

**Date: Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**Present:**

Mr R. Benson (Chair)-(RB)  
 Prof T. Sadat-Shafai (TSS)  
 Mr J. Marsh (JM)  
 Prof P Horrocks (PH)  
 Mrs J. Turner (JT)  
 Mrs K. Powell (KP)  
 Mr P. Turner (PT)

**Apologies:**

Mr J. Green (JG)  
 Mr S. Worthington (SW)

**Absent:** n/a

**In attendance:**

Ms H. Thurland – Headteacher (HT)  
 Mrs L. Darling – Deputy Headteacher (LD)  
 Mrs L. Salt – Deputy Headteacher (LS)  
 Miss J. Boulton – Assistant Headteacher, Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form (JB)  
 Mr P. Blaylock (PB) - Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion)  
 Mr R. McQueen (RM)- Assistant Headteacher  
 Mr C. Capey (CC)- Assistant Headteacher (Quality of Education)  
 Mrs N. Trigg (NT)-School Business Manager

Head Students-Toby and Abby-left after item 4

**Clerk:** Mrs S. Pomeroy

**Administration**

**1. Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations**

The Chair welcomed everyone and confirmed that the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from JG and SW. There were no Declarations of interest declared with the business of the meeting. Unless stated otherwise, all papers and policies had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- a) The part one minutes of the CHS LGB Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.
- b) There were no matters arising.

**3. Membership update:**

- There had been no changes to the membership of the board.
- There are no vacancies on the LGB
- Terms of office due to expire-TSS-31.08.25 and JG 31.10.25. Both governors had confirmed their willingness to serve a further term on the board and the Trust Governance Committee would consider their re-appointment.

**4. Update from Head Students**

Toby and Abby delivered a presentation to governors: "Leadership Update". They highlighted the following points:

- **Student Parliament:** This had gone well and there had been good communications with all students. The parliament had addressed issues raised by the students such as the dinner queue not flowing well and monitoring of the toilets. There are 35 students on the parliament and discussions take place withing year groups, chaired by the Head Students. The parliament provides feedback to students on the issues they have raised via the form tutors.
- **Charity work:** The students are on track to raise more money this year. Work is also being carried out to ensure that the students are better informed about the charities they are supporting such as White Ribbon UK.

- **Science Ambassadors:** A student had produced an excellent proposal for tree planting which has been approved. The format of the proposal has been shared for other students to use.
- **Mental Health Ambassadors:** Students had supported “Movember” and the campaign had been used by the charity as a showcase. Assemblies are planned by Year 12 as part of Mental Health Awareness Week.
- **LGBTQ Ambassadors:** A range of activities is planned for the Pride celebrations.
- Year 12 students are involved in the Debating Matters competition and will attend the final at the House of Lords.
- **Next steps:**
  - SEND Ambassadors
  - Body Positivity
  - Expand charity work

**Governors asked** Toby and Abby about the impact on them of serving as the Head Students. They responded that they had grown in confidence, particularly in speaking to a range of audiences. They had learned to work as a team and had developed project management skills. Governors also asked about succession planning and the transition to next year. Toby and Abby explained that Year 12 students had been involved this year with leadership projects in preparation for next year. Interviews for the Head Student positions would be held in the second half of the summer term 2025.

**HT commented** that she is proud of the Head Students and how they have fulfilled their roles and helped to develop the School Parliament. **The Chair thanked** the students for attending today’s meeting and providing an update on their work.

#### Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

##### 5. SIP and SEF

**School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self Evaluation (SEF)- to receive an update on progress.**

- HT informed governors that Tim Long from TCAT Academy Trust had been working with her on developing the SDF and SEF documentation.
- There is a significant amount of work to do at the school and the documents provide the medium to long term plan.
- Evidence of the impact of the work done so far can be seen. For example, in the reduction in the levels of persistent absenteeism and suspensions and the improvements in achievement.

