



# The Castle School

A SPECIALIST COLLEGE FOR COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION

Love Lane, Newbury, RG14 2JG

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## Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Board (FGB) held on Thursday 15 November 2018 in the Jane Evans room, main site.

- Present:** Wendy Batchelor (Chair), Alison Eade (parent governor), Jon Hewitt (Headteacher), Tracy Warwick (parent governor), Ursula Codrington (co-opted governor), Marie Verney (new parent governor), Roses Parfitt (staff governor), Katherine Wilkes (co-opted governor), Carol Turner (co-opted governor), Joan Sargent (parent governor), Marcos Butterwick (co-opted governor), Charlie Kowalski (new co-opted governor) and Vicki Murphy (clerk to governors)
- In attendance:** Caroline Whitlock (Deputy Headteacher) and Atul Attra (School Business Manager)
- Apologies:** None

At the start of the meeting, WB led introductions for the benefit of new governors CK and MV, and welcomed them to the board. Both were formally appointed, CK will join as a co-opted governor to sit on Finance & Premises committee in the first instance, with MV joining as parent governor to sit on Curriculum & Staffing committees. **ACTION: VM to send welcome packs to both as part of induction. It was also suggested that a new governor 'buddy' be appointed for both, so this to be progressed and VM to update both by email.**

### 1. Apologies

All governors were present for this meeting.

### 2. Any other business (AOB) items for the agenda

The following AOB items were noted for discussion at the end of the meeting.

- Governor email
- Use of post 16 for private hire
- Governor vacancy
- Post 19 provision
- New governor guidance
- Use of acronyms

### 3. Declarations of interest for this meeting (WB)

*Music scholarship*

JS declared an interest in this item as her child is taking part in the programme for 2018-9. WB noted that this would preclude her from any voting on this item if required.

### 4. Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising (WB)

The minutes of the last full board meeting, 21 June 2018, were agreed and copy signed by the Chair. The following matters arising were discussed:

- *Music scholarship programme*  
JH noted that the selection process for this year is now complete and four scholarships have been awarded for singing, piano, guitar and French horn. AE and CT took part on

behalf of the governing board and noted they had greatly enjoyed taking part. JH noted that the school plans to offer a similar programme for next year, with further information to be available on the scheme by summer 2019. Cirrus Logic continue to support this programme, and it was noted that although she is employed by them, this did not present a conflict for CT – as the scheme was in place prior to her appointment as a governor.

**ACTION: Agenda for summer term FGB.**

- *School transport changes*  
WB asked if there were any updates on this item, as she had not received a response to the letter she had sent to West Berkshire Council (WBC). JH and CW reported that they continued to have ongoing dialogue with the transport providers and escorts to ensure that the new routes and timetables were causing minimal stress and disruption to children. It was noted that most children affected by transport changes were managing well, and where additional support was needed to manage the change – this was being put in place with both families and schools helping them to resettle.
- *Evisense*  
JH updated that the trial of Evisense had ended and the school was not progressing to use this package. Tapestry, remains in place for parents and carers to be able to access updates on their child's learning.
- *Skills audit*  
WB noted that she will continue to audit the skills of the governing board to ensure that there is a broad and balanced range of experience for the school. It was noted that it may be useful for some additional governors to take part in exclusions training, if offered by WBC or look at an in-house session at school. **ACTION: VM to share guidance on exclusions from Department for Education (DFE) site – included below for information.**

#### **EXCLUSIONS GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNORS**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/641418/20170831\\_Exclusion\\_Stat\\_guidance\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf)

- *Use of Victoria Park Nursery*  
Governors discussed the ongoing use of Victoria Park Nursery for its nursery aged children, noting that it was not being used this school year. JH noted that discussions were ongoing and a full update on future use would be given in the summer term. **ACITON: VM to add to agenda for summer term FGB.**
- *Link governor list*  
WB noted that the list would be updated by the end of term to reflect the new governors now on board, and allocating curriculum links to non-staff governors.
- *Governor email*  
See AOB, item 12.
- *Values & vision statement*  
WB noted that this item was now complete, and governor input from the last strategy day in March had provided some useful feedback for this piece of work.

## **5. Committee reports**

### *a. Curriculum*

UC gave an update on this term's meetings. The committee had discussed the changes to online accident reporting, which now used the WBC system (CREST) in place of paper-based FRIARS. CW noted that this was working well. UC also noted that policy reviews had taken place with Sex & Relationships Education (SRE) returning for review in January. UC noted that they had received an update on destinations of school leavers, noting that the majority had progressed to further study or employment. JH added that the one student noted as not in education or employment (NEET) in October was now involved in a supported employment project.

*b. Staffing*

It was noted that the school was not continuing to pay for Investors in People (IIP) accreditation, but would instead focus on a wellbeing programme for all staff, which included access to a dedicated counselling programme via healthcare provider, BUPA. The committee also received staffing updates via the Headteacher's report, noting that the Head of Music had left at the end of term.

