



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

**CHESHIRE STUDIO SCHOOL LGB
MINUTES – Part I**



Date: Monday 2nd May 2023 at 4:20pm

Present:

Mrs C. Millson (Chair) (CM)
Mr D. Hermitt (DH)
Mr D. Walton (DW)

Absent:

Mrs A. Sennett (AS)
Mr N. Jackson (NJ)

In attendance:

Mrs K. Key (KKY) (HT) –Headteacher
Mr C Leigh (CLH) –Acting Deputy Headteacher
Mr C. Parr (CPR) – Assistant Headteacher
Mrs N. Phillips (NPS) – Director of Operations & Finance
Dr A. Howells – TLA Director of Quality (AH)
Dr R Taylor (observer- KA Governor)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy - The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received from AS and the meeting was quorate. The Chair noted that since the last meeting, James Whittaker had retired, Karen Key had been appointed to the role of Headteacher, and Chris Leigh to the role of acting Deputy Headteacher. The Deputy Headteacher role from September 2023, interviews were being held later this week. The committee acknowledged James Whittaker’s significant contribution to the Knutsford Schools over many years. Karen Key was congratulated on her appointment and she and Chris Leigh were welcomed to the meeting in their new roles. The Chair introduced and welcomed Dr Bob Taylor to the meeting, who was in attendance as an observer.
2. Declarations of Interest - There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest. Papers and policies had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, unless otherwise stated herein.
3. The Minutes of the meeting of the CSS LGB held on 16th January 2023 were **approved**. Matters Arising – paper 3.0 CSS Matters Arising Report, was received and the Action Log updated. **It was confirmed that** the school is running an election for a new Parent Governor. No nominations have been received to date. Knutsford Academy (KA) is also running a Parent Governor Election and a number of nominations have been received. **It was agreed that** consideration will be given to inviting a suitable nominee/s (with reference to the skills audit) to join the CSS LGB, should they be unsuccessful in being appointed to the KA LGB.

4. School Performance and Welfare

Paper 4.0 – 5.3 KA HT Report CSS LGB 02.05.23 Final, was received.

4.1 School Improvement Plan (SIP) The HT reported that school performance continues to be strong. The school’s strengths lie in KA and CSS’ unique curriculum offer, the well qualified, hardworking and committed staff, the support and accountability afforded to KA and CSS by the Trust and the Good Ofsted reports, noting these strengths. The next steps are to continue to embed the curriculum and the Knutsford Way, to introduce an ambitious academic programme from Year 7-13 and to prioritise reading and oracy across the curriculum. The 3 core values of Ambition, Respect and Kindness, are being introduced along with behaviour relational practice to further support students who are struggling to engage and the development of the personal development curriculum. HT has spoken to the students about these steps and student and parent feedback has been positive.

Challenge: Governors noted that only 80% of CSS students had access to Satchel One at the time of the last meeting and asked whether this had been resolved. It was reported that the previously reported SIMS glitch had been resolved and all students now have access to satchel One.

4.2 Admissions and Pupil Number Update

CPR reported that currently 19 students have opted for the studio pathway in year 10. It was noted that a careers morning is planned to ensure that students are fully advised of the options available, to help them choose a route that is best for them and a transition programme of tasters in Health and Social Care and other CSS subjects, as well as additional support for English, Maths and Science, are available to students for this purpose. In response to Governor challenge, it was reported that whilst the CSS route is discussed at Yr7 parent evenings, the school does so in a way that is mindful that it does not place bias or undue emphasis on any particular academic or vocational pathway to parents at that time. Across the sixth form provision for KA and CSS, including internal and external students, there had currently been 230 applications. for September intake. To date 42 have chosen 2 or more vocational subjects.

4.3 Pupil Progress and Attainment It was confirmed that [ACTION HT] the data and accompanying narrative would be circulated to governors as soon possible after the data becomes available. Governors will be able to post questions to GH following the upload of that report].

4.4 Ofsted Report Paper 4.4 Ofsted Inspection report, was received. It was reported that the published report noted that strengths were present in curriculum, behaviour, destinations, strong teacher subject knowledge and effective identification of reading gaps and implementation of impactful interventions. Governors were delighted with the 'good' outcome and thanked the Headteacher and all the staff for their hard work. The areas for improvement included attendance and uptake for enrichment activities. The school already has good enrichment offers and is looking at ways to engage students in those activities and to expand the offer to make it more attractive. Governors noted that these areas had been identified by the LGB prior to inspection. Governors noted the recent media coverage regarding the challenges schools and staff face during Ofsted inspections and the HT confirmed that the Ofsted inspection had been a rigorous process,, but had been a positive professional, respectful experience. Governors congratulated the school on the Good Ofsted rating and are keen to continue to support the school in monitoring the areas of improvement. [ACTION SLT: will provide regular monitoring reports on the areas identified by Ofsted as areas for improvement].

5. School Welfare

5.1 Attendance CLH reported that national attendance figures remain lower than pre-covid levels. CSS students entered the school with lower attendance rates than KA students, but are showing signs of improvement, as are reduced levels of persistent absence across both schools. The schools work with EWM (Education Welfare Management) on improving attendance and staff were able to articulate the school's understanding of attendance during the Ofsted inspection.

