



## Board Meeting

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019

### Minutes

**Present:**

**Independent Members:**

Lynn Blades  
Pamela Chowdhury  
Del Cooke  
Funmi Esuola  
Delia Goldring  
Peter Green (Chair)  
Lucy Harrison  
Angela Hille  
Matthew Konneh  
Marco Macchitella  
Adrian Marrocco  
James Marshall  
Zubair Shaikh

1.	Governance
2.	Minutes
3.	Matters Arising
4.	Strategic Item – Examination Results
5.	Confidential Item
6.	Safeguarding Report & Policy
7.	Principal's Report
8.	Finance Report
9.	Reports from Committees
10.	Ofsted Guidance
11.	Risk Management Plan
12.	AOB
13.	Dates of Next Meetings

**Parent Member:**

Indira Warwick

**Staff Members:**

Jo Large

**Student Governors:**

Luke Alsford  
Bella Goodman-Spears

**Principal:**

John Rubinstein

**Clerk to the Governors:**

Beth Yap

**In Attendance:**

Ian Hooper  
Lubna Hussain  
Carol Kirkland  
Peter Thompson

Minute	Decision /Action	
1.4	To appoint Funmi Esuola as an Independent Governor and member of the Audit Committee for a term of four years.	D
1.5	To increase the Board number by one to 22 to accommodate an additional governor from the Archer Academy.	D
1.6	To appoint Lucy Harrison (Head of the Archer Academy) as an Independent Governor and member of the Finance & Operations Committee for a term of four years.	D
1.7	To appoint Matthew Konneh as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.	D
3.3.4	Training for governors on the new Ofsted framework to take place at the Annual Strategy & Training Event in January.	A
4.	<i>Confidential action.</i>	A
6.	To approve the College's safeguarding policy for 2019-20.	D
6.	Clerk to circulate the SFCA safeguarding training webinar to all governors.	D
7.	The issues with the girls' toilets to be resolved by the next Board meeting.	A
8.1	To approve the year-end accounts for 2018-19.	D
9.1	To approve the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee, along with the Annual Report of the Audit Committee with one amendment.	D
9.2	To approve the Terms of Reference of the Finance & Operations Committee.	D
9.3	To approve the Terms of Reference of the Quality & Standards Committee.	D
9.4	To approve the Terms of Reference of the Search & Governance Committee.	D
10.	Peter Green to confirm to the North Finchley developers that the Board is not interested in their proposal.	A
10.	To submit an application to the Mayor's Fund for London for a total refurbishment of all toilets in the millennium building at a cost of £52k with 50% submitted by the College.	A

The Chair of Governors welcomed Funmi Esuola, Lucy Harrison and Lubna Hussain to their first Board meeting and introductions were made.

## 1. Governance

### 1.1 Apologies for Absence

Aisha Adesanya, Milton McIntosh, Helen Pettifor and Olivia Stanton

### 1.2 Register of Interest

All governors were asked to complete a register of interest form and return it to the Clerk.

### 1.3 Declaration of Interest

Matthew Konneh declared an interest in item 1.7.  
Angela Hille declared an interest in items 2.2 and 5.

### 1.4 Funmi Esuola

*Funmi Esuola withdrew for this item*

Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed to appoint Funmi Esuola as an Independent Governor and member of the Audit Committee for a term of four years.

### 1.5 Increase to the Size of the Board

The Chair reminded the Board that the College would like to strengthen

Decision

its partnership with the Archer Academy and the Board agreed to increase its number by one to 22 to accommodate an additional governor from the Archer Academy.

Decision

### **1.6 Lucy Harrison**

*Lucy Harrison withdrew for this item*

Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed to appoint Lucy Harrison (Headteacher of the Archer Academy) as an Independent Governor and member of the Finance & Operations Committee for a term of four years.

Decision

### **1.7 Vice Chair of Audit Committee**

*Matthew Konneh withdrew for this item.*

Following the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board agreed to appoint Matthew Konneh as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

Decision

### **1.8 Attendance**

The Board was presented with the attendance figures for the previous academic year. The Clerk explained that the average attendance for the Board was 82%, which is in line with the sector average.

### **1.9 Governor Self-Assessment**

The Chair drew attention to the results of the governor self-assessment questionnaire, explaining that this is conducted annually to allow for continuous improvement. The Board considered the results of the self-assessment paying particular attention to the few points where governors 'disagreed'.

Noting the comment that the Board could do more to take into account the views of staff and students when making key decisions, the Chair referenced plans to introduce a number of informal meetings between governors and staff and students.

