



CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL LGB
Meeting Minutes



Date: 24th January 2023 at 6.00pm

Present:

Mr T. Pear (TP) (Chair)
Ms J. Jardine (JJ) (Vice Chair)
Mrs L. Bialek (LB)
Mrs Z. Morris (ZM) (From 6:40pm)
Mrs N. Leese (NL)

Apologies:

Mrs N. Nee (NN)
Mrs J. Lowe (JL)

In attendance:

Miss J. Mason – Headteacher (HT)
Dr. A. Howells – TLA Director of Quality (AH)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were received and accepted from JL and NL and the meeting was quorate.
2. Declarations of Interest – There were no declarations.
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - The **Minutes of the CPS LGB meeting held on 5th October 2022**, uploaded to Governor Hub (GH), prior to the meeting, were **approved** as a true and correct record. The Action Log was updated as noted therein. **[ACTION: Clerk to send GH notification of where Governors can find the GH Health Check, so Governors can consider prior to meeting to agree LGB responses.]**
Governor Recruitment and Training CPS LGB currently has 7 members and under the TLA Terms of Reference, can have up to 9, so Governors will let the Clerk/HT know if they know anyone who might be interested in joining the LGB. **ACTION: The HT** will ask the local Vicar whether he might be interested in becoming a Governor].
4. AH reminded Governors to be mindful of equality and diversity and TLA’s drive to ensure that LGBs represent the communities they serve. **It was confirmed that** CPS Governors’ declarations and confirmations are up to date on GH. **It was agreed that** a Governor training event would be held at the school on 15th February 2023 at 6pm.
5. Governance Review The 15th February training event will focus on the Governors’ skills and the NGA Health Check.

School Performance

Paper 24.01.2023 HT Report, uploaded to GH, prior to the meeting, was **received**.

6. School Improvement Plan (SIP) **Papers RAG RATE CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**, and **PHONICS TARGET**, uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, were **received**. The impact of Covid is still evident as 10 out of 18 pupils are working towards or below expected standard and pupils are doing keep-up or catch-up work as needed. Phonics improvements are evident since the introduction of Little Wandle, which is matched to phonics. A comprehension ‘gap’ has been identified and is being addressed. Reading is timetabled for all pupils, every day.

Challenge: Governors asked how reading groups are split and whether pupils’ family members are still coming in to school to read with the children. It was reported that reading groups are split according to ability, within year groups. There are no more than 6 pupils in guided reading groups and 1 day a week, the pupils have shared reading across the classes. Forms have been sent out to pupils’ families, to ascertain interest in reading with the children.

The school now has no Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENCo), and no Maths nor Science lead. The HT is overseeing Maths and other staff are stepping in to cover and support as much as possible. The HT is very mindful of staff wellbeing and is doing her best to not overload already, very busy staff, especially newly qualified teachers at the school, but everybody's workload has been especially heavy since Christmas. The Trust is supporting the school with SEND and has arranged for a member of Trust staff to attend the school on the day after this meeting, to support with an ongoing Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) application. All SEND paperwork is up-to-date.

Pupils have begun a physical health and wellbeing programme, a couple of times a week and counsellors and play therapists continue to carry out sessions in the school. On TP's request, the HT confirmed that he is welcome to attend the first aid sessions.

Challenge: A Governor noted that the pupils have first aid courses and asked what they learn. It was reported that the younger children have oral hygiene training and the older children do basic first aid.

7. Admissions and Pupil Numbers It was reported that September 2023's Reception class of 5 will be particularly small, but this may be simply a low birth-rate year and the number may increase by at least 1 from the 2nd choice preferences. Nursery numbers are looking healthier for September 2023 and all figures were reported in the 24.03.2023 HT Report.

8. Pupil Progress and Attainment Paper DEC 2022 DATA FOR GOVERNORS, uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was received.

School Welfare

9. Attendance It was reported that attendance had fallen from 93% to 92% due to pupils' illness before Christmas, but figures remained better than national average. The school has sent out letters regarding attendance where improvement was needed and where subsequent improvement has been seen, further letters have been sent, noting improvement and advising that attendance continues to be carefully monitored.

