

Date: Tuesday 8th December 2022 at 4:30pm.

Present:

Mrs M. Massey – Chair
Mrs A. Wilkinson (AW)(Until 6:10pm)
Mr A. Middleton (MA)
Mr P. Howell (PH)

Apologies: Mr D. Bull (DB), Mrs H. Pate (HP), Miss E. Humphries (EH), Miss L. Hodgkison (LH)

In Attendance:

Mr P. Kingdom – Headteacher (PK)
Mr K. Graham – Deputy Headteacher (KG)
Mrs E. Abberley – Assistant Headteacher (EA)
Mrs J. Meakreath-Aylett – Deputy Headteacher (JM)
Mr J. Newham – Assistant Headteacher (JN)
Mr R. Hadley – Head of Maths (Items 1-5 only) (RH)
Mr M. Barlow – Head of English (Items 1-5 only) (MB)

Clerk: Mrs C Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted as recorded above and the meeting was quorate.
2. There were no Declarations of Interest.
3. The Minutes of the TOA LGB meeting held on 4th October 2022 uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, **were approved**. Matters Arising – The Action Log was updated as noted thereon.
4. Appointments **Governors noted that** the TOA LGB has a full constitution.

5. School Performance

SLT Report 081222 – Final uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, covering items 5 – 10 inclusive, was **received**. **The Chair requested that** reports contain consistent acronym descriptions.

5.1 Heads of Faculty

Maths **RH reported that** there are some challenges to overcome in the Maths department but it is an improving picture. Since RH joined the school in September 2022, there has been a greater sense of stability in the team and staff are keen to encourage, and support the students to do well. The last term has seen staff embed the brand new scheme of work and improvements are expected to gather pace next term.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether Yr7 students are at the expected level. It was reported that there are gaps in their learning due to Covid, but the new scheme of work is the same one used at most primary schools, so the primary to secondary learning transition is smoother than it was historically. Team teaching and enhanced training is in place to support the non-mathematician teachers supporting the department.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether the department still plans on running a Saturday school. It was reported that RH intends to establish a Saturday school and in answer to **Governor CHALLENGE** it is hoped that it can be funded by the national tutoring programme (60%) and some Pupil Premium (PP) funding (40%) to support all learners. Four high achievers are attending Cheshire College one day a week to do Further Maths. Those students are enjoying the challenge and in answer to **Governor CHALLENGE**, it is believed that it will make a positive difference to their outcomes.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked where Maths will be next summer in terms of progress. It was reported that it was -0.821 at the week 10 data drop and the department hopes to get that to -0.6. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked how this compared to last year's progress figure. It was reported that** last year's figure was -.076. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether a 0.15 improvement is realistic given the expected increased difficulty of the GCSEs next year. It was confirmed that** it was realistic as students will have had more classroom teaching and learning time this year compared to last year. If staff hit all progress targets, the figure will be -0.45.

Student voice has reported that lessons are calmer and purposeful. **Governors received the report** and thanked and congratulated RH for his and the Maths team's hard work so far.

English MB reported that in the 18 months since he started at the school, there have been some good appointments made to the department and a consistent, strong team is being built, including some strong Early Careers' Teachers (ECTs). The department has revisited and re-sequenced the curriculum to provide bespoke teaching to address gaps in learning and further challenge those without gaps. Whole school literacy skills are a focus of the department and there are a number of external examination qualified markers in both language and literature, in the department, whose skills and experience have fed into Continued Professional Development (CPD) and practice, to build on the successes of last year.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked how that re-sequencing is utilised to ensure impact. It was reported that the department has looked at what skills can be integrated across the year groups and throughout the different texts studied, providing a spiral curriculum. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether all KS3 texts play into GCSEs. It was reported that** the texts sequence and link together clearly throughout the learning journey. Governors were pleased to note that the school uses classic and robust texts such as *The Tempest*, at Yr7.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked how the school is utilising Trust links to support and benefit literacy and the department. It was reported that cross Trust schools' moderation is taking place and AQA past papers' practice provides commonality across all schools.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked what improvements in progress are expected for more able learners. It was reported that last year's progress score was -0.9. MB has taken ownership of interventions and it is hoped that it will reach -0.6 this summer.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked about Yr7 literacy skills and what in particular is being done to support English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. It was reported that students are below the level at which they ought to be, but several new initiatives, including accelerated reader programmes, have been introduced and those who need additional support have been identified and interventions put in place. EAL students undergo bell foundations testing to ascertain into which band they need to be placed. All staff are aware of where each student sits in their band and students are withdrawn from individual subjects as appropriate to receive additional support.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked RH and MB how they view their roles as middle managers at the school and whether there is anything they need as middle managers which the school is not providing. RH and MB reported feeling comfortable in providing honest and transparent feedback and reported that JM and JN lead weekly meetings of middle managers to ensure all operational and strategic matters are in order to make the school run efficiently and effectively. Issues on which to focus throughout the year, are decided at the start of the school year. Staff can add business to the meetings' agendas, set by JM and the meetings are collaborative and work well. Staff also have regular individual meetings with JM and JN. **JM reported that** progress and interventions, and safeguarding updates are drip fed to all staff, rather than being left entirely up to middle leaders to share. In this way SLT support middle managers and all staff with the fast pace of change.

