



External Safeguarding Audit

Safeguarding First Ltd. conducted an external audit of all our safeguarding policies and procedures in January 2018. Our link Safeguarding governors are Joanne Thorns and Richard Royal.

The audit consisted of site walks, an examination of the Single Central Record, and discussions with senior staff, support staff (including catering staff), and Joanne Thorns (Safeguarding Governor).

The overall audit was very positive stating that:

- Student behaviour was excellent
- Students manage themselves well around site and in lessons
- No serious safeguarding or behaviour concerns were observed
- Policies and procedures were in place
- Staff and students, when questioned, felt safe and understood who they would refer concerns to (one Year 7 student noted that, whilst he knew which staff to report any issues of prejudice related behaviour or bullying to, he was confident that he could tell any member of staff and it would be dealt with)
- Some students, when questioned, welcomed not being allowed their mobile phones.

There were a number of recommendations for further improvements to our safeguarding policies and procedures. The main area identified for development was **E-Safety**.

Suggestions for future work from the audit include:-

- Screensavers to have a culture of vigilance message on them.
- Students and staff when logging in should have to click to affirm their understanding that they will be logging onto the internet and they understand what this entails.
- E-Safety modules should be built into PSHCE and STEP time for all year groups.
- The school should provide more information and support for students and their parents about E-Safety in addition to more training for staff.

Local Governing Board meetings

The local governing board meets twice per term. At each meeting governors report back on the training they have attended and any subsequent issues are referred on to sub-committees. Link governors also report on their meetings with staff in school. The chairs give a summary of the work of their governor sub-committees. This approach means that all governors have an active involvement in the work of the LGB. Each governor has a specific role.

Every meeting also has a training element or a discussion dealing with a current issue in school. The issue for discussion at the November 2017 meeting was the **Curriculum**. The governor linked to Curriculum issues is Professor Martin. The following issues were raised:-

- What are the principles and rationale behind our curriculum?
- Is the focus on the EBacc subjects leading to a narrowing of the curriculum?
- How do we prepare pupils for the new GCSE specifications which are more challenging and more content driven?
- Should KS3 be two or three years?
- How do we ensure pupils enjoy their curriculum?
- Support for both the arts and technical subjects was re-affirmed.

After a wide ranging discussion Governors agreed that KS3 should become a two-year key stage. This will give three years for pupils to cover all the GCSE material in KS4. This should raise standards and improve results. Governors emphasised that effective careers advice and guidance was important in supporting year 8 pupils as they made their option choices.

Senior Leadership Appointments

Governors were involved in the following appointments towards the end of last term:-

Director of Safeguarding - The successful applicant was Louise Brookes. She brings a wealth of experience to the post from her work in the probation service. Louise is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and has a wide remit which covers all issues concerning safeguarding.

Associate Assistant Headteacher – the successful applicant was Helen Machin. Her senior leadership responsibilities include curriculum development and quality assurance.

Congratulations to both candidates who took up their posts on January 1st 2018.