Challenge: Governors asked how flexible timetables work. It was reported that flexible timetables are not often used, but are being put in place as needed for a very small number of pupils. Pupils on flexible timetables are generally building up their hours, but as they are counted as being at school 5 days a week, are having a negative effect on attendance figures overall.

10. Behaviour It was reported that pupils' behaviour is good and there are no issues to report.

11. Safeguarding It was reported that there are no safeguarding issues to report. JJ will attend the safeguarding monitoring visit on 06/02/2023.

12. Staff Wellbeing It was reported that staff wellbeing is on the whole, good, but there remains some understandable sadness about Mrs Lord. Staff continue to work very hard and support each other.

Challenge: Governors noted the issues around the school having no SENCo and no Maths nor Science lead and asked what help the Trust is providing to the school. The HT confirmed that the Trust has been supportive; Mrs Hooley has taken on the mentoring of an Early Careers Teacher (ECT) (Mrs Lord was doing this) and, as discussed earlier, the Trust is providing SEND support. Ideally, the school needs 2 TAs, but there is no money in the school's budget for that provision. Governors were concerned about the HT and staff being overloaded with work and the lack of SENCo and subject leads [ACTION: AH will speak with the Trust COO about what additional support the Trust might be able to provide for the school]. **Challenge: Governors noted that the school should have a SENCo and asked whether Ofsted will allow for the current, unusual circumstances surrounding the school to have the HT as an acting SENCo. [ACTION: The HT will check this with the Trust CEO]. The HT reported that** with the CEO's support, the Ofsted preparation documentation had been completed and the HT was hoping that Ofsted would see that the school is doing its very best for its pupils in the difficult circumstances.

Policy Updates

13. Policy Approval It was confirmed that all statutory Policies were up to date at the time of the meeting.

14. Register It was reported that the governance team are working to align policies' review dates and content, across the Trust where possible.

15. Link Governor Updates

Other Matters

- 16. Finance** **It was reported that** the Trust is financially strong so although the school's finances are challenging, there are no concerns regarding energy costs this year. The size of the school and lagged funding may lead to more financial challenges next year but there are currently no big adjustments expected. The Government has indicated that schools may receive financial support with regard to pay increases, but no details have been provided by the Government.
- 17. Risk Register** Nothing to report.
- 18. Local Matters** **The HT reported that** it has recently come to the HT's attention that there has been an issue with the gas since January 2021; it appears that despite the gas being turned off in the school, it has actually remained on. The HT has spoken with the company who fitted the system and they have hopefully sorted the issue out.
It was reported that as far as the HT was aware, no staff intended to strike in the upcoming planned teachers' strikes.
- 19. Matters to Share with the Trust Board**
- AH will speak with the Trust COO about what additional support the Trust might be able to provide for the school with regard to there being no SENCO and no subject leads for Maths nor Science and whether the school might be able to have 2 TAs.
 - The HT will check with the CEO, the Ofsted position regarding the school not having a SENCo.
- 20. Matters to Share from the Trust Board** Reported under Part 2.
- 21. AOB** Governors asked whether there was any way for the Trust to recognise the HT and staff for their hard work since Mrs Lord's passing, recognising their welfare and wellbeing. **[ACTION: AH in discussions with the COO generally about further Trust support for the school].**
In response to Governor query, the HT confirmed that there were plans for a memorial for Mrs Lord. Mr Lord would be coming into school in the spring term, with his birds of prey, when a bird of prey memorial, made by a parent who is a blacksmith, will be unveiled. A Governor offered help with flowers for the memorial.
Governors and the HT asked it to be minuted that everyone expressed profound condolences to the school, family and friends of Mrs Lord. Mrs Lord meant a great deal to the school, its staff and pupils and she will be dearly missed. Everyone thanked her for her years of dedicated service to the school.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 26th April 2023

Meeting closed at 8:00pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

Meeting Action Log

Now on Excel spreadsheet as of January 2023