*c. Pay panel*

UC noted that the panel continued to meet to review the Headteacher's performance, and other matters related to staff pay. The panel meets termly and comprises of three non-staff governors, plus the Headteacher.

*d. Premises*

AE chaired this committee in October noting that premises matters continued to be well managed. The new classrooms had been handed over at the start of term, and there were a few minor snagging issues that would be addressed by end of this term. AE also noted that AA had updated on the cleaning contract (which was going to a new supplier, following a mini tender. Existing staffed would be transferred over under TUPE terms. Cleaning costs would rise to £45k per year, but all agreed that service had been running at a loss, and a sensible increase had been included in the budget. AE also noted that the school had been asked by the existing catering contractor to provide a carried meal for another school site. It was noted that this arrangement was between the contractor (ISS) and the school (The IIsleys) and would not impact on school meal service at The Castle. Finally AE noted that she had recently completed a health & safety walk with MB and AA – and noted only a few minor matters to be address.

The health & safety policy has recently been reviewed and would come back to the committee in January for review. A date for the H&S audit is expected to be confirmed later this month, and will likely take place in early 2019.

*e. Finance (AE)*

AE confirmed that the year-end accounts had now been signed after independent verification. AE also confirmed that the fundraiser had started in role and was starting to apply for grants and funds that would provide additional income for the school. AE noted that the virement request for monies from capital to main school budget had been agreed by this committee to cover required works for IT upgrading and security improvements at the post 16 site. A letter has been sent to WBC and awaiting a response. AE noted that they had received a full update on funds, including pupil premium and primary sports grant. AE also noted that governors had requested that the bank statement be updated as still contained the former bursar's name. Finally MB noted that he had now completed a reconciliation exercise with the school's finance officer and found this useful.

## **6. Headteacher's report (JH)**

JH had circulated this in advance of the meeting and invited questions. He noted to new governors that this is updated each term to provide a full update on the school, numbers, outcomes, progress, staffing, leadership & management plus training.

KW referred to p.6 and asked if the pupils who receive PPG payments are continuing to make significant progress. JH noted that although these pupils receive specific support – they are not singled out within the school, as it was noted that all pupils are encouraged to reach their own potential. JH noted that the impact of pastoral care may be seen as equally significant as direct interventions, and noting progress made across the board was measured, as well as direct progress within English and Maths.

JH noted that now Ofsted would consider progress across the board, as well as English and Maths – the school was considering the most appropriate ways to track and measure this data, and will share findings with governors in due course.

JH gave an update that Jan (Catering lead at Post 16) had now left the school for personal reasons and the leadership team were considered how this role would be filled. It was noted that Jan had made such impact with the Castle Catering project, it would be hard to replicate this, but the school was considering how a similar training experience could be put in place for students at Post 16. **ACTION: CK and JH to discuss and give an update at the next FGB. It was also noted that dates / opening times for the current Post 16 Café and Post 16 café at Greenham Tower to be shared with governors.**

JH also noted that a new music teacher had now been appointed. Charles would be joining in the near future as music lead at main site.

#### **7. Progress & achievement update (JH)**

An update on progress was shared with governors in the Headteacher's written report.

#### **8. Policies for ratification**

CACHE policies

**ACTION: WB noted these would be brought back to FGB in spring for review.**

The following policies have been agreed by committees this term.

Child Protection

Digital Safety

Pay policy

Private fund

**ACTION: These policies were all ratified by governors and copies signed at the meeting.**

*Recommended for removal*

Data Protection

Social networking guidance

**ACTION: These policies were agreed as superfluous and can be removed from review calendar.**

#### **9. Safeguarding update and signing of central register**

CW noted she had met with UC and WB today for a safeguarding and looked after children (LAC) update. CW noted that the school continues to use the cloud-based system MyConcern to record concerns and this works well. CW noted that school will focus on online safety in the coming term, sharing updates with parents and governors in due course. CW also noted that an intimate care policy will be developed over the coming months for review by governors in due course.

Finally CW noted that perceptions of safety surveys with parents and pupils have been done, and staff will also be surveyed in the coming term.

AA noted that WB had signed the central register on 4/10/18 – but noted that this should be done at FGB in the future. **ACTION: AA to arrange for copy of central register to be available for signature at next FGB on 7 March 2019.**

CW confirmed that governors should all complete the face to face training in school OR online training for Safeguarding Level 1. This needs to be refreshed every three years. **ACTION: VM to provide dates to new governors CK and MV.**

#### **10. Governor visits, training and development**

VM noted that she had received a number of forms from governors this term, and these were on file. New governors have also taken part in induction and PREVENT training.

WB confirmed for the benefit of new governors, that all governors were encouraged to complete 'visit' forms each time they visit school or take part in school related business offsite. This may include site walks or visits to staff members, audit meetings, training, visiting student events – but governor meetings were excluded from this. **ACTION: VM to circulate visit form with these minutes, and governors to send any completed form to VM for review and file.**

Governor training available through West Berkshire Council is as follows:

#### [ANALYSE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE & INSPECTION DATA SUMMARY REPORT TRAINING](#)

Can you interpret your school's ASP & IDSR?

