



# The Castle School

A SPECIALIST COLLEGE FOR COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION

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## Minutes of a full governors' meeting, Tuesday 17 June 2014 at The Castle School (main site)

- Present:** Brian Connolly (Chair), Jon Hewitt (Headteacher), Ursula Codrington (Community governor), Ola Cassels-White (Local authority governor), Georgie Woods (Community governor), Roses Parfitt (Staff governor), Wendy Batchelor (Community governor), Malcolm Pullinger (Parent governor), David Greenway (Parent governor), Shannon Booth (Staff governor), Kate Dress (Parent governor), and Vicki Murphy (Clerk)
- In attendance:** Atul Attra (School Business Manager) and Rhona O'Neill (Deputy Headteacher)
- Apologies:** Tracy Warwick (parent governor)

### Decision & Action Table

ITEM	ACTION	FOLLOW UP
4.	Governor vacancy – approaches to Vodafone / previous governor / Waitrose	WB / BC / JH
4.	Governor articles – deadlines for newsletters to be circulated	VM / JH
5.	Dates for assessment review training	SB
6.	School factsheet development	ALL
8.	Governors to new parent coffee mornings	ALL
10.	BC to sign central register	BC / AA
11.	Policy updates	VM
12.	Friends funding for playground project	AA
12.	Complaint received / panel (if required)	BC / WB / OCW / GW

Prior to the meeting, AA led governors on a brief site walk to review current developments on site, including build of new classrooms on site, planned to open in the autumn term.

The main meeting started at 5.10pm. BC welcomed all to the meeting.

1. **Apologies**  
Apologies were received from Tracy Warwick.
2. **Any other business (AOB) items**
  - Friends of Castle School funding request (JH)
  - School transformation plan (JH)
  - Complaint (BC)
  - Training requests (ALL)
  - Re-constitution of governing body (VM)
  - Meeting dates 2014/5 (VM)
3. **Declarations of interest**  
No other interests were declared.

4. **Minutes and matters arising from 4/3/14**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed, and governors discussed the following updates:

**- Parent governor vacancy / local authority governor**

VM noted that since the last full governors meeting, a new parent governor, MP, was appointed and has now attended committee meetings. BC noted that there was still a vacancy for a local authority governor, but despite numerous efforts, have not managed to fill this position yet. Governors discussed other ways to approach new and potential governors. **ACTION: WB to speak to Vodafone, BC to make contact with previous governor Sue Palmer. Possible contact with Waitrose. An update will be given at the next meeting.**

**- Governor website profiles**

JH noted that all governor profiles were now on the website. **ACTION: KD to send JH a short profile for inclusion.**

**- Reminders for governor articles**

JH noted that there would continue to be opportunities for governors to write short articles in the school newsletter. These should be about 150 words. **ACTION: VM to get list of deadlines from JH and circulate these to governors ahead of time. MP to be included on list of those to write articles.**

**- Development of forest walk area**

An update on this would be covered under Item 6 – Headteacher’s Report.

**- Safeguarding / safer recruitment training**

To be covered under Item 11.

**- Link governors**

All agreed that the original discussion relating to possible links with Manor School in Slough, were not worth pursuing at this stage. All felt that there were other opportunities to build links with schools which were closer. No follow up needed for this item.

**Minutes and matters arising from 13/5/14**

Governors also discussed the minutes from the additional full governors meeting which covered the approval of the school budget for 2014/15. These were agreed and signed. There were no matters arising for governors.

5. **Committee Reports**

*Curriculum*

GW gave an update on this committee held in May and noted success of sharing Pupil Progress data from SB this year. The next update will take place in September. GW noted that the policy approval process had also been smooth for the committee. All agreed that there might be scope to build in an additional session for governors on assessment reviews, and staff felt it might be good to run this as a separate twilight session. **ACTION: SB / staff to consider dates / times suitable for this, and circulate via governors.**

*Staffing*

GW also updated on the staffing committee and noted that actions and policy updates were now underway.

