



Local Governing Board to The Learning Partnership

## CHESHIRE STUDIO SCHOOL LGB

### MINUTES – Part I



Date: Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 4:00pm

#### Present:

Dr C. Millson (Chair) (CM)  
Mrs D. Baines (DB)  
Dr D. Baxendale (DB)  
Mrs D. Nicholl-Timmins (DNT)  
Mr D. Walton  
Mr G. Kelly (GK)

#### Apologies:

Mrs A Sennett (AS)  
Dr R. Taylor (RT)

#### In attendance:

Mrs K. Key (KKY) - Headteacher  
Mr J. Lawes (JLA) - Senior Deputy Headteacher  
Mrs A. Thatcher - (ATR) Deputy Headteacher  
Mr C Leigh (CLH) - Assistant Headteacher  
Mr C. Parr - (CPR) - Assistant Headteacher  
Mrs H. Weigh-Williams (HWH) - Assistant Headteacher  
Dr A. Howells - (AH) - TLP Director of Quality  
Mrs J. Bradbury (JBY)-Head of English- left at 4:18 pm  
Mrs A. McGeehan (AMC)-Head of Maths-left at 4:42 pm  
Mr T. Swan (TSN)-Head of Science-left at 4:54 pm

**Clerk:** Mrs S. Pomeroy

#### Administration

**1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy** - The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted. The meeting was quorate. There were no additional Declarations of Interest made with the business of the meeting.

All papers and policies referred to had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, unless otherwise stated.

Governors agreed to take agenda item 5 next to allow members of staff to leave the meeting following their input. The minutes have been produced in agenda order for ease of reading.

#### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Governors approved the minutes of the LGB held on 16 January 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### Matters Arising

The Matters Arising report was received. All actions on the report had been completed or were placed on the meeting agenda. The following matters arising were discussed:

#### Inappropriate parental behaviour

The Chair commented that this is a national issue and was discussed at the most recent Chair's Forum. There has been an increase in parental complaints nationally and schools are finding it more difficult to de-escalate these issues and deal with them informally, which is the preferred approach of the Trust. The NGA are lobbying

the government and the DfE on whether it is the best use of governors' time to deal with complaints. The Chair also noted that staff are receiving an increased number of vexatious emails.

The leadership team at the school are taking a robust approach to this issue and have respectfully reinforced expectations of acceptable behaviour and conduct with parents.

**Q. Is the school receiving complaints from a range of parents or the same ones?**

R. From lots of parents. Some parents do not follow the Complaints Policy, and some are sending long, often abusive emails. Situations can escalate very quickly.

**Q. Does the school have a Code of Conduct for parents?**

R. Yes. This is set out at the beginning of each school year. The school promotes its values. It is important to ensure that lines of communication are open and that parents views are heard.

**SEND Link Governor**

It was confirmed that Bob Taylor had been appointed as the link governor for SEND.

**3. Governor Skills Audit**

The skills audit had been launched on Governor Hub and governors were requested to complete it by 4:00 pm on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024. **ACTION**

The results would be used to identify governor training needs and to revise the governor induction materials. A summary of the results would be presented at the next LGB meeting.

**4. Election of Vice Chair**

It was confirmed that Deborah Nicholl-Timmins had been approved as Vice Chair of the LGB via Governor Hub until 31.08.26.

CM informed governors that she would be standing down as Chair and as a governor when her current term of office expires on 31.08.24. She explained that she had been a governor for 30 years and that now felt the right time to leave. AH thanked her on behalf of then Trust and the school for her fantastic contribution to governance. The governors, Headteacher and staff also thanked CM for her service to the school in a variety of roles.

**5. Curriculum-Progress and Attainment**

a) Performance in English, Maths and Science

**English-JBY**

- JBY shared a series of slides on Curriculum progress and attainment in English for Years 10-12 and Year 13.
- Year 10 are a strong cohort in terms of engagement and enthusiasm. The internal exams had provided a good indication of what is required for Year 11 and the school is pleased.
- Trial data for Literacy in Year 11 shows that it is slightly behind target data.
- National grade boundaries are changing, and the school is preparing the students.
- Year 12 is a very able cohort, and the students are engaged. A resource bank is being developed to stretch and challenge the students.
- Year 13 have struggled with issues regarding resilience of the drafting process and including sufficient detail in extended answers.

**Q. What is the faculty's biggest concern?**

R. The changing of grade boundaries is the greatest concern. The school has stayed ahead of the trend and has done well over the last few years. Language has been taught separately and now other centres are starting to adopt this approach.

**Q. What percentage does course work account for?**

R. 20%. However, AI is having an impact, and the school is not sure if course work will continue. This is a shame for some students who perform less well in an examination situation.

