



**Date: Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 16:00**

**Present:**

Mrs J. Turner (JT) (Chair)  
Mr J. Green (JG)  
Mrs S. Hubball – (SH)  
Mrs S. Jorgensen (SJ)  
Mrs K. Powell (KP)  
Prof T. Sadat-Shafai  
Mr S. Worthington (SW)  
**Apologies:** Mr R. Benson (RB), Mr P. Turner(PT)

**In attendance:**

Mrs H. Thurland – Headteacher (HT)  
Mr M. Warren (Interim Headteacher) (MW)  
Mrs L. Darling – Deputy Headteacher (LD)  
Miss L. Salt – Deputy Headteacher (LS)  
Miss J. Boulton – Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form (JB)  
Issac -Head Boy (Item 3 only)  
Ruby – Head Girl (Item 3 only)  
**Clerk:** Dr A. Howells – TLA Director of Quality (AH)

**Administration**

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from RB and PT. The meeting was quorate. There were no Declarations. Unless stated otherwise, all papers and policies had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting.
2. The **Part 1 Minutes of the CHS LGB Meeting held on 27 September 2023** were confirmed as **approved**.  
Matters Arising – Nothing to report. Actions all up to date.

**Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities**

**3. School Vision, Values and Ethos**

The Head Boy and Head Girl made a presentation to the LGB about the progress that were making against their priorities for 2023-24. They highlighted:

- The new house system was contributing towards a positive culture across the school;
- The pupils’ charity fund raising work was very effective, with good progress made against an ambitious target of £3,300;
- The Yr12 Body Positive Group continued to develop resources and offer support to pupils across the school;
- This years’ legacy podcast would provide advice on school life and university trajectories. Other podcast would raise awareness around LGBTQ+;
- Other groups such as the Science Ambassadors Group, sports leaders, arts and mental health awareness were all actively contributing to the school ethos and culture.

Governors congratulated the pupil leaders and their leadership team and encouraged them to continue the work that they are doing.

Governors received an updated SIP which included progress made since the start of the academic year. Governors **challenged** whether the attendance target was sufficiently ambitious. The HT noted that a 98% attendance target was articulated to pupils, although the internal rate of +2 percentage points above national was being attained. A focus remained on re-establishing positive attendance patterns with families as well as with pupils. There was a disproportionate impact on overall rate due to a small number of hard-to-engage families, as well as from some individual cases (some linked to EHCPs). There was a positive working relationship with the Local Authority. Governors also **queried** the operational process for managing daily attendance, and in particular pupils arriving late, and were satisfied with the approach taken by the school. Governors acknowledged that a range of approaches was needed around attendance and that a 1-size fits all approach would not deliver the necessary outcomes. Governors also **noted** the recent DFE focus on attendance.

## Education

4. Admissions and Pupil Numbers The breakdown of pupil number by year group was included in the data dashboard. There was no material change in the total number on role. KS5 had experienced a decrease of 4 pupils since October. Yr7 remained at 218 against the PAN of 230.

Applications received for Yr7 entry in 2024 include 171 first choice requests from 309 applications. A lower local birth rate was the main factor behind the decrease in demand, since the pattern of application from local primaries remained consistent with previous years and historical trends. Applications to KS5 (6<sup>th</sup> Form) continued to be received with 119 current Yr11 applications received to date. A retention/conversion rate of 60-65% is typical for CHS, which is well above the national figure (47%). The latest projection predicts an intake of 116 against a target of 120. Governors debated and **challenged** whether the admissions policy should retain the current minimum entry requirements for 6<sup>th</sup> form. Currently 5 GCSE grade-6 are required to study on A-level courses, although the school will look at alternative pathways for those pupils not reaching the academic standard. The SLT agreed to reconsider the academic threshold and published wording for A-level entry to ensure that appropriate opportunities to study A-levels could be afforded to pupils, especially for those with the potential to peak later in their academic development. **[Action SLT]**.
5. Attendance: A breakdown of attendance by year group and pupil characteristics was included in the meeting papers. Overall attendance was 91.6%, with attendance in Yr7 the best of all cohorts, running at 95.2%. Attendance of SEND pupils was 84.8% and Pupil Premium at 83.0%. Attendance and persistent absenteeism (PA) was viewed by the SLT as a priority, as the school rates were worse than the national average. Yr10-Y13 had the highest PA rates in the school. Governors **challenged** what was being done to improve attendance and reduce PA. The HT report identified a range of actions taken in the autumn term to address and improve rates. These included external support, including the LA, the appointment of a school attendance officer, new arrangements for managing lateness, home visits and creating closer internal links between the SEND and attendance teams. Whilst Governors welcomed the availability of quantitative data, they requested that further work is done to develop and improve that data dashboards. AH **agreed** to feed this back to the Trust.
6. Behaviour: Behaviour at CHS remains good. Data on the latest number of suspensions and exclusions was provided. There had been no permanent exclusions and the total number of suspensions was dropping. The use of the school's RESET room, as part of a wider set of supportive initiatives linked with de-escalating behaviour, was appearing to have a positive impact. 60% of pupils experiencing the RESET room have not required a further session. Positive behaviour points remain a key element within the overall approach. 18 pupils have attended an alternative provision (AP) setting for a total of 33 days, with 45% of them not receiving any further suspension or the need to more undertake additional AP. Behaviour within the 6<sup>th</sup> Form remains good.
7. Curriculum- Shape and Quality of Education: A curriculum review was undertaken during the autumn term, the results of which were informing the curriculum offer for 24/25. Further refinements would take place in 24/25 especially for the KS5 curriculum offer to coincide with external curriculum reform. Detail was provided in the HT's report. At KS5 there was likely to be some reduction in subjects offered and a shift from A-level to vocational qualifications, specifically for engineering. Entry standards had been reviewed and the SLT was now considering raising entry requirements. Governors **challenged** whether appropriate flexibility could be built into the entry criteria to ensure that the requirements did not disadvantage suitably able pupils whose GCSE results were not reflective of their potential. Reassurance was given that this could be incorporated into the decision making. Changes at the KS4 curriculum included moving to a short-course RE qualification, delivering PSHE within a timetabled Yr10 slot, and narrowing some subjects from Yr9, including the removal of the ASDAN. KS3 changes included increased time for maths, science, history and geography; the delivery of dance through PE/performing arts; and an MFL allocation of 5 hours. Governors **endorsed** the changes to the curriculum shape and offer, noting that it would remain under SLT review for 24/25.