It was agreed that the next LGB meeting to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025 would have a focus on forward planning and provide an opportunity for governors to review the SDP/SEF and agree priorities for 2025-26. The clerk would adjust the agenda accordingly. **ACTION**

**Governors challenged** whether there was duplication in the documents presented to governors and requested that the SEF, SDP and Headteacher’s report could be revised for future meetings. **Governors also commented** that the papers presented at the LGB meetings do not always align with the agenda items. HT agreed to review the format of the documents for future meetings. **ACTION**

#### Quality of Education

##### 6. Update on progress and attainment including groups (pupil premium, SEND, disadvantaged, gender): Year 11 and Year 13

**Year 13: JB provided an update:**

- Mock 2 data: The average A Level grade is a C: this is similar to the average grade achieved at the same point in 2024. However, current students have a lower prior attainment score, which suggests that they will make more progress.
- Subjects that have done particularly well in terms of progress (measured against minimum expected grade) include A Level Chemistry (3), Computer Science (1), Product Design (3), English Literature (3), Sociology (3), Physics (3) and Art, Biology, Economics, Law, Further Maths and Physics (all Alps grade 5).
- Subjects of concern include Business Studies, English Language, Politics, History and Geography, and Maths although English Language, Politics and Geography have only small

Numbers. The Maths Mock 2 exam tested different areas of the curriculum to Mock 1.

- The overall ALPS score at mock 1 was 7 and had improved to 6 at mock 2. (The score was 8 in 2024.) 3 is the predicted score but the school is not confident that this will be achieved. There is an issue of over inflation in some subjects which the school is challenging. SLT are confident that an ALPS score of 5 is a reasonable expectation this year. The predictions are not reported to parents. The school is still in the early stages of using ALPS.
- The key is the reduction in the number of students who are below target.
- Disadvantaged pupils are performing better.
- Boys are underachieving.
- High ability pupils are doing well.
- Middle to low prior attaining students are an issue and present a risk.
- Next steps are detailed in the presentation. Some courses used to finish late and did not allow for revision time. This has now been changed. Enrichment sessions are being offered for boys and exam preparation is the focus. The first had been held today and there had been a reasonable take up.

**Governors challenged** on the accuracy of the predicted grades for 2025. JB responded that this is more accurate than ever before. Staff use raw scores when making predictions and then consider the potential to improve to a higher grade. Predicted grades are increased only if staff are confident that they will be achieved.

**Governors asked** whether more work had been done from last year to prepare students for the exams. JB informed them that significant work had been carried out to prepare students. For example, revision checklist had been produced. Performance in some subjects may impact the overall ALPS score so there is still more work to do.

**Governors challenged** whether the school was confident enough to identify and disseminate good practice. HT explained that there had been a holistic approach to teaching and learning this year which had resulted in greater consistency. Leaders are aware of where there is good practice within the school. The driver for the sixth form curriculum is to be consistent with other providers. JB added that there is now also a common approach to the use of revision materials.

**Governors asked** who the ALPS data is shared with. HT explained that is shared with governors and would be used with Ofsted inspectors. It is also used extensively in conversations with staff to identify how many students need to improve their grade to have an impact on the overall ALPS scores.

**Year 11:** LS provided an update. She referred to the “Summary Statement on Mock 2 Outcomes Intervention Impact” report and highlighted the following points:

- The impact of recent work is evident, and the position is much stronger than in 2024.
- Average Attainment 8 grade of 4.48 and an estimated Progress 8 (Estimate based on CAT4 data) of 0.10 in comparison to -0.58 in March 2024.
- Outcomes for SEND learners are much closer to target with 32% (targets 44%) currently achieving benchmarks. At this point last year 12.5% of SEND students were achieving the 4+ benchmarks.
- The disadvantaged gap is closing with 40.9% of Pupil Premium students achieving Grade 4+ in English and Maths, which achieves the FFT20 target.
- 15 subjects are currently in a better average grade position to this time last year and some such as PE, Sports Studies, Engineering, Business and IT starting to improve from 2024.
- The English and Maths matching strategy has been effective in facilitating a 9.1% increase in students meeting the 4+ benchmark and a 10.8% increase in students achieving the 5+ benchmark between Mock 1 and Mock 2. 9-7 is above the FFT20 target.
- LS has taken ownership of the interventions programme. Each student has been considered and support identified. This has resulted in the school being more confident in the data it is presenting.

- Strategic decisions made last year around the structure of the school day are having an impact. 30 minutes of time each morning has been made available and this is particularly important for students entitled to Pupil Premium funding who are not always able to access support after school.
- Slide 2 details the impact of interventions by subject.
- The average mark increase per paper (mock 1 to mock 2) in the cohort was 4.86, an increase of 60%.
- The current cohort has 13 outliers due to Medical Needs / SEMH / contextual safeguarding issues. There were 33 outliers in the 2024 cohort. LS and LD are working together to monitor these students and make strategic decisions to best support them, for example using by using part-time timetables.
- The school is involved with the Cheshire East RADY programme (Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters) and LS would present the school's proposal on this programme at the next meeting of the LGB. **ACTION**

**Governors challenged** on whether the school is also considering the needs of high attaining students. HT explained that a student-by-student analysis takes place to ensure that the needs of all are met. There is evidence that 7+ measures and improving. Staff work to stretch higher attaining students and develop deeper thinking. They understand what students need to do to achieve top marks. The school has looked at the data to see which courses students would be eligible for and have invited them to the sixth form.

