations for students in Y7-11, stressing that we expect all students to adhere to our agreed school uniform whilst at school and travelling to and from school. CG also advised that following DfE policy, both SJS and KRS are currently in consultation regarding a change to the school uniform. CG said that this would only be a change to the school skirt worn at both schools. CG added that he will canvas parental opinion via a link in this week's Parents newsletter, and said that the SGC are also welcome to contribute to this. CG advised that the Padre has said that there is no need to wear a religious necklace at school. Government policy advises that the decision regarding this matter lies with each respective headteacher. CG asked the governors for their opinion regarding this. 	All

Ser	Agenda Point	Comments	Actions
6	Policy Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EB asked what is the difference between being able to wear religious headwear and being to wear a cross and chain? KP said that if we allow a cross and chain, students would be able to wear a range of necklaces and it would make it difficult for us to police. The difference is that a necklace poses a risk regarding health and safety in school and concern that items may be lost. CG added that there is no DCS policy regarding this and there is variation between the schools on opinion. SA said that he is not against the cross but felt that it should be agreed between SJS and KRS. NR said that it is difficult because once you do it for one you have to do it for everybody. JC said that you will have to police it, whatever you decide. PF asked for the governors to vote regarding this and the decision was no, it is not permitted to wear a religious necklace at SJS. <p style="text-align: right;">8:1 SGC Approval CG/PJD/KP abstained</p>	
7	Subcommittee Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CG asked for these questions to please be emailed to him instead, to give him an opportunity to reply to them in more depth. 	
8	AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NR and CG have received an email from the Y12 boys complaining about the lack of things to do in the BFC community. PF asked for this to please be referred to PD. SA asked if girls can wear flared trousers to school? KP replied that these are not acceptable, that the trousers have to be tailored and not of stretchy material. SR advised that in his role as UWO he cannot share specific student information with our SGC but can share limited information with SJS, eg regarding if any of the students' parents in the RIB are away on deployment. SR said that he is happy to deal with any concerns that we may have. It was decided to discuss the 50 Year Anniversary at the next SGC meeting. PF asked for any recommendations for new governors from Akrotiri please. 	PD
9	Date of next meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 11 December 2024 at 10:00 in the Conference Room. 	

OFFICIAL



OFFICIAL