



The Castle School

A SPECIALIST COLLEGE FOR COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION

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MINUTES of a meeting of the Full Governing Board held on Thursday 14 November 2019, from 5.00pm, Jane Evans Room, Castle School main site

- Present:** Wendy Batchelor (Chair of Governors), Ursula Codrington (Vice Chair and co-opted governor), Alison Eade (parent governor), Marie Verney (parent governor), Jon Hewitt (Headteacher), Roses Parfitt (staff governor), and Charlie Kowalski (co-opted governor)
- Apologies:** Joan Sargent (parent governor), Marcos Butterwick (co-opted governor) and Tracy Warwick (parent governor)
- In attendance:** Atul Attra (School Business Manager), Caroline Whitlock (Deputy Headteacher), Helen Cabell (prospective co-opted governor)

WB welcomed all to the meeting, and introduced Helen Cabell who is a prospective new co-opted governor to be voted onto the board. All present introduced themselves.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received MB, TW JS and Giles Francis (newly elected parent governor).

2. Appointment of Co-opted Governors

UC chaired the beginning of the meeting and both WB and AE were nominated and voted in as co-opted governors on to the board. Their terms of office will be from 14.11.2019 to the 13.11.2023. It was also noted that Kimber Patterson had resigned due to relocation reasons and as such JT was instructed to remove her details and school email. **ACTION; JT to add WB and AE as co-opted governors and their terms of office and to remove KP details and school email.**

3. Election of Chair

JT noted that the election of the chair for 2019-20 would now take place. WB was proposed to continue as chair and all governors agreed.

4. Declaration, code of conduct and business interest forms

WB asked all governors to complete the declaration, code of conduct and business interest forms and to return them to JT. **ACTION: All governors to fill in the declaration, code of conduct and business interest forms and return them to JT.**

5. Any other business (AOB) items for the agenda

- Staff pay (UC)
- Link Governors (AE)
- Revenue to Capital Transfer (AA)
- Christmas Fair (CW)

6. Declarations of interest for this meeting

No declarations were made.

7. Minutes from the last meetings (20 June 2019) and matters arising

Governors agreed with the minutes from the last FGB meeting and WB signed a copy of the minutes from the meeting. The following matters arising were discussed.

- *New governor 'buddies' and induction*
WB asked MV and CK if it would be useful to have a governor 'buddy' and WB agreed to take this position. WB asked AE to be a governor 'buddy' for HC, who will be allocated onto the Premise and Finance committee. WB asked RP to be the governor 'buddy' for NM. Giles Francis will have an induction with JH. **ACTION: JT to confirm a visit date with GF with JH.**
- *CCTV cameras fundraising*
AA confirmed that CCTV cameras were not a priority for the school currently due to other commitments such as the leaking roof, flooding and the refurbishment costs. However a new gate has been sited at the front of the school which will close at 6.30pm and new fencing has been constructed around the school for added security. £800 was raised by parents for the CCTV and WB had written a letter to the parent who had initiated the fundraising. JH will update the newsletter so that parents realise that CCTV is on hold but will be looked at again next year. **ACTION: JH to update the newsletter regarding CCTV.**
- *Music scholarship funding*
CA is still currently looking at music scholarship funding and it is on hold until next year.
- *School Transformation Plan*
JH stated that he had emailed out the School Development Plan (SDP) to all governors and will email the document to the new governors. **ACTION: JH to email out the SDP to the new governors.**
- *Christmas Fair*
CW reminded all governors that the Christmas Fair is on 5th December 4.30-6.30pm and all governors are welcome to come along. There will be a range of activities including Santa's Grotto, Winter BBQ, Candlelight carols, crafts and games. Donations for the Tombola prizes – both adult and child would be welcome as would raffle prizes. **ACTION: Governors who wish to donate gifts to the raffle or tombolas should bring their gifts to reception before 4th December.**
- *Pastoral Report*
JH stated that this would be covered under his Headteacher's report.
- *Progress monitoring and interested governors*
Progress monitoring is going to change this year. The curriculum will be developed in stages throughout the year and the school needs a useful method to see how children are progressing. JH stated that OFSTED will not look at internal data. WB asked if any governor had a particular interest and MV offered to take on this role. **ACTION: MV to be the governor involved in pupil progress monitoring.**
- *Governors Strategy Session date*
WB confirmed that a date had been set, which is Tuesday 9th June 2020 3-7pm, at the main school and a light buffet supper will be provided.

