



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 27 February 2020, from 5.00pm, Post 16 site

Present: Wendy Batchelor (Chair of Governors), Alison Eade (co-opted governor), Marie Verney (parent governor), Nicola Markham (co-opted governor) Charlie Kowalski (co-opted governor), Tracy Warwick (parent governor) and Helen Cabell (co-opted governor).

Apologies: Joan Sargent (parent governor), Giles Francis (parent governor), Roses Parfitt (staff governor) and Jon Hewitt (Headteacher).

In attendance: Atul Attra (School Business Manager), Caroline Whitlock (Deputy Headteacher),

1. Apologies

Apologies were received JS, GF, RP and JH. Ursula Codrington was invited to the meeting so that we could thank her for all her hard work as a governor for 7 years. As she was not able to attend due to another engagement, it was decided to send the card (via Nicole Markham) and a gift to her in the post.

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

- Pupils activity weeks (AE)
- Safeguarding (WB)

3. Declaration of interest at this meeting

No declarations were made.

4. Election of Vice Chair to the Full Governing Board

AE was nominated and voted in as vice chair of the FGB on to the board. **ACTION; JT to amend the Gov Hub information.**

5. Appointment of LEA Governor

WB was appointed as the LEA governor at the meeting as WB had been through the West Berkshire procedure to be approved as an LEA governor. **ACTION; JT to amend the Gov Hub information.**

6. Minutes from the last meetings (14 November 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.

- *Giles Francis*
WB asked if GF and HC had received an induction pack. HC said that she had received the new induction pack. Wendy informed the governors that MB had decided to step down as a governor. **ACTION: JT to remove MB from the GOV Hub and his school email address.**

- *CCTV cameras fundraising*
AA confirmed that CCTV cameras were going to be installed after the recent break in events. The school will fund the CCTV even if the Local Authority do not as AA explained that the CCTV images will help identify thieves. The cost is expected to be £9,000 if a contractor is used or £4,000 if we install it ourselves. The cameras will be protected and will be connected to the school server. AA recommended that the school chooses 4 k as it gives a better quality image and the cameras can zoom in. The cameras will be set on timers and will be on during the holidays. They will store the data for a month and then the images will be deleted. AA, the School Site Manager and IT Manger will be connected to see the CCTV images. WB agreed that the CCTV cameras were needed. CW suggested that we let the parents know who raised some money for the CCTV cameras that we have put the money that they raised towards the costs. **ACTION: JH to contact the parents who raised the money regarding CCTV to let them know that the money will be used for installing CCTV cameras at the school shortly.**

- *School Transformation Plan*
HC confirmed that she had not yet received the School Transformation Plan but WB pointed out that this was now included in the Headteacher's Report.

- *Christmas Fair*
CW stated that the Christmas Fair event had been a great success with the choir in quad, BBQ, raffle and we made about 1.6k from the event, and importantly everyone had a lovely evening. **ACTION: All governors are invited to the summer fete on Saturday 6th June.**

- *School Catering*
AA stated that a West Berkshire group consisting of 15 schools had been formed and were working through the ESPO framework. They have agreed an agenda and filled in the tender pack. Tenders will be invited the week commencing the 9th March with the closing date being the 27th March. All 15 schools will be involved in the evaluation process with interviews taking place if necessary. The starting date for the contract will be 24th July. 4 key leaders within the group are splitting the work. 250 companies are on the ESPO framework and the companies most likely to apply are Dulci, Harrisons and Caterlink. AA stated that roughly 3,000 children could take a meal. **ACTION: AA invited HC to join the next meeting on 11th March.**

- *DBS checks*
HC has received her DBS certificate. NM will send her documents to AA for her DBS requirements. **ACTION: NM to send her documents to AA for her DBS requirements. JT to send out the link to the key to all governors.**

- *Link Governors*
JH has placed the list of link governors on the website. WB suggested that the governors need to consider which links governors are needed and suggested that this could be consider at the governors strategy day. **ACTION: All governors to consider what link governors are needed and to discuss this at the strategy day on Tuesday 9th June.**

7. Committee reports

a. Curriculum (MV)

MV noted that 2 staff members are fundraising for the school by running the London Marathon on 26th April, James Wybra and Kieron Fisher. Pupil progress and monitoring was discussed and CW confirmed that Earwig have been chosen as the company to develop the bespoke package. Four policies had been approved Admissions, SEND, Education of LAC and Supporting pupils with medical conditions. **ACTION: NM to liaise with the school nurse Leanne Graham to ask how the school insurance works regarding supporting pupils with medical conditions.**

b. Staffing (MV)

MV noted the IT manager had been appointed and the teaching assistants were in place. The policies that had been approved were Appraisal, Capability, Flexible working and NQT.

c. Premises (AE)

AE stated that she had been elected as chair and HC as vice chair of this committee. All had been made aware of the health and safety courses available. JS and AE had done the health and safety walk around Post 16. The work on the sports track had started however due to the weather, the contractors are 3 weeks behind. New fencing and a new gate are in place and the flooding in the front office had been sorted. The secondary gazebo had been put on hold and work had begun to replace the lighting in Post 16. The primary roof work had also begun and although there will be some disruption, the school was trying to minimise the impact to the pupils and staff. It will be a costly project totalling a ¼ million pounds but the school is expecting to pay £14,000 towards it. The Mini bus policy and the Offsite activity guidance policy had been approved ready for ratification. The break-in events at both the main site and Post 16 had been covered by AA. The insurance had paid for the catalytic converter and the mini-buses with the school contributing £100 for each bus and the catalytic converter claim.

d. Finance (AE)

AE stated that Charles Allison is reviewing the funding of 2 music scholarship places and both AE and TW will be involved in the panel discussions for the scholarship places. A small amount of money may be needed from the private fund for the outdoor sports track and AA will keep the governors updated. JS has been asked to do the next reconciliation. The contract has been renewed with Annodata for the school photocopying. The committee had been through the accounts and had asked for clarification on certain lines. Of note was the surplus which may be eroded by the teachers' salaries increase as it currently appears that the government will not fund it. So the school will have to allow enough money in the budget to cover this pay rise. The private fund had been independently reviewed which currently totals £67,000.

e. Pay panel (WB)

WB stated that herself, AE and HC would get together to discuss Jon's objectives and see if they were on track. **ACTION: WB to set a date for the pay panel to meet.**

8. Headteacher's report

JH had circulated an updated report in advance of the meeting.

