



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

**CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL LGB
MINUTES – Part I**



Date: 8th March 2022 at 6pm

Present:

T. Pear (Chair)	L. Bialek (LB)
J Jardine (JJ)	N. Leese (NL)
N. Nee (NN)	P. Ashraf (PA)
Z. Morris (ZM)	J. Lowe (JL)

Apologies:

M. Lord
D Fish

In attendance:

J. Mason - Headteacher
D. Twambley – TLA COO
A. Howells – TLA Director of Quality

Clerk: C. Gritton

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy - The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting, in particular the new Governors NN, AM, NL and PA for whom this was their first LGB meeting . Apologies were accepted and noted as above and the meeting was quorate.
2. **Paper 2.0 Future Meeting Administration** uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting was **received. It was reported that** the Trust are looking to how the LGB can make the best use of its time and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in discharging its responsibilities. AH is attending all TLA schools' LGB meetings and identifying best practices to share across the Trust. Governors were invited to send comments to the Clerk or to AH. **Governors reported that** the uploading to GH, of pre-meeting questions was helpful, but relied on papers being uploaded well in advance of the meeting. The Headteacher added that the uploading of papers relied on the early preparation of agendas. **It was reported that** AH and the Clerk were working on preparing mapped agendas for the year, to be provided in September each year. Governors were reminded that Working Parties were an efficient way of looking at specific matters and projects to report back to the LGB.
3. Declarations of Interest - There were no declarations of a personal or prejudicial nature.
4. **Paper 4.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** - The Minutes of the CPS LGB meeting held on **22nd June 2021**, uploaded to GH prior to the meeting had been **approved** via email in the Autumn term. No further comments or amendments were raised.
5. Composition of LGB and Governance Matters – **It was reported that** the CPS LGB had a full constitution and there were no terms of office due to expire this term.
6. Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB – **It was reported that** the Trust Board had noted the LGB's thanks to the Headteacher and all CPS staff for their hard work during Covid.

7. Admissions' Update

7. **It was reported that** CPS had received 10 first and 15 second choice applications for September 2022. The school usually takes 15 pupils and it is anticipated that it will be oversubscribed, necessitating the Headteacher having to apply the Admissions' Criteria. Governors were reminded that these can be found on the school website.
 - **Governors asked what had the school done that it will be oversubscribed, as this is unusual and whether the school will admit over 15 students. It was reported that** a local school had recently reduced its Published Admissions Number (PAN) by 10 and more houses have been built in the area. CPS has also admitted a number of in-year transfers this year. The outgoing Yr6 is quite a large group, so increased pupil numbers coming into the school will help to rebalance lagged funding to pupil numbers which is good for long-term financial sustainability .

- **Governors asked how an increased intake will affect the combined year groups and staff resources. It was reported that** careful planning will ensure the right pupils are in the right groups and if the school is able to maintain the current staffing levels, staff should not be overstretched.

8. School Performance

8.1.1 Performance Data - Paper Summary of Data Analysis uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was **received. It was reported that** the data in the Paper was Teacher Assessed, showing where the pupils were up to this point in time. Reception data has changed, so pupils are either on track or not. As seen nationally, progress has not followed a steady trajectory over lockdowns, mirroring the time pupils have spent out of school. As seen nationally, writing has been the worst affected subject, as families find it difficult to keep on track at home, without teacher input. The school has worked closely with an external professional to support pupils in their writing and whilst this has shown positive outcomes, the expert has advised that as seen nationally, pupils may not reach their pre-Covid expected levels.

8.1.2 It was reported that pupils had been split into groups to support the differing needs of those working towards and at expected, bands. There were no greater depth pupils at this point in time and the school has long-since recognised that a number of Yr6, lower ability pupils are struggling for a number of reasons but they are making good progress with the support in place. The percentages reported should be analysed in context with the noted pupil numbers, which are relatively small. Yr5 are a strong cohort.

- **Governors noted the figures for Yr3 and asked what interventions are in place. It was reported that** the figures reflected the national picture as Yr3 pupils' last 'normal' year had been Reception; they missed all of their Yr1 and much of Yr2, so the foundations for learning were not as strong as they would usually be. CPS staff are confident that there is time for them to improve and the school is putting all it can in place to support them and overall, CPS pupils are doing well to stay focused, given the circumstances of the last 2 years.
- **Governors asked whether the school has seen any decline in behaviour since the pupils returned to school. It was reported that** no decline had been seen and **the COO reported that** as across all schools, there has been an emotional maturity decline. **The Headteacher reported that** staff have remained flexible to support students to keep the school running whilst pupils and staff were absent for Covid reasons. Staff are very supportive of each other, are committed to the school and its pupils and will go the extra mile for them. The Headteacher makes all staff aware that they are appreciated. Governors were also grateful to the Headteacher and staff for this and **ACTION:** The Chair will write to CPS staff to express the LGB's gratitude.