EA reported that a local Primary Headteacher had reported being very impressed with the quality of work the school is achieving with the students. **PK reported that** MB has overseen a previously challenging and somewhat dysfunctional department with a number of inexperienced staff and has built a strong team, with great ECTs who are all developed, upskilled and supported. Governors thanked and congratulated MB and his team for the hard work so far.

RH and MB left the meeting at 5.05pm

5.1 Student Council **Governors noted that** 35% of the Student Council are Pupil Premium (PP) and there is an increase in numbers of students on the council with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND).

CHALLENGE: Governors asked about the gender mix and it was reported that there a few more girls than boys. **Governors were pleased to note that** the school now has Head Students rather than Head Boy and Head Girl.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked how staff ensure equality when applications to join the council are in writing and whether applicants are interviewed. It was reported that students had requested that applications be in writing, but applicants are chosen based on their enthusiasm and commitment rather than their writing skills and no students were turned down based on the quality of their written application. Senior students are interviewed but juniors are not, but staff recommendations are considered for junior applicants.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether the council members represent the school's diverse communities. It was reported that when applications were requested, there were significantly fewer English as an Additional Language (EAL) students in the school, so further applications may be encouraged.

It was reported that the Student Leadership Team was an area for improvement but is improving. Students are leadership trained using a prescribed course, including learning about meetings' protocols. Members are really engaged and enthused and are now looking at how to put their training into practice, paying attention to student voice regarding what other students want from their Student Leadership Team. Young Enterprise are due to visit the school and students have been advised by staff that businesses must benefit the whole school community.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether the school has student mental health ambassadors. It was reported that staff are considering setting up student advocacy groups as the year develops. It is hoped that Young Enterprise will encourage cross-year groups working together and **the Chair recommended** staff consider the implementation of a student buddying system, monitored for impact.

5.2 P8 Data It was reported that 25% (14 students) are not currently P8 compliant and as this equates to almost 2 percentage points per student, P8 is -0.77. Without those non-compliant students, the P8 figure would be -0.61. Non-compliance is mainly due to them not doing History or Geography, so the school is now encouraging students to do a humanities subject, explaining the benefits of the expanded understanding of culture this will give them.

In response to Governor CHALLENGE about what percentage of students will not be P8 complaint this year it was reported that the figure will be 15% (the year group is bigger, so this will amount to 10 students, but this is a legacy issue from previous leadership) and this figure should decrease year on year. **ACTION:** JN will provide detailed P8 data to the Clerk for upload to Governor Hub, including P8 data for the current Yr10. PK congratulated JN for his work in attaining the best mock examination results since PK joined the school, noting that the examination period had felt controlled and calm, thanks also to the invigilators.

CHALLENGE: Governors noted that official P8 data was not available for the current Yr9, due to Covid and asked whether the school has entry level data from internal valuations from which it can make predictions and if so, whether there is confidence in the data in terms of all middle leaders' input. It was reported that internal data has been gathered and all middle leaders have been trained in inputting, gathering and analysing data and challenging conversations are being had to ensure the data is robust. One data drop has been completed and whilst a few tweaks may be needed, overall, it appears to be an effective, accurate system. The next data drop will be week 10, from which an all school data report will be prepared and provided to Governors. Governors were encouraged by the system and thanked staff for the helpful update.

