



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

CHESHIRE STUDIO SCHOOL LGB

Online Meeting via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES – Part I



Date: 10th March 2021 at 4pm

Present:

Mrs C. Millson (Chair)
Mrs A Sennet (Vice Chair) (AS)
Mr D Hermitt (DH)(From item 7.6)
Mr N Jackson
Mrs J Padget

Absent: - None

In attendance:

Mr J Whittaker – Headteacher
Mrs K Key – Deputy Headteacher
Mr C Leigh – Assistant Headteacher – (Items 1-5 and 9)
Mr D Twambley – TLA COO
Mrs N Phillips– TLA Director of Finance & Governance (NP)

Clerk: Mrs C Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and quoracy was confirmed.
2. There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.
3. Subject to the Chair’s name correct spelling update, to Mrs C Millson and the note that the Vice Chair is the Safeguarding Governor, the **Minutes** of the meeting held on 24th November 2020 were approved.
- 3.1 **Matters Arising**
- 3.2 Congratulations were extended to Mr Whittaker and Mrs Key on their appointment as Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher respectively, of both Knutsford Academy (KA) and Cheshire Studio School (CSS). Congratulations were also sent to Mrs Weigh, appointed Assistant Headteacher.
- 3.3 With regard to item 11 of the Minutes of 24th November, the Admissions policy, it was confirmed that, subject to timetable alignment issues, with the use of Teams, it may be possible that in the future, pupils from other TLA schools are able to access to courses offered at CSS.
4. **Composition of LGB**
- 4.1 Thanks were proffered to Mrs Padget, whose term as Parent Governor ends on 27th March 2021, for her contributions as Governor to the Studio School. NP will guide the Headteacher on the process for election for a replacement parent governor.
- 4.2 Governors were reminded to complete their declarations and confirmations on Governor Hub.

Strengthening Leadership, Collaboration and Governance

5. **Matters for the Trust Board to share with LGB** – As requested by this LGB, the approved Trust Board Minutes are now being posted on Governor Hub. There were no wider Trust updates to report.
6. **Finance Update** – (Appendix 2) It was reported that overall the school is currently expected to achieve a small surplus of c.£673, in line with budget.
- 6.1 **A Governor asked that as Mr Kingdom had moved to The Oaks Academy (TOA), could more financial savings had been expected.** NP reminded Governors that Mr Kingdom’s salary had been allocated between KA and CSS, to reflect the work he did for both schools. Furthermore, other staff are now carrying out the roles Mr Kingdom had, resulting in very little forecasted staffing changes. Governors will shortly be able to access monthly reporting figures on Governor Hub.
- 6.1 Reserves are anticipated to be 11% of GAG at year end. TLA policy is a target of 5% of GAG and the COO and NP will meet with the Headteacher to discuss reinvestment options.

Improving Education and Opportunities

7. Covid-19 Update

7.1 **Review of risk assessments** – Risk assessments were completed and approved at Trust level, for reopening. The site is utilised as it was in September in terms of bubbles of pupils and lessons, and the school has decided to follow government guidance and request all pupils to wear face masks in lessons as well as social areas (unless medical reasons prevent that).

7.2 **Remote learning offer (published on school website) and impact** – Since Christmas, the school has offered 4 weeks of 100%, live lessons, 5 hours a day and the curriculum has been followed as if the pupils were in school. The remote learning structure includes registration each day and assemblies. Following a pupil survey, for a period of 2 weeks, a self-supported study lesson was incorporated into the lessons, equating to an hour a day to support wellbeing and family life. Governors who are parents reported that the online learning accessibility was good and their children were engaged with the lessons. The pupils survey revealed that pupils found the hardest thing with which to deal was motivation and loneliness. Tutors therefore engaged with pupils every morning and Teams break-out rooms were utilised. A Governor who is a parent remarked that there was nothing more the school could have done to support the pupils.

7.3 **Remote learning Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)** – Each faculty developed its own online provision and the SEF contains an aim for faculties to share best practice.

7.4 **Catch up premium** - The timetable has increased the periods to be taught in Yr12 next year, to ensure that year group is caught up and able to hit their GCSE expectations. Staff are considering a pre-summer, summer school, to which Yr11 pupils may be invited to taster sessions.

7.5 **Covid testing programme** – Of the 4000 tests to be carried out on pupils, 1200 have been completed. Testing has gone smoothly and there have been no Covid-19 positive cases. Governors had heard positive feedback, outside the meeting, about the testing regime and asked that their thanks be given to all involved, particularly Mr Routs and Mr Parr.