**Q. If there was no change to the grade boundary, would the school expect outcomes to be the same as last year?**

R. This cohort is performing well, and the school would expect results to be better.

**Q. Is the school still experiencing some effects from the Covid-19 pandemic?**

R. Yes. Year 13 are experiencing some issues which the school is responding to.

**Q. Do the A level students still have university aspirations or are they considering other options?**

R. The majority of A Level students still go on to university. Media is a popular option and there is a big demand for English A Level.

**Q. Is the focus on Reading having an impact?**

R. The school is trialling many incentives to get students reading more. They are reading less paper texts, but the school is encouraging them to read a wide range of quality texts online, for example newspaper articles. This helps them to develop their vocabulary. Comprehension is being developed using daily Sparx Reader quizzes. The data from these is promising.

Governors thanked JBY for her presentation and wished her luck in her new role with the Trust as Director of the Learning Institute.

*JBY left the meeting at 4:18 pm.*

**Maths-AMC**

- Contextual information and actions were detailed in the Headteacher's Report.
- Year 10 experienced a disrupted Year 6 and do not have any SATS results. They missed out on the focus on numeracy skills to prepare them for the Year 6 SATs. The Year 10 mock results were better than last year's.
- Year 11 are more teacher dependent and some lack confidence with independent study. A range of actions have been implemented to build independence and shadow questions have been provided.
- 52 pupils in Year 11 have been entered for Further Maths.
- The Year 12 Cohort has lower prior attainment on average than previous Year 13 groups. Flip it lessons are in place and individual unit tests have had a positive impact. An adjustment is planned to the Scheme of Work.
- Year 13 are a self-sufficient cohort with high prior attainment. They are highly motivated and determined to achieve. The Scheme of Work was completed before Easter and challenge papers and papers from alternative exam boards have been issued to prepare the students for a range of questions.

**Q. The interventions in place for Year 11; are you expecting those to take place for Year 10 also?**

R. Yes. The school has focused on moving pupils from grades 5 to 7.

**Q. Is the school able to retain the most able students in Maths?**

R. Last year some chose Sir John Deane's for sixth form, largely because electronics was not offered here at KA. Marketing of the sixth form has been successful. The school needs to support students to make the best choices to meet their requirements.

**Q. Much of the Maths homework is done through Sparx. How is this assessed by the teacher?**

R. The school used to have homework books but around 50% only of the students would complete the work. The school can monitor what the students have done. Sparx is used up to Year 10 and then different types of homework are set from Year 11.

AMC demonstrated the teacher view of Sparx to show how the teacher can monitor what each student has done. They can see which types of questions students are answering incorrectly and which students are struggling. They can also provide extension activities if students have done well. AMC explained that the homework system has been demonstrated to parents. The teacher will also pick up areas to include in starters to lessons.

**Q. How does the school decide which students to enter for Further Maths?**

The children are set in Year 9 and the top set are all entered. They can opt out later if they decide that they cannot cope with the extra work.

Governors thanked AMC for her presentation and congratulated her on her new role as Associate Assistant Headteacher.

AMC left the meeting at 4:42 pm.

**Science-TSN**

- Year 10-the focus is on Quality First teaching and learning with an emphasis on retrieval practice, scaffolding, and checking understanding. Homework is set from Tassomai which is an online package with AI embedded. It selects areas where students need further work. The school is monitoring the use of this package. There is an increased number of Triple Science students, including more low prior attainers choosing this option.
- Year 11-Since Trial 2, the focus has been on all students working below grade 5 in all Science qualifications. Interventions have been scaled up and have had a positive impact. After school support is well attended.
- Year 12 is a cohort with a wide range of GCSE prior attainment (Grades 6-9). The focus has been on developing independent learning skills and meta-cognition. Flipped learning has been used but some students do not complete the preparatory work.
- In Year 13 there is a wide range of GCSE prior attainment (Grades 5-9), and the focus has been on reversing the downward trend in Biology and Chemistry results. There are some attendance issues with A Level Physics and contact has been sustained with the absent students' tutor.

**Q. Why is attainment in combined Science lower than in the individual Science subjects?**

R. This cohort of separate students are higher attaining students. The school is aiming to maximise attainment at 5+ and increase the current 39.2% to 55-60%.

**Q. Are students making the correct choices at Year 9?**

R. This is something the school is considering and has been discussing recently. Triple Science is a good choice for those students moving on to do A Levels.

Governors thanked TSN for his presentation.