**Governors noted** that improvements are evident and that it is pleasing to see that the disadvantaged gap is closing.

#### 7. **KS4 Curriculum Rationale Update:**

HT provided a verbal update:

- The curriculum has been rationalised and now serves the needs of the community.
  - The school still retains an EBAC ambition for the future.
  - The revised curriculum model and rational would be shared at the next meeting of the LGB. **ACTION**
- Governors queried whether there had been any impact from removing MFL. HT informed them that the curriculum offer was now in line with when the school has posted its best results. RE had been removed and this had allowed for increased teaching time for Maths. The school had catered for the requests of students within the capacity of the staff.

#### 8. **Admissions and Pupil Numbers**

The Headteacher provided an update:

- Mobility statistics are included on page 3 of the Headteacher's Report.
- There had been an overall reduction in pupil numbers over the year, but the school expects this to even out.
- There is an increasing trend for EHE (Elective Home Education).
- The new intake for 2025 is in line with the forecast of 190, with the potential to increase further. This is an improvement on the previous year and is a positive return from the 210 initial allocations.
- The budget is in line with expectations and is better than last year.
- Sixth form recruitment represents a similar picture to Year 12. There has been a significant increase in the number of external applicants.
- There needs to be a sustainable curriculum offer and there are some difficult decisions to be made regarding group sizes and this may impact on the overall size of the sixth form.
- Curriculum leaders need to be focussed on ensuring that students achieve the right grades to enable them to move to the next stage of their education.

#### 9. **Link Governor Monitoring**

- There were no link governor monitoring reports to consider at this meeting.
- The Chair confirmed that he visits school every fortnight to meet with the Headteacher.
- JG, JM and KP had also visited school. PH informed HT that he would be available in the second half of the summer term 2025 and would arrange a monitoring visit. **ACTION**

### **Personal Development**

## 10. Summary Report on Attendance

HT provided an update:

- Persistent absenteeism had reduced. Significant progress has been made in line with the Attendance Accelerated Action Plan. The TCAT Trust has played a key supportive role in reviewing barriers to improving attendance at CHS.
- There are issues in Year 9 and a mentoring programme is in place.
- The new Arbor system will be used to its full potential to drive improvement.
- The national picture regarding attendance is improving and the school is aware that there is further work to be done. Attendance is a focus for the Trust.

## 11. Rewards and Behaviour: RM

- Suspension incidents and the number of days is declining within year and compared to 2023/4 data. This is largely due to the use of the RESET room and how the school is managing behaviour internally.
- There has been 50% reduction in suspensions for Year 9. However, there is still more work to do with this cohort.
- RESET referrals have reduced by 35%. Key students in Year 11 are now on more appropriate timetables. There has been a slight increase in referrals in Year 10 and this is related to two students.
- A mentoring programme had been introduced from November 2024
- There has been 1 permanent exclusion this academic year, to-date.
- The Year 9 RADY programme would be developed across the school, starting with a pilot in Years 7 and 8.
- An apprentice Learning mentor would be in place for Years 7 and 8 next year.
- The school generally feels calm this year. Routines are set and there are clear expectations of behaviour.

**Governors challenged** on how these improvements could be sustained and improved upon further. HT responded that staff capacity and excellent relationships are key. Staff, pupils and their families can see the benefits of the interventions and the views of all stakeholders are considered.

## Welfare

### 12. Safeguarding

- The school had experienced two significant and challenging incidents with students. JB had done great work to support students and there had been a positive response from the wider community.
- The SCiES audit had taken place and had been very positive overall. The school is regarded as a beacon of excellence. There had been some recommendations around increased training for the safeguarding link governor. AH commented that developing link roles is a focus for the Trust.
- The school is aware of the risks of suicide, particularly at assessment points and is vigilant to changes in behaviour. Pastoral support is offered to students and supervision in place for staff.