- *School Catering*

AA noted that at the end of the last academic year ISS, the catering company had given 5 days notice that the contract had not been renewed. The contract was then renewed until July 2020 but there was a 30 pence price rise per meal from £2.35 to £2.65. The Local Authority has stepped in and agreed to fund the gap. RP noted that the quality of the meals had not improved despite the price increase. The LA wanted feedback to see if schools wished to continue with this arrangements but many larger schools have decided to pull out as they can get a better price per meal. AA stated the school has decided not to renew because we can get a better deal with Dolci who have a different approach and source fresh local foods. The school have to make a decision in March/April. WB asked if anyone would be willing to help AA with the school catering contract process and HC offered her help.

ACTION: AA to contact HC regarding arrangements for the catering contract.

8. Committee reports

a. *Curriculum (UC)*

UC noted that WB had chaired the meeting. UC stated that the named Link governors had been put on the website. Colin Mansell who had donated 5k to the Friends of Castle School (FoCS) had also donated 2 London Marathon places on 26th April 2020 to James Wybra and Kieron Fisher who had just received their official running shirts this week. The school continues to receive more applications from out of the county and the school had one exclusion. JH stated the school was looking at ways of supporting this pupil as a place has been found for him in education but not until September 2020. Pupil progress and monitoring was discussed and 2 companies are coming in with bespoke packages before the next FGB meeting so the committee will much clearer about the next steps. The two policies Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity had been approved, ready for ratification. 85% of staff had received the safeguarding training this year. No children were on the CPP and the school has 3 Looked After Children. Post 16 is going well and the World of Work programme (WOW) has over 80 organisations on the books. HIVE is also going well and CW explained what HIVE involves.

b. *Staffing (UC)*

UC noted that WB had chaired the meeting. The FoCs supported the Step up 4 Good 10 k run and a number of staff raised sponsorship money from the event. CW mentioned the Christmas Fair and the Barn Dance on 20th March 2020. It had been acknowledged that the Summer Fair was a great success. An IT manager had been appointed. No policies needed to be reviewed. There had been 1 disciplinary in the summer term and 2 members (now only 1) had been off long term sick. Terms of reference (TOR) had been signed.

c. *Pay panel*

The pay panel had met and UC noted that 2019 pay policy had been reviewed and the panel would be liaising with all the governors in part 2 of the meeting.

d. *Premises*

AE stated that JT and AA are looking to see if there are health and safety courses which are appropriate to the governors. Teaching training records were discussed and need to be on Blue Sky. The fencing had been fixed a Post 16. The TOR had been approved.

Current projects had been discussed including the relocation of the administration staff into Platt's House which had gone well, music room had moved to meeting room 2, CCTV was agreed as not a priority, new gate and fencing completed, the woodland area had started to be developed with a new pathway and steps. Volunteers from Newbury racecourse and Vodafone have offered to come and help clear the site. The gazebo will be delayed until the new outdoor sport track has been developed. The roof on primary has been leaking since August, the tender for this work closed last week and it will involve 12 weeks of work. The school will have to consider if they put temporary classroom in or the work may have to be done in the holidays because of the noise. A new floor is also needed in primary. West Berks is paying for the roof work but the school needs to pay 5%. AE stated that CCTV cameras were discussed to look at the source of the flooding underground. AE and JS carried out a Health and Safety site walk recently and AE wanted to express particular thanks on behalf of the governors to Pete Bulter and his site team who do a wonderful job and are very impressed that the site is so well maintained. The GDPR policy had been approved ready for ratification.

e. *Finance*

AE noted that FoCS had managed to get matched funding via Vodafone through Chrissie Payne. Brass banding funding was being reviewed and children having music lessons (except 1 child) were being paid for by their parents. The outdoor sports track specification had been changed for a superior quality track which meant that the quotes for the development had risen to over 100k and AA was liaising with the LA regarding the documentation needed and whether a tender process would be necessary (which can take up to 3 months). AA stated that there will likely be a short fall of 5 k for this project. AA stated that we need to get commitment for the project to go ahead by December because of some of the grant conditions. The work should take 6-8 weeks but is weather dependent. Period 6 was noted as not a great gauge however there is more detail on finance in the HT report. An extra teacher had been recruited however extra savings had been made in other areas so the budget currently showed a positive 80K variance. Pupil premium grants had been mainly spent on staffing and sports coaching. The Capital Fund, Sugar Tax and Peter Baker grants money went towards the sensory music garden and some money will go to the outdoor track. Tesco had given money to the Woodland area. The FoCS have the majority of the money for the outdoor track. VINCI Foundation had donated 10k towards a WOW car. Two policies had been reviewed the Private Fund and Pay Policy and AA will review the next Financial Management and Procedures Policy for the next committee meeting. AE will liaise with Jo Westbrooke for the reconciliation and JS has offered to do the next reconciliation. AA discussed the school photocopiers contract and that the decision had been made to renew the contract with Annadata. The IT Manager in place from the 1st January 2020 doing 2-3 days work with the idea of selling his services to other schools in the area.