*TSN left the meeting at 4:54 pm.*

b) Performance in all subjects-Key Stage 3, 4, 5-ATR

- Progress in Years 12 and 13- Movement from PP1 was highlighted:  
Y12 Media, Biology, History, Drama up one ALPS grade  
Y12 Physics, Maths, Criminology down one ALPS grade  
Y13 Maths, Eng Lang, Eng Lang/Lit up, Psychology up one ALPS grade  
Y13 Media down two ALPS grades, Drama, Criminology down one ALPS grade.
- ATR explained that ALS scores in red are “red Hot” and equate to performance within the top 25%.
- Attainment-Years 10 and 11-Progress 8 score of -0.08 is an improvement from -0.36 at this time last year.
- ATR receives an overview of progress and attainment, and interventions are triggered.
- Departments are aware of which students are not achieving the required grades and targeted plans are in place. These will be monitored, and their impact evaluated after the PP3 data collection.
- Progress data-Year 10-movement from PP1 was highlighted:  
Eng Lang up from PP1 by one sub grade  
Maths up one sub grade from PP1  
Physics and Biology up to a positive SPI from PP1  
Combined Science down one sub grade since PP1
- Quality First Teaching is the focus. All faculties have an action plan. The interventions are detailed in the Headteacher’s report.
- Student intervention plans (SIPs) are in place for students under-performing in subjects.
- There is a continued focus on flipped learning. However, this represents a culture shift and will take time to embed.

CSS-Years 10 and 11 attainment data-P8 score -1.69 as opposed to -2.02 in March 2023. This represents a stronger position than last year. Lots of work is being focused on Science to ensure the best outcomes. There are smaller student numbers in CSS and so the figures are not presented as percentages.

**Q. Are certain students encouraged to revise in school?**

R. Yes-the school is overseeing students to ensure that they receive the correct support. Regular communication takes place with parents.

**Q. Does any of the data include the Studio School?**

R. Yes-the information is combined. Some courses are specific to the Studio School. The Year 11 GCSE grades relate to KA only.

**Q. Did the school meet with Sir John Deane college?**

R. Yes, the Trust arranged a meeting with them to share best practice. They have embedded flipped learning.

**Q. Will the school continue to liaise with SJD?**

R. Yes, it is planned for the Head of Science to liaise.

Governors commented that flipped learning was good preparation for those students moving on to university.

**Q. What is the timescale for SIPs?**

R. They are reviewed after six weeks and may continue or another area for development may become apparent. They are supportive programmes for the students.

**Q. Are other pupils aware if a student has a SIP?**

R. They are individual to the pupil. They provide direct, targeted support.

**Q. Does the SLT have any specific concerns regarding progress and attainment?**

R. English Language, although JBY is confident that results will increase. Business Studies and Media will be reviewed next.

**Q. There are many extra initiatives taking place which means increased workload for the staff. Are there any issues with morale?**

R. The staff are highly motivated and want the best for the students. Some had spare capacity within their teaching allocation. The staff are happy to do the extra work. The school finances those who come in at holiday times.

ATR explained that when the students are working hard it motivates the staff. There is a strong culture at the school and there are staff well-being initiatives in place.

**Key Stage3**

- ATR explained that this Key Stage is particularly important to set the foundation for Years 10 and 11.
- The Headteacher's Report detailed movement from PP1.  
Y7 Maths up from PP1 - 1 sub grade.  
Y8 Science up from PP1 - 1 sub grade.  
Y9 Science & English up from PP1 - 1 sub grade.
- A PP2 action plan has been produced and is being implemented this half-term.

**Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities**

**6. School Improvement Plan (SIP) Update**

The Headteacher's report provided a summary update on the progress made against School improvement priorities.

**Q. What is the latest situation with the development of the library?**

R. The School Parliament and an external provider have been consulted and a plan is in place. Existing stock needs reviewing, and then new books will be ordered. A job description has been produced for a librarian for September 2024.

**Q. Does the school have a budget for purchasing new books?**

R. Yes, there is a significant budget available from the parent donations.

**Education**

**7. Admissions and Pupil Numbers -CL/CP**

Governors **received** and **noted** the latest data on pupil numbers.

- Numbers have stabilised and stood at 1235 in total as of April 2024. Year 9 is back at 220 from 214 in October 2023.
- The school is at PAN of 220 for September 2024. 78% of applicants are in catchment. There is a wait list of 24 students and the school is expecting 8 appeals.
- The birth rate is falling but KA is full.

**Q. Is the school receiving fewer applications from Trafford and Manchester?**

R. The number of applications from these areas has not reduced. What has changed is that the school is attracting more students from the local catchment area due to its good reputation and strong results.

CSS-Total number of students as at April 2024-120.

### **8. Attendance-CL**

The headteacher's report provided governors with a detailed breakdown of attendance across the period October 2023-April 2024. Attendance remains strong across the Academy when compared to national data (Yr7-11).

#### **Q. Does the school have in-house support for attendance?**

R. The school has an attendance officer and has links with the Local Authority and receives a termly visit. The school has maximised the offer from the LA and will continue this into next year.

#### **Q. Is new guidance on holidays in term time coming into force from September 2024?**

R. There will be a moderate increase in fines. The school will make parents aware of all the changes to the attendance guidance.

