

**Meeting of:** Central Hub Brighton Full Management Committee

**Date/Time:** Monday 3rd March 2025, 16:30-18:00

**Location:** Teams

**Distribution:** Full Management Committee, Senior Leadership Team and website once approved.

**Quorum:** At least half the number of current members is required to be present for decisions to be binding. The meeting was quorate throughout.

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**Present:**

**Members (voting):**

- Carla Butler (Co-Chair)
- Rachel Carter (Co-Chair)
- Tim Self (Headteacher)
- Simon Boden (Chair of Curriculum, Standards, and Welfare Sub-Committee)
- Luke Lording (Chair of Finance, Premises and Personnel Sub-Committee)
- Luke Sherry (Staff Representative)
- Lorraine Myles (Community Member)
- Cassie Hoffman-Kazlauskas (Parent/Carer Member)
- Diana Boyd (Parent/Carer Member)
- Amanda Meier (Community Member)

**Other:**

- Rachel Holmes (Head of School, The Connected Hub)
- Mark Sheehan (Senior Teacher, Middle School)
- Penny Langridge (SENDCo)
- Hannah Reed (prospective Community member)
- Sammie Lea (Clerk)

**Apologies:**

- Jo Black (Staff Representative)
  - Lydia Majic (Community Member)
  - Craig Nicholson (Head of Primary)
  - Rosie Reekie (Head of Secondary)
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## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- Meeting chaired by Carla Butler.
- Introductions carried out for new attendees.
- Hannah Reed, prospective MC member, introduced.

## **2. Apologies for Absence**

- Apologies received from Jo Black, Rosie Reekie and Craig Nicholson.
- Absence noted from Lydia Majic.

## **3. History Project Video**

- Video deferred to next face-to-face meeting.

## **4. Declarations of Interest**

- No declarations of interest were made.

## **5. Any Other Business (AOB)**

- No additional business raised.

## **6. Committee Membership**

- Hannah Reed voted in unanimously as a Community committee member.
- She will take the lead role for Looked After Children and join the Curriculum, Standards and Welfare Sub-Committee.

## **7. Approval of Previous Minutes and Matters Arising**

- FMC Minutes of 11.11.2024 approved as true record.
- Tim confirmed action points relevant to him are addressed in his report.

### **Matters arising updates:**

- Staff exit interviews not yet conducted - one early retirement noted without time for committee involvement.
- Parent-carer feedback is ongoing as part of the School Development Plan.
- Ongoing taxi bay issue at Connaught Road discussed, referred to local authority.
- Training reminders issued. All relevant training completed can be shared, including external/LA-based training.

## **8. Site Updates – Primary Provision**

- Craig's report discussed in his absence.
- TS explained increase in Health and Safety Incident referrals to the LA and the strategy to manage complex cases.
- Discussions ongoing with LA about tuition and placement balance.
- Simon and Lorraine commended data-led and site-based practices.

## **9. Attendance and Student Movement**

- MS reported early steps in Year 8 expansion.
- RC raised concern over one case of long-term non-attendance.
- TS detailed complex safeguarding situation and steps taken, including recommended prosecution.

## **10. Secondary Site Update**

- TS highlighted double Year 10 cohort impact.
- Positive movement of long-term students into other settings.
- Shift away from destination model for KS3.
- Strategic conversations with LA on consolidating Year 11 provision.
- RC, LM, and AM raised concerns about racial bias, fairness, and LA data collection.

## **11. Connected Hub Update (RH)**

- Mock exams held in spare space at Connaught Road, allowing tailored access arrangements.
- Behaviour and attendance strong; early results encouraging.
- Curriculum delivery to continue full-term, without transition to revision timetable.
- Positive trends in student attendance and off-site package engagement.
- Noted dip in mid-range attendance students due to chronic mental health challenges.
- Positive social media feedback from parents.
- CIAG development noted; employers and governor support welcomed.
- Challenges with post-application motivation discussed, low GCSE requirements.
- RH praised APST post-16 worker's outreach, especially for off-site students.
- AM confirmed no DfE update yet on continued funding for APST team.
- Enterprise Advisor Network links praised. RC to visit again.

## **12. Finance, Premises and Personnel (FPP) Committee Update**

- LL shared updates on audit process, monthly outturn review, and pre-meeting finance discussions.
- Audit report awaited but no major concerns identified.
- Forecast deficit reducing to £18,750–£38,500 depending on student funding.
- Committee reviewing site-based costs; Connaught Road noted for current overspend.
- Site-based budget document to be circulated.