**Governors noted** that safeguarding statistics are included in the Safeguarding Report and **commented** that it would be useful if trends over time were also reported on. LD would include this information in future reports. **ACTION**

### 13. Welfare and Wellbeing – Students

- The Trust carried out a student voice survey across all schools and key stages.
- Key findings are listed on page 17 of the Headteacher's Report.
- A key recommendation from the survey was to signpost to external agencies and display support posters.
- There is more work to do on gathering whole school student voice.

### 14. Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff

- NT is the key point of contact for HR issues.
- Staff make use of the Employee Assistance Programme. The staff absence statistics indicate an improvement in staff wellbeing. There has been a significant reduction in the use of supply staff.
- The Headteacher engaged with staff to gain feedback on the progress of the school so far. Most staff are happy at CHS, feel proud to work at the school and feel safe.

- The staff understand that the school is on a journey and can see the impact of changes made. There is further work to do to continue the improvements in student behaviour and attitudes which feeds into staff wellbeing.
- The key areas staff want the school to focus on are communications and consistency.
- A staff executive forum meets every half term, and the schools acts on their feedback.

## **Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement**

### **15. Polices**

#### **Local Policy Approval**

- Careers
- Charging and Remissions

**Governors approved** the above polices. They commented that it would be useful if there was a summary of the changes made to the polices or an indication if it was a new policy.

#### **Trust Polices**

- Serial and Unreasonable Complaints
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

**Governors noted** the Trust polices. The Chair raised some issues with the content of the polices which he would discuss outside of the meeting with AH. **ACTION**

It was suggested that it would be useful if the Trust provided template letters for complaints and training for staff on managing complaints. AH would feed these matters back to the Trust and commented that the number of complaints that progress to Stage 2 is low.

**Governors challenged** on whether the suspension and exclusion process is audited. AH responded that the governance team maintain a tracker and that the Education Committee considers the rates of suspensions and exclusions. Recommendations from Governing Board Panels and Independent Review Panels on procedures are acted upon.

### **16. Governor Training Update**

- Any governors who had not yet done so were reminded to complete the mandatory Safeguarding and Prevent training.
- The Trust is now asking governors to complete suspensions and exclusions training to increase the pool of trained governors available to sit on panels. The clerk explained that the governance team have also developed resources to support governors serving on permanent exclusion panels.

### **17. Stakeholder Engagement – Parents/Carers**

- The SLT are Leaders are involved with the Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA) to help evaluate and improve communication with families. 100 Families have engaged in a survey to help inform the school action plan.
- The move to Arbor has provided an opportunity to relaunch the parent portal.

### **18. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community**

- The school has signed up for Duke of Edinburgh licences.
- The Rotary Club is a key link for the school. They run a range of competitions and provide an award for the scholars evening.
- An Olympian will deliver a speech at the Awards Evening.
- HT would share dates for summer events with governors. **ACTION.**
- A Careers Fair is planned.

### **19. Communication to Trust**

AH to feedback to the Trust on points raised in the meeting.

### **20. Communication from Trust**

- The results from the Equality and Diversity Survey had been shared on Governor Hub.
- The Trust Governance Conference would take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

- The Annual Skills Audit had been launched.

## 21. AOB

Governors requested a glossary of educational terms and acronyms. The clerk would provide links to the glossaries included in the Trust Governance Handbook. **ACTION**

**Next Meeting: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 5:00 pm at Congleton High School**

There were no part two items for discussion at this meeting.

The meeting closed at 7:30 pm.

## Summary of actions

Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Deadline
<b>From the meeting held on 30.04.25</b>			
5	To change the format of the Headteacher's report for future LGB meetings.	HT	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
5	To present a proposal on the rollout of the RADY programme at the next LGB meeting.	LS	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
6	To present the revised curriculum offer at the next LGB meeting.	HT	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
8	To arrange a monitoring visit in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of the summer term 2025.	PH/HT	July 2025
11	To include trend data in future safeguarding reports to governors.	LD	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
14	To discuss the Trust policies presented at the meeting with AH.	RB	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
17	To share dates with governors for summer term school events.	HT	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
18	To feedback the following items to the Trust: a) Involvement of Chair of Governors in managing serial and unreasonable complaints (if complaint against Headteacher) b) Consider providing template letters for schools when managing complaints. c) Training for staff to manage and de-escalate complaints.	AH	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
20	a) To adapt the agenda for the next LGB to focus on forward planning and SDP. b) To provide a link to the glossary of education acronyms. (posted link on Governor Hub 02.05.25)	Clerk/HT/RB Clerk	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2025