*Finance*

WB gave an update on finance committee held in May. WB noted that governors had discussed in details about items discussed / preparation for special budget approval meeting. WB noted that the committee had also reviewed policies ahead of the full governors meeting to ensure cycle of review is ongoing within the school.

*Premises*

WB also updated on this committee from May and noted that governors had received an update on current and planned projects from AA. WB also noted that new governor MP was welcomed to the Finance and Premises committees.

## 6. **Headteacher Report**

Prior to the meeting, governors had taken time to read the Headteacher's report and JH invited questions.

The report included an update on how the Pupil Premium Grant was spent in school during 2013-14. The total funds received for 2013-14 was £45,000 (by year end) and the report detailed specific areas of spend and direct benefits to pupils as a result.

JH noted that the statement detailing the Sports Premium is available on the school website.

Governors discussed the need to be able to be informed about the progress of specific groups of pupils e.g. free school meals / looked after children in the event of an inspection. Governors noted that reports should not identify specific children if they are to be reviewed by governors or other agencies.

**ACTION: Development of a school fact sheet for these areas to be discussed at the next meeting.**

Governors had a discussion about performance management, mindful of the reviews that will be taking place in the autumn term. JH noted that the policy was to be reviewed early in the autumn term so that there were not any delays to the review process. The performance management panel will also meet in early autumn term.

All noted that The Key - <http://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com/> contained a range of useful information, and governors are encouraged to visit it to review and read relevant articles.

JH updated governors about the development of the Forest Area, and noted that although initial plans to use external contractors to complete the project had been halted because of cost, the school would be able to complete some of the work themselves. JH also noted that the school had some support from the St James Place organisation, and this might enable some other contributions to be made.

RON gave an update the Early Years Foundation Stage, and noted that a moderation had just taken place and had gone well.

DG asked for update on recruitment of teacher, and JH noted an appointment had been made with a planned start date of September.

All thanked JH for his report.

*\*KD left the meeting at this point.*

## 7. **Finance Report**

AA gave governors a brief update at this stage, which is the end of period 2. AA noted that there was a carry forward figure of £148k, and an expected funding of £3.2 million. AA noted that the premises spend is as expected at this stage as a number of projects are not yet paid for or underway.

**ACTION: Further update in November.**

AA noted that an update on the Private Fund would be given as part of the Finance Committee in September. AA noted that there will also be an audit in October. AA confirmed that new processes were in place for school spend and are working well. AA updated that the Finance officer is still an interim post / but hopes to recruit full time in autumn. Finally, AA noted one small change made to budget – slight adjustment to show additional budget relating

to free school meals which means increase from September.

All thanked AA for his report.

**8. Governor visits, training and development**

OCW updated governors on training and development across the year, and noted it had been very successful, with 42 recorded visits and many more occasions with governors visiting the school to take part in activities and events. OCW suggested that a system is put in place to follow up suggestions and actions from visits moving ahead to next academic year.

**ACTION: To discuss at November meeting.**

SB suggested that positive comments for staff should be shared as part of the review process. Also invited governors to attend the new parents coffee morning. **ACTION: Date reminder for governors – new parent coffee morning being held as a drop in, on 11 July from 930-1200.**

Governors asked how the newsletters are shared within the school, and JH noted that these are often done on a class basis, with general updates shared via the school website and blog. **ACTION: Governors encouraged to visit.**

Governors discussed the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education> and noted this was useful for governors to review as part of their ongoing training and development.

Finally OCW updated that link governors within specific areas of the school was working well, and MP agreed to work on key stage 2. OCW will work on governor development pack for September.

All thanked OCW for her report.

**9. Progress and Achievement**

SB updated governors that a full review for 2013-14 will take place in autumn term, with data shared first with the curriculum committee, and then at full governors meeting in November.