Wed, 21 Nov 2018 18:30 - 20:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

#### [GOVERNANCE TODAY 2](#)

To build an awareness of the expected behaviours and the role and responsibility of a school governor.

Wed, 28 Nov 2018 18:30 - 20:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

#### [Universal Safeguarding](#)

This course provides basic information on safeguarding.

Wed, 16 Jan 2019 09:30 - 13:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

#### [ROLE OF THE FINANCE GOVERNOR](#)

Deciphering financial frameworks and accountability.

Tue, 22 Jan 2019 18:30 - 20:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

#### [LEADERSHIP FORUM](#)

Providing key themes and information which relate to the core functions of the governing board, namely, setting the vision, the ethos and the strategic direction of the school.

Thu, 24 Jan 2019 09:30 - 11:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

#### [LEADERSHIP FORUM](#)

Providing key themes and information which relate to the core functions of the governing board, namely, setting the vision, the ethos and the strategic direction of the school.

Tue, 29 Jan 2019 18:30 - 20:30

Holiday Inn, Padworth, Bath Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 5HT

### [SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR NETWORK](#)

Ensuring governors carry out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Tue, 05 Feb 2019 18:00 - 19:30

HOLIDAY INN, BATH ROAD, PADWORTH, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG7 5HT

### [Safer Recruitment](#)

For those involved in recruiting employees who will work with children either in a school or non-school setting.

Thu, 07 Feb 2019 09:30 - 16:00

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

### [GOVERNANCE TODAY 1 - induction](#)

To build an awareness of the expected behaviours and the role and responsibility of a school governor.

Thu, 28 Feb 2019 18:30 - 20:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

### [GOVERNANCE TODAY 2 - induction](#)

To build an awareness of the expected behaviours and the role and responsibility of a school governor.

Thu, 14 Mar 2019 18:30 - 20:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

### [Universal Safeguarding](#)

This course provides basic information on safeguarding.

Fri, 17 May 2019 09:30 - 13:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

### [LEADERSHIP FORUM](#)

Providing key themes and information which relate to the core functions of the governing board, namely, setting the vision, the ethos and the strategic direction of the school.

Thu, 06 Jun 2019 09:30 - 11:30

HOLIDAY INN, BATH ROAD, PADWORTH, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG7 5HT

### [LEADERSHIP FORUM](#)

Providing key themes and information which relate to the core functions of the governing board, namely, setting the vision, the ethos and the strategic direction of the school.

Tue, 11 Jun 2019 18:30 - 20:30

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

### [Safer Recruitment](#)

For those involved in recruiting employees who will work with children either in a school or non-school setting.

Fri, 14 Jun 2019 09:30 - 16:00

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

### [GOVERNANCE TODAY 1 & 2 - induction](#)

To build an awareness of the expected behaviours and the role and responsibility of a school governor.

Thu, 27 Jun 2019 09:30 - 15:00

Shaw House (Newbury, RG14 2DR)

**ACTION: If any governor is interested in attending these sessions, please contact VM in the first instance.**

## **11. Declaration and business interest forms**

VM noted that these forms were completed annually for each governor, to record main contact details – noting any changes since the last completion. The business interest form should record any interest with direct relevance to the school e.g. governorship at another school, close family member who may be employed or associated with the school, trusteeship of related charity, involvement with local authority or partner, involvement with any contractor who may currently or in the future be carrying out works with the school. **ACTION: VM to send these forms for completion to all governors. Any queries to VM in the first instance.**

## 12. AOB items

### *Governor email*

Non-staff governors discussed the issues with having to access dedicated school emails to receive governor information and updates, as it was leading to delays in communication. Governors asked if a secure fob or app could be considered? **ACTION: MB and AA to discuss and bring an update to the next FGB.**

### *Use of post 16 for private hire*

TW asked if it was possible to use Post 16 building for private hire e.g. parties. AA noted that this was not possible at this time due to insurance and staff were not available to lock / alarm buildings outside of existing working hours.

### *Governor vacancy*

WB noted that there was still a vacancy on the board for a co-opted governor, and particularly useful skills would be IT and finance. **ACTION: All governors to consider any relevant contacts who may be interested – and send details to WB / VM.**

### *Post 19 provision*

JH noted that the school was considering post 19 provision for a small specific group – and was in discussion with a provider who may be able to support this work, and to explore related opportunities **ACTION: JH will report back at next FGB.**

### *Use of acronyms*

MB noted that there were many acronyms used in governor meetings and communications that were unfamiliar to those who were new to the board. **ACTION: VM to provide a decoder for common terms, and all to be mindful of being clear when using these abbreviations.**

## **Date of the next meeting**

The dates of the next meetings are:

Curriculum & Staffing – 17 January 2019 4.30pm onwards

Finance & Premises – moving to 8 February 2019 4.30pm onwards

Full Governing Board – 7 March 2019, 5pm onwards

These will all be held at Castle School Post 16.

Governors Strategy Day (main site) – 19 March 2019 3.00-7.00pm.