The Chair stated that, as a result of governor feedback, it has been agreed that safeguarding (including the Prevent agenda); equality & diversity; and the curriculum will all be covered at the Annual Strategy Training Event in January.

## **2. Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

**2.1** The minutes of the meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair. As part of minute 4 was deemed to be confidential, this would be removed prior to being uploaded to the College website.

**2.2** The minutes of the Extraordinary Board meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair. It was agreed that these minutes would remain confidential.

## **3. Matters Arising 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

- 3.3.4 The Board was informed that training for governors on the new Ofsted framework would also take place at the Annual Strategy & Training Event in January.
6. John Rubinstein reminded the Board that there have been intermittent concerns regarding drug use at the College. John explained that these concerns are largely due to students being a target for drug dealers when smoking cigarettes outside the College. John confirmed that, as a result of a consultation with the police, smoking around the perimeter of the College has now been banned.
8. The Data Protection Officer confirmed that an updated Data Protection Policy would be presented at the next meeting of the Audit Committee for approval.

#### 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019

10. The Chair confirmed that he had responded to Laura Wall's letter, which she had sent on behalf of the NEU members at the College.
11. *Confidential action.*

#### 4. Strategic/Training Item: Examination Results

Ian Hooper presented the Board with an overview of the latest examination results. Ian reminded the Board of the changes in A Levels since 2017; introduced by the Government to make them more ambitious and to give greater confidence in the reliability of the qualifications system. This was the final transition year, when all subjects were linear.

Ian explained that, overall, the College's pass rate fell slightly this year. The Board was reminded that in previous years students typically took 4 AS Levels in year 12 and dropped the weakest subject before the start of year 13. However, now most students take 3 subjects and continue with these throughout the whole 2-year period, which means that students no longer have the option to drop their weakest subject. Ian noted that the number of fails increased from 6 to 26 this year and the majority of those were in maths, for which it was the first year of linear qualifications.

The Board noted that the A Level high rate (A\*-B grades) reduced from 69.9% to 65.7%, which is a key performance indicator for the College. This rate did fall nationally but not by the same amount as seen at Woodhouse. This fall is almost entirely attributable to the fall in the maths grades. In addition to this, there was also a reduction in the number of A\*s (35.6% to 33.6%) and As (10.1% to 8.7%).

Ian explained that the College has been using two measures to analyse the results; the first being ALPS which uses a 'temperature' system, rating a subject from 'hot' (1) to 'cold' (9). Ian explained that overall the College has reduced from a grade 4 to a grade 5 this year. The Board noted that the College has a range of 'hot' subjects such as business, drama and law but also a number of 'cold' subjects including maths, geography and economics.

**In response to a question from governors**, Ian explained that around 360 students take maths (around half of all students), whereas geography and economics only have around 80 students. This is why the weaker performance in maths had such a big impact on the College's overall performance.

**In response to another question from governors,** Ian confirmed that most schools across the country saw a reduction in their maths scores but, again, this reduction was not as pronounced as at Woodhouse.

Ian explained that using the 'Level 3 Value Added' measure for analysis, the College results produced a Value Added score of -0.07. Ian confirmed that this was very disappointing for the College as it had achieved a positive Value Added score last year and the trend seemed to be improving. Ian explained further that without the maths scores, the College would have achieved a positive Value Added result this year. **In response to another question from governors,** Ian confirmed that the Level 3 Value Added score is based on students' expected-versus-actual grades.

Ian explained that a Value Added score of -0.07 is around 100 individual grades short of being 'neutral' or 0.00. Ian outlined the subjects that received lower grades than expected, which then pulled down the average rating. This included 182 maths grades; meaning that 1 out of every 2 students achieved a grade lower than expected. Improving the outcomes in maths, particularly for female students, is an urgent and key focus for the College.

Ian explained that the Quality & Standards Committee had discussed in detail the maths Quality Improvement Plan and will consider its progress at each of its meetings this year. Ian also noted that there were a number of variants this year that contributed to the poor maths scores nationally, such as the exam papers being hard to access for the full range of abilities and a number of questions where students tended to achieve full marks or zero marks.

Ian explained that the maths action plan focuses on teachers' responsibilities for academic progress and encourages staff to have difficult conversations early if students are struggling. It also focuses on improving students' ability to tackle harder questions.

**In response to a question from governors,** John explained that the College did consider whether to change exam boards but has decided to remain with Edexcel for at least one more year as it would cause too much disruption to change at this stage.