SB gave indications to governors that progress was continuing to improve and to be used in all areas of the school to continuously review and develop learning. SB also noted that new developments on the BSquared programme meant that data could now be more easily shared and reviewed across the school. **ACTION: Agenda items for committee and full governor meeting in autumn term.**

**10. Safeguarding report and signing of central register**

RON updated governors on safeguarding practice and reporting systems in place. RON noted these continued to work well and were effective in helping staff to recognise and put into place necessary interventions. RON also noted that all Level 1 training was up to date, and staff requiring updates to their training would do so as part of INSET programme for September. RON / BC noted that they had taken a site walk to review any safeguarding issues, and the new security entrance points would further assist with this. RON also updated that the pastoral team continued to work well across the school. **ACTION: BC to sign the central register by end of June. AA to arrange.**

RON noted that local systems were also working well and had highlighted a bus company that should not be used by the school. RON updated governors that Safeguarding information is updated each week and available to view in school at any time for governors wishing to do so.

## 11. Policies

Governors reviewed policies in two groups. The first group had been reviewed at May committee meetings, and governors were in agreement that these could be passed and signed. The following policies were agreed and will be updated in school files and online if applicable.

### **Policies agreed by committees**

- Allegations of Abuse
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting
- Attendance
- Curriculum
- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Freedom of information
- Induction
- Internet access / internet permission
- Learning and Teaching
- Work Related Stress

Governors also discussed the following policies, which have had some formatting changes made ahead of full review by committee next academic year. Governors were also in agreement that these changes were accepted and they agreed these policies. These will also be updated in school files and online if applicable.

### **Policies with format changes /RRS statement added**

- Admissions
- Behaviour & Exclusions
- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection
- Disability Equality Scheme
- SEN and Disability
- Sex and Relationships Education

**ACTION:** VM to arrange signature of all and update school files by end of term.

\*SB left the meeting at this point.

## 12. AOB

Governors discussed the following items:

### *Friends of Castle School funding application*

JH circulated a draft proposal to make improvements to the outside play area for Appleby and Beaumaris classes. The Friends of the School have costed improvements to this area, and note it will cost around £24k to complete. The Friends would like to request £12k from the Private Fund, with the rest of the project to be match funded. Governors had a discussion around the project and whether they were in agreement to part fund the project. The governors agreed to match funding raised by the Friends of the Castle for the Red Zone playground project bearing 50% of the cost up to a maximum of £12,000. This is subject to three independent quotes being obtained and evaluated. **ACTION: AA to progress obtaining quotes and moving project forward. Update in autumn term.**

### *School Transformation Plan*

Alongside the Headteacher report this term, JH had also circulated the School Transformation Plan prior to the meeting, and invited questions from governors. All agreed that the plan reads well and shows continued focus on reading, and big push on maths from September onwards. Governors happy with this update and thanked JH for his work to date on this plan.

### *Complaint*

BC updated governors that a complaint had been received by the school, and was now at stage 2. BC noted that there may be a need to form a complaints panel, and draft date/time of 24 June at 10am was agreed. A panel of governors will be formed as required. **Action: AA to supply notepaper to BC for response and update at the next meeting.**

*School Training Requests*

This item is minuted as a Part 2 item. JH and RON were asked to leave the meeting while this item was discussed.

\*WB left the meeting after this item. JH and RON rejoined the meeting at this point.

*Re-constitution of governing body*

DG / VM updated governors that new guidance had been issued to advise governing bodies that those with governing instruments dated before 1 September 2012, would have to reconstitute before end of August 2015. All agreed this would need to be considered as part of next year's programme, and considered that Spring may be the best time to review the instrument of government and agree what, if any, changes should be made. Governors noted that this might form part of Strategy Day activities. **ACTION: To add to Spring term agenda.**

*Meeting dates 2014/5*

Meeting dates for 2014-15 have been drafted and will be circulated with these minutes for information.