The LGB was informed of the quality assurance processes that had taken place during the autumn term. They included reviews of teaching and learning in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, maths and MFL; observation of SEND provision; and Curriculum Team Leaders (CLTs) reviewing the quality of L&T within the faculty. Together these had identified strengths and opportunities for development. The latter included reading strategies, feedback

strategies and retrieval activities. The QA work also provided evidence that supported the analysis that behaviour and attitude within lessons was good.

**8. Curriculum- Progress, PP Strategy Statement:**

The pupil premium strategy statement 2023-26 which included an impact statement was included in the meeting papers and would be published on the school website. Governors **noted** and **approved** the report. Governors **challenged** how the school supported more able and talented pupils. The school offered and “honours programme” for the more able pupils which was designed to stretch pupils by providing opportunities to develop critical thinking skills using activities such as debating challenges. The school also offered pupils an opportunity to complete an EPQ. However, it was recognised that unlike PP, there was no additional hypothecated funding for this group of pupils.

**9. Curriculum- Progress and Attainment:**

Yr11: The HTs report provided a summary on the current position. This was supported by more detailed data contained within the data dashboard. The latest data position was based on pupil performance in recent mock examinations, using 2019 grade boundaries, which provided a greater degree of confidence in the projections. A governor **queried** whether mocks covered all curriculum areas and it was confirmed that this was the case. The current Yr11 progress8 measure was measuring a -0.61 outturn (compared with -1.00 for 22/23) which then forecasted a -0.17 outcome at year end. The corresponding December Disadvantaged and SEND values were lower at -1.44 and -2.12 respectively. Attainment8 profiles highlighted that Maths and EBACC needed to show an improvement, whereas English was closer to the FFT20 targets that have been set. Governors were informed that currently girls were outperforming boys and that SEND and PP remained behind the main cohort average. Governors **questioned** whether two mock cycles had a negative impact on pupil welfare. The decision to run two mocks was taken as part of preparing pupils for the live examination, and to provide them with an understanding and experience of the actual conditions. A mock results day would be used, again to help condition and prepare the pupils. Staff were supporting all pupils through the mock process and providing additional support to SEND pupils. Governors **challenged** why maths mock performance was lower than English. This was in part due to the linear nature of the curriculum and that a full maths paper had been used for the mock. The results from the mock would enable more targeted intervention groups to be assembled for dedicated support. Governors **challenged** how assessing elements of the curriculum not yet studied benefited the students. It was noted that some adaptations were made to questions and marking, however, the approach highlighted those pupils would benefit from stretch, and it provided all pupils with general exam technique experience on sequencing which questions to answer first. It was also noted that last year 33 pupils were outside the P8 calculation due to their subject choices, although for 23-24 this number was expected to be lower. Governors were also provided with a detailed subject-level progress index which highlighted subject performance and allowed the SLT to assist and direct pupils to specific subject intervention groups.

Yr13: Mock results for Yr13 was projecting an average grade of C- for the cohort, which was lower than the position in 2022-23 (at grade C). This was in part due to more stringent grade boundaries being applied to the Mock results. The current end of year forecast was for an average grade of C+/B-. Students studying on vocational programmes appeared to be performing more strongly, and girls continued to outperform boys at this point in time. Governors **queried** whether a small number of pupils could influence the overall average data, and suggested that the SLT should repeat the analysis, and thus understand whether specific intervention with these pupils could have a marked improvement in the overall average grade outcome. Governors also **queried** whether there was any relationship between pupil performance and attendance, although this analysis had not been done.

Results from Yr12 Resits taken in the autumn were significantly better than in 2022-23 and outperformed 2019 outcomes.