Ian drew attention to the differences in Value Added scores for male and female students, highlighting that male students studying STEM subjects have a positive Value Added score of 0.12, compared to females studying STEM with a negative -0.4. However, male students taking non-STEM subjects have a negative Value Added score of -0.17, compared to female students taking non-STEM with a positive 0.07.

Ian went on to explain that narrowing the gap between disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged students is also a challenge for the College, noting that this information has only recently been made available. Ian informed the Board that, as part of this work, the College has focused heavily on transition from year 11 to year 12, with a dedicated week to integrate students into the College, and to build their non-cognitive skills.

Finally, the Board considered data based on ethnicity, noting that 72 Black African and 36 Other White female students did not achieve their expected grades. The Board noted that students who identify as Indian are the poorest performing group, which, on average, achieved half a grade less than expected. **Governors reiterated** the need to encourage students to have high aspirations, and the desire to increase the number of black teachers within the College. **In response to a question from governors**, Ian confirmed that Black African students are often from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**In response to a question from governors**, Ian explained that, as a result of this data, the maths department would be focusing on improving the results of female and disadvantaged students.

**Governors expressed concern** that some subjects, such as music, are small in size. Students would, therefore, have more intensive lessons with their teacher, yet Value Added scores were still disappointing. John agreed that music is an area that needs to improve but reminded governors that small classes in these subjects are the trend nationally and not specific to the College.

**Governors requested** that the College contact recent alumni to understand what additional support would have helped them during their time at the College.

Action

**Governors challenged staff** in noting that the College felt confident in its results predictions in February, and questioned whether the linear maths course was the only reason for the dip in performance. John reminded Governors that, if maths participants had achieved similar results to last year, the College's overall Value Added rating would have remained the same.

**In response to a question from governors**, Ian explained that due to the College's Outstanding Ofsted rating, it could not be inspected at this current moment in time without a justified reason. However, a dip in the results and a negative Value Added score could both be justified triggers for inspections.

Finally, the Vice Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee assured the Board that it had passed on its support to the maths department, but would like to see evidence of the Quality Improvement Plan making an impact following the mock exams in January.

**5. Confidential Item**  
Confidential minute.

**6. Safeguarding Report & Policy**  
Lubna Hussain presented the Safeguarding Report for 2018-19, outlining how the College ensures that all staff, including new starters, complete the necessary safeguarding training. Lubna confirmed that this year the mental health charity, Mind, would be training staff to deal with mental health issues. There are plans to ensure that all staff in the Safeguarding Team complete the Level 3 Safeguarding Training.

Lubna then presented the number of referrals for 2018-19, highlighting how many of these are still 'open'. The Board was then informed of the types of safeguarding incidents, which included bereavements; sexual exploitation; substance abuse; anxiety; and eating disorders. Lubna explained that the College should focus on mental health and building resilience in students, as a way of preventing serious safeguarding issues further down the line.

**In response to a concern raised by governors**, Lubna confirmed that this number of safeguarding incidents is usual in a College and it is positive to have a high number of referrals, as it shows that there are good systems and controls in place. **In response to a second question from governors**, Lubna confirmed that none of the high-risk safeguarding incidents, such as sexual exploitation, took place on site.

Lubna then presented the safeguarding policy, explaining that this has been completely re-written to ensure that it could be used as a working document. The Safeguarding Governor, Delia Goldring, also confirmed that she had reviewed this policy. The Safeguarding Governor explained that the College would be moving over to a safeguarding dashboard, which would make the managing of safeguarding issues easier. The Board approved the safeguarding policy and thanked Lubna and Delia for their work on this.

Decision

It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the SFCA safeguarding training webinar to all governors.

Action

## 7. **Principal's Report**

John Rubinstein presented the Principal's report, highlighting that the College currently has 1480 students, compared to 1472 last year. The Board was also informed of the number of students joining from local schools, noting that, for the second year running, Archer Academy was the College's largest feeder school, sending 60 students.

The Totteridge Academy will be launching its own sixth form next year but will continue its relationship with Woodhouse. Hornsey Girls have discontinued their sixth form and invited Woodhouse to deliver an assembly to students.

The Board was pleased to note that the College had its highest ever figure of students progressing to Oxbridge (22) and is working hard to ensure this success again this year.

**In response to a question from governors**, John confirmed that the medical numbers were not as high as expected but these tend to fluctuate from year to year. John explained that the College could do more to focus on the entrance examination for medicine, the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT), as students are expected to work through this by themselves.