Challenge: Governors asked whether there is a particular issue with lateness. It was reported that there had recently been a change to train timetables, which meant that students were arriving late. The school had allowed a period of transition whilst parents and students worked out the new timetables and now students are again expected to be in school on time. However, renewed action would be taken in the summer term to minimise lateness.

5.2 Behaviour HWH reported that internal exclusion processes and facilities have been developed and a whole school detention system is now in place. Staff are supportive of the systems and processes and feel supported in their consistent provision across the school. The systems and processes have been clearly communicated to staff and students and attendance at detentions has improved significantly. The systems and processes are robust and having a positive impact and HWH has clear oversight of where escalation is taking place and of the high priority list of students who are anticipated as possibly presenting challenging behaviour. There has been an increase in the use of the reset (internal suspension) room, where students work on the same curriculum and lesson as they would if they were in class and have restorative conversations and this increase aligns with a decrease in the number of external suspensions. The school has worked hard on building positive, supportive relationships with students and parents and SLT are confident that students and parents understand the behaviour expectations, systems and processes. The

reset room is currently open 3 days a week and will be open 5 days a week from September 2023. Data for internal suspensions/the reset room and detentions has improved significantly; the school is now confident in the attendance and escalation data gathered and staff can analyse who attends and when and can efficiently follow up absences when needed.

Challenge: Governors asked how students in after school detention travel home if they are usually reliant on the school coaches. It was reported that the school has communicated to parents that it is parents' responsibility to make alternate arrangements for their children to get home. Parents have been supportive of this and **in response to Governor challenge, it was confirmed that** no student has been stranded at school.

Challenge: Governors asked how will the school's systems and processes look when behaviour is outstanding. It was reported that many factors, in school and in the community, affect behaviour and there will always be students for whom their own behaviour management is more challenging and the school will always strive to support those students. The plans in place are effective and efficient, pick up on behaviour quickly and, over time, aim to decrease the likelihood of both poor behaviour and of poor behaviour escalation and the school also has an outstanding rewards programme to encourage good behaviour.

Challenge: Governors asked whether parents are utilising Satchel One effectively. It was reported that the majority of parents do so and Satchel One continues to work well for reporting behaviour and communications, but the school also communicates with parents in a variety of other ways, building very positive relationships. **Governors noted that** the school has a student agreement in place and suggested the school consider putting a similar parental agreement in place, to further provide clarity of expectations of the school and of parents. Heads of Year now remain with their form tutor groups, helping with positive relationships' building and assisting with speedier, individually targeted interventions when needed.

5.3 Safeguarding It was reported that the safeguarding team have all completed level 3 training. The Safeguarding Children in education Settings (SCiES) visit was deferred to the Autumn term, due to a clash with the Ofsted inspection, but there are no safeguarding concerns. Swans counselling attend the school one day a week with a focus on high priority behaviour and are a tremendous support to the school. There has been good support for parental workshops. The Government is due to provide guidance on supporting children who are trans gender and it will now be illegal for adults working with children, to not report suspicious sexual activity. It is anticipated that these matters will be reflected in the next Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) statutory guidance from September 2023. The Trust has introduced the online safeguarding tool, CPOMS across the Trust (already in use at CSS) and collaborative work and reporting consistency across the Trust schools is proving helpful. Across KA and CSS, Children in Need (CIN) and Looked After Children (LAC) numbers are higher than usual for this time of year and it is challenging meeting the needs of those children, but the school continues to do its best to support them and there are no major concerns.

6. Policies

6.1 Paper 6.1.1 Charging and Remissions Policy. NPS reported that a further amendment will be made to include reference to theft as well as wilful damage and with that amendment **the Policy was approved.** Governors thanked NPS for her work on the Policy.

6.2 Link Governor Monitoring It was reported that the Chair had been into school for a safeguarding visit, and there were currently no concerns and nothing to report. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENCo) is leaving the school at end of term, so a new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Link Governor will be appointed following appointment of the new SENCo. The Chair will continue to support the SEND team in the meantime. The Chair will carry out a safeguarding link governor review visit shortly and Mr Hermitt will support the HT carrying out a Health and Safety review also.

7. Other Matters

7.1 Local Matters

7.1.1 Staffing Update This item was taken under Part 2

7.1.2 School specific risks As reflected across Trust schools and nationally, it is difficult to recruit Teaching Assistants (TAs), cleaners and administration staff. The Trust Board is aware and is looking at ways to

make those job offers more attractive, but different schools have different challenges, so the Board is having to be creative in its thinking.

7.1.3 Site Matters It was reported that there will be an upgrade to the staff, 6th form and student toilets over the summer, with trans gender considerations being taken into account with regard to toilet allocation.

7.2 Matters to Share with the Trust Board

- Governors thanked AH and the finance team for the provision of the finance narrative.
- Governors would like more information on how communications between the LGBs and Trust Board will be developed.

7.3 Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB The information in the GH link **7.5 Feedback from the Trust Board held 29th March** was received.

7.4 AOB Nothing to report.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Monday 26th June at 4:00pm

Meeting Closed 5:20pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....