6. School Priorities

6.1 SIP (School Improvement Plan) 2022/2023 The Chair reported that Governors were pleased with the leadership work. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked how the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) ensure all staff are aware of the information provided whilst some staff are on duty during the daily education briefings. It**

was reported that pastoral heads of year step in to supervise students whilst teachers attend briefings and information is also drip-fed out and there is a constant revisiting of information.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked how the school monitors academic literacy across the curriculum. It was reported that there will be an increase in the number of academic learning walks carried out by middle leaders and other trained members of staff, from January 2023 and deep dives undertaken across the school. Gaps will be assessed and outcomes will be followed up in briefings. **ACTION:** SLT will provide an update in the March 2023 meeting. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked how frank and honest SLT are when discussing their subject areas with middle leaders. PK reported that** SLT are 'brilliantly honest' as all staff are onboard with the ethos that they are on this school improvement journey all together to bring about positive change. Subject discussions are not about blame, but rather about development.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked how many improvement areas are structural development issues and how many are teaching skills' issues. Governors were assured that the school has a solid understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, but all staff are keen to develop and take advice onboard. Measured changes, bringing all staff along on the developmental journey, ensure staff wellbeing is also good. This was evidenced in the Trust staff wellbeing survey, from which TOA received the best staff wellbeing feedback of all Trust schools. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked how the school celebrates successes. It was reported that** line managers are very good at leading on staff rewards and staff enjoy the collective element of sharing what the school does well. Staffing is an issue in some departments, such as Science, but the Head and Deputy of that department are excellent. There are issues, but staff are driving progress and improvement and people visiting the school recently, including Governors, report a great atmosphere and positive 'buzz' about the school. **The Chair reported that** when she speaks with staff, there is an overwhelming sense of welcoming change, a positive shift in the school environment and a real enthusiasm to provide the students the great chances they deserve. Staff feel they are listened to and cared for and can be open and honest about how they feel and things are improving. **The Chair noted that** improvement is gradual and cannot be done all at once, but congratulated SLT for the differences they have made, noting that the school has been transformed and Governors agreed.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether the school is utilising Trust support to ensure quality assurance of teaching and learning across the curriculum. It was reported that the trust CEO has always been very supportive with quality assurance, encouraging and supporting staff in the use of a formative assessment programme. Trust collaboration and consideration of external expertise, in areas such as SEND have led to improved teaching and the school is always willing to consider other external support packages and ideas. The school also collaborates on individual subject areas with Trust and non-Trust schools.

Governors noted improvements in the Personal Social Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum and the school is pleased with the programme bought and brought in, which has more dialogue and discussion than writing, as previously recommended by the Chair. The PSHE team is not as strong and stable as the school would like and there are some concerns, but it is being well taught. **CHALLENGE: Governors noted that under 'Successes' the SLT Report stated that there is a greater awareness of bullying, and asked to whom the awareness is attributed. It was reported that** staff are more aware; low level bullying has significantly decreased since child on child bullying has been taught in PSHE.

Community A Governor reported that schools generally need to educate staff and students about employment opportunities, apprenticeships and build links with employers for work experience. TOA's Gatsby marks are very good in terms of careers advice but more work needs to be done nationally on building skills for workplaces.

6.2 Staffing It was reported that a person with a strong IT background had been recruited last week. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects are areas for which the school is finding recruitment particularly difficult, reflecting the national picture. Staff in the Maths department are keen and are being

supported in gaining more classroom experience and the Head and Deputy Head of Science are excellent leaders.

The current Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENCo) is leaving and the school have appointed a new experienced Associate Senior Lead, who is also an IT specialist who will take up the SENCo role and the new Assistant Head Teacher (AHT) is also an experienced SENCo and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Both appointments have arisen from recommendations from staff already at the school, which is an encouraging sign of a strong, happy team of staff.

7. Student Wellbeing

7.1 In response to **Governor CHALLENGE as to number of students who take up the school's free breakfast offer. It was reported that** it is over 50% of students. The school counsellor comes in all day, every Monday. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked how referrals are made to the Counsellor. It was reported that** students are referred by the safeguarding team. Trauma informed practice will start after Easter when the new AHT starts at the school. **It was reported that** on the whole, TOA students enjoy coming to school.

8. Pastoral

8.1 Student Numbers Feedback from Open Evenings had been very positive and Governors were pleased with the 191 applications (77% first and second choice) for the September 2023 intake, which shows how the school's reputation is improving in the area. **CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether the school has capacity to take 191 in September. It was reported that** c.60 are first choice and the school usually picks up a number of 2nd choice, but it hoped that this will improve as perceptions of the school are changing. Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is 130. Yr7 currently has 124 on roll and most in-year new students at the school are EAL. **Governors recommended that** the school celebrate its successes and impressive improvements and recommended that students are asked what in their opinion is great about the school. **It was reported that** a student had recently referred to being at the school in terms of hotel ratings; that it was previously a 1 star and is now a 4-5 star experience.

Governors confirmed that they support the school's stance on challenging Fair Access Panel (FAP) decisions where they are not in the best interest of the school or the child in question.

8.2 Punctuality **CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether there had been an improvement in punctuality. It was reported that** it is looking better in general and staff are constantly monitoring, addressing and discussing the importance of punctuality and behaviour, such as the issues around vaping, with students.

