



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

**CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL LGB**

Blended Meeting

**MINUTES**



**Date: 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 6.00pm**

**Present:**

Ms J Jardine (JJ) Meeting Chair  
Mrs Z Morris (ZM) (item 16 onwards)  
Mrs N Nee (NN)  
Mr T Pear (TP)

**Apologies:**

Mrs L Bialek,  
Mrs N Leese

**In attendance:**

Miss J Mason – Headteacher (HT)

**Clerk:** Dr A Howells

**Administration**

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy – JJ agreed to Chair the meeting. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. The meeting was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Bialek and Mrs Leese. Mrs Morris would attend the meeting late, due to work commitments.
2. Declarations of Interest – TP made an **additional declaration** (family friend) regarding item 19 (Sports Premium Funding).
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - The **Minutes of the CPS LGB meeting held on 8 March 2022** were **approved** as a true and correct record.  
Matters Arising – **The HT confirmed that** Governors had been invited to attend the school in the summer term. Many had taken up this invitation. The HT noted that community engagement was increasing. Nine parents had recently expressed an interest in developing a Parents and Family Association. An opportunity to use the BBC Children in Need fundraiser to launch this was being explored. The HT also noted that a connection had been made with the new vicar of St Thomas’ Church.
4. Chair and Vice Chair  
**The LGB confirmed and endorsed the appointment** of Tom Pear as Chair and Jessica Jardine as Vice Chair for 2022-23.
5. Link Governors – **The LGB confirmed** the following link governor positions:
  - 5.1 SEND- Jessica Jardine
  - 5.2 Safeguarding – Jessica Jardine
 NN expressed an interest to shadow JJ during 22-23 with a view to taking up a link governor role in the next academic year when personal circumstances would offer more time to discharge the responsibilities.  
The HT confirmed that she was the DSL.
6. Membership – [see Part 2 confidential minutes]
7. Annual Confirmations: **The clerk reported that** despite issuing reminders annual confirmations on Governor Hub (GH) remained outstanding for 4 governors. The clerk agreed to contact each governor directly to secure completion [Clerk note: Individual emails were issued to governors on 6 October with supporting instructions which generated one immediate response]. **[Action LGB JL & LB 31/10/22]**
8. Governor Visits: **The LGB Chair stressed** the importance of termly governor monitoring visits and the completion of a written report. Guidance and templates are available from the Governor Handbook accessed via GH. It was agreed that TP and JJ would meet to establish a schedule. **[Action TP & JJ 15/11/22]**

**9. School Values and Ethos** – The school’s vision, values and ethos were **confirmed**. **Governors noted that** these aligned with those of the Trust.

**10. Website review** – **The HT confirmed that** a review of the school’s website had been undertaken by the TLA Marketing Officer on 4<sup>th</sup> October to assess compliance with DFE/Ofsted requirements. The outcome of the review had been shared with the HT. It did not identify any significant issues, other than the need to update the website with the annual documents that confirm the use and impact of specialist funding initiatives when this information becomes available.

### Headteacher’s Report

**11. Self-Evaluation (SEF)** The SEF was provided to Governors on Governor Hub, and **the HT confirmed that** it provided an accurate reflection at this point in time. The HT had updated the SEF to include the pupil outcomes from 2021-22 SATs and other actions and progress made during the summer term of 21-22. Governors noted that the school has varying size cohorts between years. Consequently, large percentage shifts could result from only one or two pupils, and this was recognised in the context of target setting and review, especially where comparisons with national data was available. Whilst governors noted this, they still wished to see performance reflected against pre-covid outcomes in order to provide historical context. When reviewing pupil performance, **the governors CHALLENGED with** regards to writing outcomes in KS2. The HT confirmed that the impact of Covid on writing was a factor. However, actions were being taken to provide additional support. This included mock moderation, joint moderation, phonics and reading. The support was being secured through cross-Trust working (with EPS) and also externally with the Learning of Life Partnership. **CHALLENGE: Governors also interrogated** the targets going forward, noting national performance levels. However, the HT highlighted that target setting in the smaller cohorts (e.g. 7 pupils in Yr ) would be built upwards based on pupil progress. These would still continue to contain an aspirational element for pupils to ensure that all pupils could be supported to meet their potential. Governors also asked whether other initiatives could be deployed to encourage writing development, for example the use of pen-pals across the school or Trust. The HT would consider this, and if appropriate update the SEF accordingly. Governors also **CHALLENGED on the covid catch-up plans** for reading and phonics in the earlier year groups. The HT reported that Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Scheme was now being used, and early indications was that pupil performance was enhanced as a result. The use of Covid catch up funding (c£12k) deployed against teaching staff time also appeared to be making a contribution to positive improvement in pupil outcomes. The Teachers would focus on whether some of the smaller activities supported could be embedded into the curriculum delivery going forward to provide sustainability. The HT identified that the longer-term impact of covid was that some Yr3 and Yr4 pupils appeared to have gaps in their knowledge of phonics, as the Little Wandle scheme was not available to them at that time. Consequently, they would be targeted with additional support this year. **CHALLENGE: Governors also enquired** whether e-books had made a positive impact during the covid period, but feedback suggested that they did not. The HT also advised governors that pupil mental health support would remain a focus within the school as part of the extended recovery from covid disruption.