**In response to a question from governors**, Ian Hooper confirmed that students are able to make changes to their programmes in the first half term. This flexibility is highlighted in the prospectus and at the College open days. John also confirmed that students are informed that they can choose any combination of subjects to study at the College. All governors were invited to the College open day on 9 November.

Peter Thompson explained that the Quality Improvement Plan has been written to deliver the key priorities for the College, which include A Level results returning to 2018 levels or better. The Board noted the provisional targets of 70% A\*-B grades, 40% A\*-A grades and an overall ALPS grade of 4.

**In response to a question from governors**, Peter Thompson confirmed that the College has taken the decision to discontinue its accounting A Level and will not recruit a new cohort next year. **In response to a follow up question from governors**, Ian confirmed that Value Added score in accounting was positive, but this relates to only 20 students. Staff are being re-assigned to business/economics so there are no HR ramifications.

The Student Governors raised the issue that there is no division in the quiet room between male and females when praying and it was agreed that students affected by this should speak to Lubna Hussain.

**Governors were also concerned** that the hygiene issue in the girls' toilets was still unresolved and demanded that this issue be resolved by the next Board meeting. Carol Kirkland confirmed that she was currently amending the contract.

Action

## 8. Financial Reports

### 8.1 Year End Accounts 2018-19

John Rubinstein presented the year end accounts for the 2018-19 financial year, reminding governors that these accounts had been scrutinised by the Finance & Operations Committee in detail.

The Board was pleased to note that the operating surplus for the year was £128k, which was £254k better than budget and £124k better than forecast. John explained that this was due to a number of reasons, such as a reduction in staff costs (£64k) and an increase in donations (£16.4k). The Board was also pleased to note that the College met all its financial KPIs in 2018-19.

The Board congratulated all staff for this turnaround and approved the year-end accounts for 2018-19.

Decision.

**Governors expressed disappointment** that the apprenticeship levy continues to be set aside, yet no apprentice had been recruited. However, John explained that Olivia Stanton has looked into using this money for the CPD of current staff.

### 8.2 Management Accounts 2019-20

As the College is only two months into the financial year, a verbal report was received, explaining that there have been a number of long-term sick leaves, meaning that the staff contingency has already been used. The Board was reminded that the forecast for the current academic year was for an operating deficit, but with expectations of a return to operating surpluses from 2020-21 onwards.



## **9. Reports from Committees**

### **9.1 Audit Committee**

The minutes of the Audit Committee of 16th September 2019 were noted. The Terms of Reference were reviewed and approved, along with the Annual Report of the Audit Committee, with one amendment.

Decision

### **9.2 Finance & Operations Committee**

The minutes of the Finance & Operations Committee of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 were noted and the Terms of Reference approved.

Decision

### **9.3 Quality & Standards Committee**

The minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were noted and the Terms of Reference approved.

Decision

### **9.4 Search & Governance Committee**

The minutes of the Search & Governance Committee of the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were noted and the Terms of Reference approved.

Decision

## **10. Ofsted Guidance**

The Board was presented with a sample set of questions that are likely to be asked by Ofsted under the new inspection framework (effective September 2019) and all governors were encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document.

## **11. Risk Management**

The Board noted the risk management plan, paying particular attention to the risks for which it had responsibility. The Board noted that the College now has 1480 students on roll, which is at target.

Under GDPR, the Principal explained that additional security has been added to staff mobile phones, which now require a password to be entered in order to access College emails.

## **12. AOB**

The Chair informed the Board that he was approached by property developers who are planning to regenerate the North Finchley High Street.

Peter explained that the developers are interested in the development potential of the Woodhouse College campus. The proposal is for them to redevelop the College site into a residential area and for Woodhouse to move into a new building on the High Street. The College would then share in the profitability of this development, in the form of a £10 million endowment fund.

The Board was informed that the developers are offering 100,000 square feet of internal space, which matches the current College accommodation, but with no external spaces, other than an artificial-grass sports pitch on the roof of the new building. However, Peter explained that the developers have now said that they could leave some green open space on the current Woodhouse site if their plans were to go ahead.

*Confidential minute.*

The Board agreed not to progress these discussions any further and requested that the Chair confirm this to the developers.

Action

Carol Kirkland then presented a premises investment proposal for a total refurbishment of all toilets in the Millennium Building, for submission to the Mayor's Fund for London. This work would be at a cost of £52k, with 50% provided by the College. It was agreed to submit this application to the Mayor's Fund for London.

Decision

**11. Dates of Next Meetings**

9 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	BOARD
20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	Annual Strategy & Training Event
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	BOARD
6 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	BOARD

The meeting concluded at 8:40pm