8.2 Covid Recovery – Catch-Up Planning Document June 2021 uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was **received. It was reported that** the school was back to normal as far as possible but everybody continues to sanitise and wash hands carefully and classrooms are kept well ventilated with open windows.

- **Governors asked whether pupils were coping well with the easing of restrictions. It was reported that** the pupils were coping well and their current questions to staff were about the situation in the Ukraine. The school has shown the pupils age-appropriate news footage and support discussion when the pupils want it. Counsellors and a Play therapist come into school to support mental health and wellbeing, which is very positive.

9. Action Plans and Updates

9.1 It was reported that safeguarding training is up to date for the safeguarding lead and the 3 deputies. All staff and volunteer DBS checks have been updated. Governors' DBS checks will be updated shortly by the Clerk. There had been no major behaviour or safeguarding incidents.

9.2 A paper detailing attendance was shared with Governors and **it was reported that** attendance had been up and down dependant on Covid but overall had been above national averages and was improving.

9.3 SEND Governor Report – Marchv1 uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was **received. It was reported that** numbers of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) needs had risen during Covid.

- **Governors asked whether the school received any additional provisions or resources to help support the additional numbers. It was reported that** the school has received no additional provisions nor resources but manage due to the supportive, flexible working approach adopted by all staff at the school. The paid for external counselling is exhausted in terms of being able to increase numbers

referred and the situation is being carefully monitored. Yr6 will be provided with additional transition support but as they are taught in such small groups, this is already factored into their learning. The support of the school's trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) staff can be drawn upon if needed.

9.3.1 The SEND Governor reported that the school is a nurturing environment where all pupils are supported above and beyond' whether or not with SEND needs.

10. Governor Visits

10.1 Governors were reminded that they can come into school any time and were reminded their purpose is not to critique teaching but to gain an understanding of the areas such as the ethos of the school, and how policies and school improvement plans are implemented to support pupils' behaviour, interventions and safeguarding. There are templates for visit reports and working parties will be established for targeted projects.

10.2 Governors were reminded that they should have an understanding of the curriculum which can be found on the school website and staff will provide a series of reports for Governors next term detailing their subject areas to assist Governors in being able to articulate the school's intent and implementation.

ACTION: All Governors were asked to arrange a school visit before the June LGB meeting.

11. Policies

The **following Policies** had been uploaded to GH prior to the meeting and **were approved.**

11.1 Exclusions Policy

11.2 Behaviour Policy

11.3 Child Protection Policy and Procedures

It was reported that AH and the Clerk are working on policies' version control and the timing throughout the school year, of policies being brought for approval.

12. Local Matters

ACTION: Governors were asked to send to the Clerk, ideas to help support community engagement and parent volunteers will be sought again, via the school Newsletter, to come into support reading initiatives.

13. Governor Training

13.1 It was reported that AH and the Clerk are working on Governor Induction and training programmes as well as a Governor Handbook.

13.2 Governors had received their NGA logins and no issues were reported. Governors were asked to record any training in their GH profiles.

14. Finance Update

14.1 It was reported that whilst finance is not a Governor/LGB responsibility, the Trust share the monthly management accounts on GH. Reserves are healthy and there have been recent large amounts of capital reinvestment in the school site. Further plans include the building of a covered area for early years. The school is on track to make a modest surplus this year.

- **Governors asked how the surplus is used. It was reported that** surplus funds go into the school's reserves. The Trust requires TLA schools to retain a certain sum as a financial safety net to assist with issues arising from the volatility in pupil numbers and lagged funding. When accounts are at a suitable point, surpluses can be reinvested in the school in consultation with the Headteacher as to need.

15. Matters to Share with the Trust Board

15.1 The LGB repeated their sincere thanks to Mrs Cumberlidge for her dedication to the school and her hard work as Chair of the LGB.

16. AOB

Governors were asked to let the Chair know if they were interested in becoming Vice Chair of the LGB.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 22nd June 2022 at 6pm Meeting closed at 7:30pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....