7.6 **Staff well-being** – 94% of staff reported in the survey that they felt well-supported and 84% felt that communication was good. Negative comments in the survey results were addressed individually. Governors recognised the difficulties teachers faced providing online teaching, whilst caring for their own families and noted that good planning was evident. SLT continued welfare checks with staff throughout remote learning periods. Staff and pupils are happy to be back in school, where there is an environment of positivity and staff are confident that gaps in learning can be plugged. A few members of staff are nervous to return to school, but are reassured by the measures put in place, following risk assessments.

7.7 **Numbers of children attending school** – 92% of all pupils and 98% of Yr12, attended all their live lessons.

8. Strategic Vision:

8.1 **School Performance** – The data provided at Appendix 4, is from the last data collection at the end of the Autumn term. Examinations have been postponed for Yrs 11 and 13 and teachers will focus on work for teacher assessed grades after Easter. Teachers will consider what is appropriate to award each pupil and examination boards may request evidence to support those grades. It is thought that the examination boards may provide test papers which can be used to boost that evidence, but the details from the examination boards, such as whether they reserve the right to adjust marks where they feel evidence does not match grades and appeals policies, are not yet known. There are no concerns as the school analysed every pupil's grade in detail last summer for centre assessed grades and staff are comfortable that they can do this again. **Governors asked whether January Mock examinations went ahead.** The school opted to continue with January BTEC examinations for those who had worked hard towards them over Christmas and wanted to sit them, but they were not compulsory. Nearly all pupils sat those examinations but examination boards have clarified that there will be no penalties for those pupils who chose not to. Yr11 and 13 examination results will be published 3 weeks earlier than usual. The school has not yet responded to students asking about leaving dates, to ensure there is adequate time to collect as much evidence for grades as possible.

8.2 **School Improvement Priorities** – Nothing to report this meeting

9. Student Welfare (including Safeguarding) – (Appendix 5).

9.1 The spreadsheet at Appendix 5 showed the figures for Looked After Children (LAC), Child Protection (CP), Child in Need (CIN) and Early Help (EH) pupils, of which there are relatively few at the school. As is usual, there has been a dip in safeguarding incident reports during this term and a rise in social care interventions is anticipated during the summer term, so figures will resemble those of last year, but there are no major concerns. **Governors asked whether there had been any increase in need as pupils begin to return to school?** A small number of pupils have been anxious and lockdown has had an impact on the mental health of some pupils more than others, but appropriate support and reassurance was provided. Overall, the return to school has been a smooth transition. **Governors asked how often the spreadsheet in Appendix 5 (safeguarding summary) is updated.** The spreadsheet is updated every fortnight, following discussions about every individual pupil, at the appropriate level.

9.2 The Headteacher described the SLT structure to the LGB and a document detailing this will be sent to Governors when completed. The Headteacher advised that a new appointment is emerging, around promoting achievement for groups of students who otherwise might be faced with barriers. Amongst other aspects, this role would look to support school’s diverse range of pupils, as well as promote vocations for all aptitudes. **Governors noted that the Headteacher may be under capacity in terms of available resources at SLT level and asked whether there are any areas which may have to be deprioritised as SLT roles become broader.** The Headteacher assured Governors that there is capacity at SLT level. The team size has increased and all SLT members are receptive to taking on new work. There is a possibility that at some future point, there may be further secondments and appointments at middle leader level to increase capacity if needed. The school also receives support from the TLA central services team, so although some previous CSS/KA staff have now moved to a trust role, there is still capacity for support when required.

Fostering Identity and Ethos

10. LGB Roles:

- 10.1 **Link Governor update** – Assistant Headteachers and Link Governors met half-termly to discuss safeguarding matters, which provided a holistic picture of both KA and CSS and those and the Trust safeguarding meetings were helpful and positive.
- 10.2 **Training Update** – A trust level training package is being considered, and more information will follow. Talking Heads training will shortly be uploaded to Governor Hub, where Governor Hub training can already be found.
- 11. **Local Matters** – Standing Item – Nothing to report for this meeting.
- 12. **LGB Policy Review** – The Trust aim is for Trust schools’ websites to be compliant by the end of the school year. Next year, the trust will undertake a consolidation of Trust and schools’ policies and programme of review. The Local Authority have been informed of the school’s admissions’ arrangements.
- 13. **Matters to Share with the Trust Board (exception reporting)** – Nothing to report

AOB

- 14. **Governors asked whether the school needs a SEND Governor.** A KA Governor covers that role for both KA and CSS currently. There is no statutory requirement to have a SEND Governor, but it is good practice to do so. AS (Safeguarding Governor) and DH (Health and Safety Governor) both offered to take that role and it will be considered further.
- 15. The next meeting has been arranged on Teams, but Governors will be updated as to the location of the meeting, with regard to Covid-19 regulations.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 16th June at 4pm **Meeting Closed 5.33pm**

Minutes approved:

Date:.....