Following the mocks, the SLT had created a 10-point action plan to support pupil performance in public exams in the summer. This had already commenced and would include targeted interventions at cohort and group levels, and at individual subject level. The approach would be “done with”, and include elements for pupil

reflection to take place on their mock performance. For Yr13 there would also be more directed study time, and a reversal of some of the independent student time arrangements.

Governors **queried** whether consideration had been given to starting KS4 in Yr9 as opposed to Yr10. This had been discounted, because KS3 was critical for developing key skills which are needed to be successful in KS4. Governors also **asked** how parents were being engaged to support the pupils and school in preparing them of exams. The school was providing ongoing communications through letters home, provided on-line resources and materials, held workshops and parent evenings. Resources used in workshop are made available to parents, irrespective of whether they had attended the activity. Governors **endorsed** the approach being followed.

**10. Curriculum- Pupil Destinations:** Nothing to report.

### **Welfare**

**11. Safeguarding:** A detailed Safeguarding report was included in the meeting papers. This included a statistical summary of safeguarding data, which is being developed as part of Trust-wide initiative to standardise reporting to LGBs. All pastoral staff have been trained to DSL standard. Governors were advised that key areas of concern remained eating disorders, substance misuse, mental health and self-harm. Support was being provided by the school as well as external agencies. Awareness raising of issues continues to be a focus of support.

**12. Welfare and Wellbeing – Pupils:** The HT report included information on the work undertaken to strengthen SEND support within the school. SEND remains one of the three SIP priorities within the school for 23-24, and the Jan 2024 INSET day focused on adaptive teaching. The HT report also provided details on the wide range of careers support provided to pupils. This included access to digital packages, talks, workshops and work experience opportunities.

A new house system has been introduced into the school during the autumn term. This was done to forge a greater sense of community and to strengthen the school culture. All pupils have been allocated to a house. Student voice remains an important element of pupil welfare and students have had the opportunity to share their voice through student leadership meetings. A range of activities have flowed from this which has included, the naming and shaping of House activities, suggestions on facilities (improved seating and canteen), support for revision skills, and developing leadership opportunities.

Pupil enrichment activities has resulted in 66.7% of Yr7-Yr11 pupils' participation. Whilst SEND and disadvantaged pupils have been involved, their level of engagement has been below that of other pupils so increasing participation from these groups will be a focus going forward.

**13. Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff:** The HT report included a report on wellbeing. A wellbeing Quality Assurance audit had been undertaken in December 23, and the outcomes from this report will shape the next phase of work. Preliminary findings suggested that staff had responded positively to changes taking place within the school, including communication and clarity of ethos and objectives. The HT had implemented three staff working groups to secure ownership and wider involvement in responding proactively to the survey findings. The HT report also provided summary data on staff absence. The most significant factor on attendance was COVID, and the Local Authority's guidance on isolation periods. All staff absences are followed up with a face-to-face meeting with a member of SLT.

### **Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement**

**14. Local Policy Approval**

Governors were advised that the admissions arrangements 2025-26 would be circulated for comment and endorsement during the spring term. No significant changes were expected for Yr7 Entry.

Governors debated KS5 entry requirements, which included the merits of studying 4 A-levels and the examination boards selected. It was agreed that the prospectus should include more information on entry requirements, so that the academic demands and expectations of pupils selecting subjects at A-level was clear.

15. Governor Training: Governors were reminded to record onto their Governor Hub personal profiles any training that had been undertaken. The annual skills would be undertaken in the summer term.
16. Governor Link Visits: Reports from Governor link visits undertaken during the autumn term on Safeguarding and Student Engagement were provided on Governor Hub
17. Extension of School Day: Supporting papers were included on Governor Hub. The school had undertaken a review of the school day, as a response to the DfE directive for a 32.5hr week. Feedback supported a model that extends for time which would be used to incorporate reading and PSHE activities with the school day concluding at 15:10. **Governors ratified this change.**
18. Uniform Consultation: A consultation on the school uniform and branding was ongoing. This would meet the expectations that a review should be undertaken every 5 years. The exercise would consider the brand and use of logo so as to ensure that the uniform was cheap, offered good quality and was sustainable. One safeguard that would be put in place was that if there was any change to the school tie, for example to align with school houses, then the school would provide the tie in the first instance. Any changes would most likely roll out from Yr7. The HT agreed to produce and share with governors a graphic on the proposed school uniform. **[Action HT]**
19. Stakeholder Engagement – Parents/Carers: The HT report included a summary of activities undertaken during the autumn term, which included open evenings, information evenings, newsletters and revision events.
20. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community: The HT report included a summary of community engagement events. These included promoting the school with local primary schools, employer engagement days, and engagement with arts and community events.
21. Communication to Trust: Governors expressed their concern that Local Authority Funding challenges could have a detrimental impact on the availability and quality of additional support services, and in particular whether only statutory services would be provided by the LA. Governors were concerned about the financial impact that this would have on the Trust and school.
22. Communication from Trust: AH reported that Dover Bank Primary school had joined the Trust wef 1 Jan 2024. This was viewed positively as the school was a feeder to CHS.
23. AOB: none

**Meeting Closed at 6:33pm**

**Next Meeting Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 4pm at Congleton High School**

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