It was reported that examination access arrangements had all been in place and run much more smoothly than previous years.

8.3 Attendance **It was reported that** there are issues in Yrs10 and 11, but overall, attendance is good. The school is working with external agencies to support vulnerable students, the number of which has increased over the last 2 weeks. **Governors noted that** as the majority of students attend, the provisions for those students must be right, but it is important that the school continues to monitor persistent absences (and reasons) to understand the overall figures.

8.4 Behaviour and Exclusions **It was reported that** behaviour has improved and exclusion figures are down. Permanent exclusions have been made where necessary, resulting in those students accessing more appropriate provisions and a calmer environment in the school.

9. Safeguarding

9.1 **It was reported that** the Safeguarding Children in educational Settings (SCiES) review is due on 14th December and a positive outcome is anticipated. Most actions recommended from the last review have been completed and a small number are ongoing. **The Chair confirmed that** for Governors, the important element of safeguarding is impact rather than compliance and the Chair is very impressed with safeguarding at the school. The website requires work as safeguarding information needs to be more easily accessible and the HT is already addressing this.

10. Pupil Premium (PP) Strategy

The Chair reported that she is impressed by the strategy as presented on the school website and thanked JN for the excellent analysis and overall good job, well done.

11. Policies

Governors approved the following Policies:	
11.1 Medical Needs Policy, which includes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with Health Needs that cannot attend school • First Aid In School • Supporting Children with Medical conditions 	
11.2 Accessibility Plan 2022-2025	
12. Local Matters	
Nothing to report.	
13. Matters to Share with the Trust Board	
Nothing to report	
14. Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB	
The Board meets on 14 th December 2022. Financial pressures continue nationally and the trust continues to explore potential growth in response to the White Paper.	
15. AOB	
Governors expressed their thanks to all who attended the meeting and especially to JN and JM for the impactful work they are doing for the school. The HT thanked everyone present for their support.	
Next Meeting : Thursday 2nd March 2023 at 4:30pm	Meeting Closed 6:30pm

Signed.....Date.....

TOA LGB ACTIONS			
AGENDA ITEM AND ACTION	By When	By Whom	Date Completed
3. Figures will be provided to Governors at the next meeting of the number of PP and SEND students involved in the Student Leadership Council (SLC).	November 2022	SLT	8/12/22
6.1 Future Results data will include cohort size	Going forward	SLT	8/12/22
6.2 Governors will be provided with data showing what P8 would be with the removal of the not P8 compliant student data. The data will not refer to U grades, but instead to not P8 compliant and a key to colouring will be included	November 2022	SLT	8/12/22
8.2 An analysis of attendance will be carried out with EHCP and SEND figures included.	November 2022	SLT	8/12/22
6.1 P8 data will be provided showing P8 when P8 non-compliant student data is removed and the data will not refer to U grades, but to not P8 compliant and a key to colouring will be included.	Autumn 2022	SLT	8/12/22
4.2 An LGB Health check review will be carried out in the 2022/2023 school year.	2022/2023	SLT	
6.6 The Pupil Premium Strategy will contain intended outcome and success criteria, detailing staff Continuous Professional	Autumn 2022	SLT/EA	8/12/22

Development (CPD) plans, impact of CPD, interventions and milestones and will be in place for the start of term September 2022. Item 4 4/10/22 - SLC membership of PP and SEND student numbers will be included.			
7.1 The careers action plan will be updated for September 2022 and include how and when the strategy and associated CPD will be measured for impact.	Complete Autumn 2022	SLT/EA	8/12/22
7.2 The PSHE strategy will also incorporate careers and have links to relevant policies and safeguarding.	Autumn 2022	SLT/LB	8/12/22
8. A report on safeguarding action plan will be provided.	Autumn 2022	LGB	
9. Governors to plan Autumn Link visits	Autumn 2022	SLT	
11th May Meeting			
6.5 The case studies for those students for whom bespoke pathways are implemented will be captured and reported to Governors when data is available.	Sept. 2022	SLT	
9. Case studies for those students attending The Hub will be captured.	Ongoing	Chair/SLT	
22nd November Meeting			
7.2.1 The T&L Action Plan will be considered in detail at the next meeting	16/02/22	SLT	Complete
7.4 Future reporting will include intended improvement outcomes, indicating the number of pupils not progressing and clarity of what is meant by 'improved'	16/02/22	SLT	Complete
8.1 The LGB will await the Safeguarding Children in Education Settings (SCiES) report before discussing further at the next meeting.	16/02/22	LGB	Complete