P.3 – Pupil Changes and admissions information

WB queried the attendance figures and that 4 pupils that had left. CW explained that she monitors the attendance and the school has a lot of children who are poorly however the attendance figure has been constant at 92.5%. In addition CW stated that 2 children had left from primary as they had moved from the area and 2 left before the term started.

P.3– Exclusions

CW noted that there had been 1 exclusion now as the other exclusion had been rescinded and the pupil had been offered a place in a new school to start in April 2020.

P.3- Pupil numbers and waiting lists

CW explained that children coming to the school will be prioritised regarding their level of need and that would be up to JH and the SEN team to decide. CW stated that the school had the biggest number of pupils that it had ever currently had.

P. 11 – Curriculum development

WB stated that obviously there had been a massive amount of work done on the curriculum and it would be good to know more about Earwig and their system. CW explained that the extended leadership team will meet between now and Easter so that that clarity on assessment frameworks will be established and set for Earwig to use. The new system will be ready to use in September and will cost the same amount as B squared. Tapestry will be replaced with this new system which has been tried and tested in other schools. CW stated that the governors will be shown the new tracking system. **ACTION: JT to add this to the agenda for the next FGB meeting.**

P.16- Staff training

CW talked about looking into Coaching training for Senior Leaders and Middle Leaders. This will be decided upon when the School Development Plan is looked at.

P.18 - Post 19

CW explained that between 2-6 pupils are expected next year and currently they are using a room at Post 16 for this students.

P. 28- The 3 Cs

CW explained that the 3 Cs are curiosity, creativity and community.

Governors thanked JH for the report and his team for their updates.

9. Progress & achievement update

WB pointed out to the governors that pupil progress could be seen at the back of the report. WB questioned CW as to whether Doodle maths was working and CW explained that Meaghan would be reviewing it as it worked for some children but not others.

10. Policies for ratification

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

Admissions
Education of LAC
SEND
Supporting pupils with medical conditions
Appraisal
Capability
Flexible working
NQT
Lettings
Minibus
Offsite activity guidance

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 to place them on the internet. AA to bring the revised FMP policy to the next finance committee meeting once the necessary changes have been incorporated.

11. Therapeutic Thinking (CW)

West Berkshire are utilising the ACES study to embark on therapeutic thinking. Angela Wadham devised therapeutic thinking (TT). West Berkshire want all schools to be therapeutic thinking schools which needs to be led by the leadership team. They have a clear mandate that they want to remove restrictive practices and exclusions. CW stated that the Castle School is well ahead in this area as the school already have BOOST and HIVE in place which are based on therapeutic learning. The model the school is using for training staff now has a clear structure in line with ProactSCIPr. Berkshire want all staff trained in TT and for it to be used in support plans. CW noted that using TT did not mean more work but just reinforcing and support. TW asked the question whether using the star award works with this thinking and CW explained that sometimes it might be better to do a letter home to the parents rather than give a star.

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

AA had given the latest up to date version of the document to WB. CW met with WB and informed her that the school is on schedule with training although there are some new staff who need training. My Concern was being effectively used with 63 concerns in February, September had the highest number of concerns but not all were child safeguarding issues. The staff are currently recording any issues well. The school does not have any children on a child protection plan and the 2 Looked After Children the school has, one child had turned 18 and will remain with his existing Foster family. Caroline talked about KCSIE highlighting Harmful Sexualised Behaviour and that Brooks Traffic Light Tool can be helpful to identify need in this area. Caroline explained Contextualised Safeguarding. Staff have had twilight training on these two areas.

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

ACTION: JT to organise for HC and GF to attend the safeguarding training.

13. Governor visits, training and development (ALL)

HC has attended the New to Governance course and NM is rebooked for the same course on June 18th. WB encouraged all governors to fill in the skills audit and send by email to JT. TW visited Renee, Arts Teacher and enquired about displaying more artwork around the school. CW explained that there are several areas around the school already where the artwork can be displayed and safety has to be considered in areas which might be considered suitable.

ACTION: Governors to fill in the skills audit and send to JT by Wednesday 4th March.

14. AOB items

Safeguarding

WB stated that all governors are annually required to read Part 1 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education so JT will circulate the documents out to the governors.

ACTION: JT to send out the Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 to the governors and for governors to confirm by email to JT once they have read it.

Pupils Activity Week

AE asked if there was any shortfall for expenses for pupils' activities week. AA said that they were not sure yet and not all the classes had confirmed their activities weeks.

15. Date of next meetings

Finance & Premises Committee, 4.30pm on Thursday 23rd April 2020, Jane Evans room, Main site

Budget sign off meeting, 4.30pm on Wednesday 29th April 2020, Jane Evans room, Main site.

Curriculum & Staffing Committee, 4.00pm on Thursday 7 May 2020 at Jane Evans room, Main site.

FGB meeting, 5pm on Thursday 25th June 2020 at Jane Evans room, Main site.

Governors Strategy Session Tuesday 9th June 3.00-7.00pm