- Health & safety repairs discussed (e.g. fire doors, damage).
- Lockdown procedure improvements in progress.
- HS2 reporting increased due to encouragement in reporting; 27 incidents this term.
- Committee acknowledged seriousness of staff injuries and praised transparency.
- TS explained importance of HS2 data in securing LA support.

### **13. Curriculum, Standards and Welfare (CSW) Committee Feedback**

- SB updated on CSW meeting:
  - Craig's presentation on primary performance and SEMH curriculum.
  - Safeguarding policy approved.
  - High need indicators: 76% pupil premium, 15 new staff inducted.
  - Attendance and curriculum strategies discussed.
  - Parking issues addressed with new allocation system (Jo Black).
  - LA to be asked to brief committee on future of primary PRU/special school.
  - Cassie raised school isolation; TS agreed joint staff-governor effort needed for better links with local schools.

### **14. Headteacher's Report (TS)**

- Key update on strategic expansion:
  - From Sept 2025: 48-place long term TIER 3 EHCP places at primary and middle school and 80-place PRU.
  - Primary and middle school (Years 7–8) special provision increasing.
  - Need for strategic planning, funding, and staffing flagged.
  - LA assurances received; TS request for five-year planning.
  - Risk of unsustainable expansion noted.
- Emphasis placed on continuing quality and sustainability of provision.
- Concerns raised about being directed to expand as AP even if resource-constrained.
- Members emphasised need for planned, well-supported growth.
- Hannah Reed (newly appointed committee member) offered insight into the city-wide concern regarding post-16 retention:
  - Local providers including Plumpton, Brighton Met, and Sutton & District are actively exploring how to adapt course offers and transition support to improve retention, particularly for students with SEMH needs and those working at Level 1.
  - There is acknowledgment city-wide of a gap in suitable provision for this cohort and commitment to address it.
- TS reiterated the scale of current need:
  - Pupil Premium now at 79%.
  - 40 students are either CIN, CP or receiving family support.

- 13 students are looked after children (LAC), with many entering care recently due to school breakdown.
  - The virtual school currently funds 3 days/week for Children in Care Coordinator role, which remains vital given complexity and volume.
  - The virtual school has not yet confirmed continued funding for these roles or placements for next year.
  - TS noted a concerning trend:
    - EHCP referrals to the Connected Hub are arriving before standard place referrals.
    - 10 EHCP places at the Connected Hub this year, stretching resources beyond sustainable levels.
    - The Hub is not a special school, and while the team has managed well, there are limits to what can be offered responsibly.
  - Discussion turned to engagement with the LA:
    - TS has responded to the LA commissioning letter, requesting an urgent meeting to clarify expectations and ensure long-term sustainability.
    - The group discussed the importance of developing a clear five-year plan, rather than continuing with ad hoc growth.
    - There is a need to avoid short-term reactive decisions and instead commit to planned expansion or reduction.
  - **Options:**
    - One option remains to refuse further expansion and revert to the original two-year Year 7/8 pilot.
    - However, as an AP provider, there is a risk of being directed to expand regardless due to lack of alternative provision.
    - Members agreed the LA has asked due to confidence in the current team but noted the need to avoid overstretching.
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## **15. Monitoring Visits**

- CB proposed that monitoring visits could be covered in sub-committee meetings going forward due to time constraints.
- Lydia's recent Health and Safety visit was praised as thorough and insightful.
- DB asked for input for her upcoming attendance visit at the Connected Hub:
  - Suggestions included exploring referral trends (e.g. students referred with <50% attendance) and what is being done to improve attendance once placed.
  - Focus on practices that support the hardest-to-reach students
  - Consider reviewing diversity-related attendance patterns, particularly for Black and Global Majority students and those with care experience.

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## **16. Training**

- Reminder shared by clerk to share details of all relevant training, including LA or workplace-delivered training.
- The Governor Support Conference is upcoming (Saturday event). No current attendees confirmed. Importance of a representative highlighted.
- Members asked to check diaries and consider attending to represent the committee.

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## **17. Any Other Business**

- One confidential item was raised (to be passed directly to the Chair).
- No new action items were raised during the meeting.
- Monitoring visits to be added to sub-committee agendas.
- Hannah to be invited to join her relevant sub-committee.

**Meeting Closed.**

**Chair thanked all members for their time and commitment.**