9. Headteacher's report

JH had circulated an updated report in advance of the meeting. WB informed the board that this document was updated every FGB meeting and was a key document.

P.3 – Pupil Changes and admissions information

WB queried the 5 pupils that had left. JH explained that actually 9 pupils had left but 4 pupils had returned to Post 19.

P.3– Exclusions

WB noted that there had been 1 exclusion which had already been discussed.

P.22- individual Staff training

WB asked about Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). CW explained that PDA is not seen as a separate diagnosis in West Berks however the school want to utilise strategies that are helpful for the condition.

P. 23 - Staffing

JH stated that the school is well staffed currently but it does take some time to reach this position and this will be reviewed for next year.

Governors thanked JH and his team for their updates.

10. Progress & achievement update

JH explained that progress and achievement had already been discussed earlier in the meeting.

11. Policies for ratification

The following policies have been discussed by committees and come to this meeting for discussion and ratification.

Safeguarding
Equality and Diversity Policy
Private Fund Policy
Pay Policy
General Data Protection Regulation Policy

ACTION: Governors noted these had all been reviewed by committees this term and ratified them. WB signed a copy of all at the meeting. JT to update school files and JH to place them on the internet.

12. Safeguarding update and signing of central register (CW / WB)

CW updated the board that all safeguarding training was up to date and new dates for training were in place for new staff. My Concern was being effectively used as the current safeguarding system for reporting any issues. The new safeguarding policy had been issued around the school and the LA need to look at safeguarding issues outside the house and CW had an update with Youth Offending Team.

WB signed a copy of the single central register at the meeting.

JH noted for new governors that this is a working document, kept up to date by AA and reviewed by CW. It includes details of all staff, such as DBS records, qualifications, document checks and mandatory training. It is always checked as part of any Ofsted visit. **ACTION: JT to send out the dates of the Safeguarding training and Prevent training to the WB and new governors.**

13. Appointment of new Governors

Helen Cabell was appointed as a new co-opted governor, term of office starting 14.11.19 and Giles Francis was noted as the new parent governor, his term of office starting on 13.11.19.

ACTION: JT to add HC as a co-opted governor and GF as a parent governor. JT will arrange DBS checks with AA, school email address and key access for NM, HC and GF. JT will update Govhub.

14. Governor visits, training and development (ALL)

WB is the safeguarding governor and AE will be the governor associated with Post 16. Meeting dates were circulated for 2019-20 by JT. NM and AE are currently enrolled for governor training this year. **ACTION: JT to send updated WBC list to new governors**

15. AOB items

Christmas Fair

WB stated that this had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Revenue to Capital Transfer

AA asked WB to sign a letter to Mr Pearson at West Berkshire District Council allowing the school to transfer money from the revenue account to the capital account to help fund the roof repairs.

Link Governors

JH stated that the framework had changed in the new SDP, WB is the safeguarding link governor and AE volunteered to be the health and safety and Post 16 link governor. **ACTION: JH to update the link governors on the website and to send out an email to governors with all the areas that governors can be involved with.**

Thank you

At the end of the formal business meeting WB extended special thanks to outgoing co-opted governor, Ursula Codrington who has been Vice-chair and is stepping down after several terms of office. UC has been a governor for 7 years and has been involved with the school as a volunteer for Riding for the Disabled locally. WB expressed that the FGB would like to invite UC back for the beginning of the next FGB meeting as the board would like to show their appreciation to her at the next meeting. **ACTION: JT to invite UC to the next FGB meeting on Thursday 27th February 2020 at 5pm at Post 16.**

16. Part Pay Panel (all staff left the room for this part of the meeting)

The pay panel went through due process and increased the pay scale according to the pay policy.

17. Date of next meetings

Curriculum & Staffing Committee, 4.30pm on 16 January 2020 at Post 16, Common Area.

Finance & Premises Committee, 4.30pm on Thursday 6 February 2020 at Post 16, Common Area.

FGB meeting, 5pm on 27th February 2020 at Post 16, Common Area,