CSS- Attendance remains challenging across the Studio School due to the higher levels of PP/SEND and the lower numbers of students in the cohort (Yr7-11). Embedded poor attendance in Year 11 continues to be challenging.

### **9. Behaviour-HW**

The headteacher's report included a detailed breakdown by year group and pupil characteristics on behaviour.

- There are some behavioural concerns in Year 10. The school has employed a strategic approach to behaviour in Year 10 targeted at specific individuals and generally improving the consistency of the standards.
- The school prepared the students for the recent exams, and they applied themselves well. The aim is to ensure that they are supported and ready for Year 11.
- The reset room has been utilised effectively to reduce the number of suspensions.
- Friday night SLT detentions have been introduced and have had a positive impact.
- Panel reviews take place every half term to review Pupils at risk of permanent exclusion.
- There had been one permanent exclusion of a Year 9 pupil this term.
- Year 8 will be taught at the Westfield Drive site in 2024-25 and this is expected to have a positive impact on behaviour.
- A new 'Pastoral Associate Assistant Headteacher' has been appointed with a focus on driving achievement. He will work with Heads of Year 10 & 11 to secure further improvement.

#### **Q. How does the new system for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion work?**

R. Robust pastoral support plans are in place and parents are involved. A letter is sent out if a pupil is at risk of permanent exclusion. Re-admission meetings are held following each suspension. The focus is on learning. If a child has SEND, the school takes advice from the SEND team on appropriate sanctions.

CSS-Details of suspensions and exclusions were included in the Headteacher's report. There had been one permanent exclusion of a Year 10 student. There are a small number of students who are repeat offenders.

## **Welfare**

### **10. Safeguarding: CL**

Key Points were detailed in the Headteachers report.

- The NHS Mental Health Support Team (MHST) are now working on the school site once a week. They are launching a group-based session with students in Year 9 and the school is looking to complete a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire with Year 7 to be able to access more support.

- A review of Mental Health provision had been carried out.

#### **11. Welfare and Wellbeing- Students:**

This item was addressed under agenda item 10.

#### **12. Welfare and Wellbeing- Staff:**

- The school continues to be committed to developing and improving staff wellbeing in line with the 'Education Staff Wellbeing Charter' as laid out by the Department for Education. The Headteacher's report highlights the initiatives currently in place.
- Staff are busy but it is a positive picture.
- Feedback channels are open to staff and the school addresses any issues raised.

#### **Q. What is the impact of the new school day?**

R. Key Stages 3 and 4 have been combined following the practices adopted for Covid-19. There is a greater staff presence and less distraction in lessons.

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

#### **13. Local Policy Approval**

The Trust Health and Safety Policy had been shared with Governors on Governor Hub for adoption.

#### **Q. The policy places greater responsibility with the Headteacher. Has she received appropriate training?**

R. The Headteacher has booked a three-day training course.

#### **14. Governor Training Update:**

Governors noted the Trust Governor Conference to be held on 13.07.24, 9:00am to 1:00 pm. It would provide governors with the opportunity to network and attend workshops.

#### **15. Stakeholder Engagement-Parents/Carers-JL**

- The responses from the Parent Forum Mid-Year Feedback had been included in the Headteacher's report.
- The responses were positive overall.
- A representative sample of 30 parents was chosen for the survey.
- Two parents responded as being very unhappy across the board.
- Q7 asked parents what they would like to know more about. The SLT has considered the answers and will issue a response.

#### **Q. Are the results of the survey feedback to all parents?**

R. This will be done in the newsletter at the end of the half term.

#### **16. Stakeholder Engagement-Wider Community-JL**

- The Headteacher's report details a range of activities.
- The aim is to build community links as and re-engage in projects which were stopped during Covid-19.

#### **Q. Are alumni encouraged to stay connected and share their achievements?**

R. This does happen, but the school would like to formalise it.

#### **17. Communication- to Trust:**



- Governors noted that Board meeting minutes had not been shared since July 2023. AH responded that this had been due to a lack of capacity in the Governance team but would be addressed now that new members of staff had been recruited.
- Governors further noted that financial information had not been received since December 2023. AH would follow this up. **ACTION.**

**18. Communication- from Trust:**

AH informed governors of the following:

- The Oaks Academy had received an Ofsted inspection. The report has not yet been published but the Trust was pleased with the outcome.
- He had approached James Routs for an update on the current situation with Knutsford Leisure Centre and had been informed that there was nothing further to report at this time.

The meeting closed 6:26 pm.

**Date and Time of Next Meeting: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 4pm**

Minutes approved: .....

Date: .....

**Summary of actions**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action/Date</b>
3	Governors to complete the skills audit.	14.05.24
17	AH to request that monthly management accounts are shared with the LGB.	22.06.24