Following further discussion on items 12, 13 and 14 below, the **Governors agreed the SEF**.

**12. School Improvement Priorities (SIP)** **Governors received and confirmed the School Improvement Priorities** for 2022-23, noting that they reflected and aligned with the priorities identified within the SEF.

**13. Pupil Attainment Targets** The pupil attainment targets were in the process of being set by the HT. The process had been delayed due to staff illnesses. The intention was to build upon the targets contained within the SEF, utilising national expectations. However, Governors recognised that small and variable-size year on year cohorts could result in large percentage swings attributable to one or two children in a sample. **Governors agreed to** confirm the targets via correspondence issued by the HT through Governor Hub. **[Action HT 31/10/22]**

**14. Curriculum** **The HT confirmed that** the curriculum information is published on the school website. Further work was ongoing to review the curriculum in mathematics, and that external advice was being

secured to support this work. TP challenged the Governors highlighting the need for governors to undertake regular termly or half-termly monitoring visits to ensure that curriculum delivery remained on track and effective. Governors agreed the need for link governors to be appointed and assigned to curriculum areas, and this should be supported by the introduction of a structured monitoring visit programme. **[Action LGB /HT]**

15. **Staffing** **The HT confirmed that** staffing was in place to deliver the curriculum in 2022-23. A teacher vacancy had been filled with an Early Career Teacher.
16. **Admissions and Pupil Numbers** Governors received via the papers circulated on Governor Hub a copy of the **admissions policy and arrangements for 2023. These were confirmed.** Governors noted the significant variability in cohort size based on a year-by-year comparison. They noted that this reflected the challenges of a small rural primary school which served a restricted catchment area near two local authority boundaries. **Governors CHALLENGED** whether there were other opportunities or actions that could be taken to increase pupil entry intakes. However, the lack of new house-building and restricted transport links made this very difficult. **The Governors confirmed the PAN.**
  - 16.3 **Attendance** The Governors received via papers circulated on Governor Hub a copy of the **Attendance Policy for 22-23.** This was **approved** by Governors. The HT report included attendance rates by pupil year group for 2021-22. The overall attendance figure was 93.4% against a target of 96.5%. The reduced figure was mainly a consequence of illness (covid)-related. An **attendance target** of 96.5% was proposed for 22-23, and this **was agreed.** In agreeing this target, governors noted that the varying size of cohorts need to be factored in when reviewing performance since one child in a small cohort could have a disproportionate impact on percentages, especially if it related to persistent absenteeism. Consequently, governor monitoring would need to be at both school and cohort levels. Governors sought clarity on the use of fines to deter absenteeism, and the HT confirmed that the school would follow the Trust procedures and issues fines if and when thresholds had been passed.
17. **Behaviour**
  - 17.1 **Exclusions:** The HT reported that no exclusions had taken place.
  - 17.2 **Exclusions Policy** The **revised DFE guidance** on exclusions was **noted.**
  - 17.3 **Behaviour and Exclusion Policy:** The school **Behavior and Exclusions Policy** circulated in advance on Governor Hub was confirmed and **agreed. The HT confirmed that** it had been communicated to family and pupils.
18. **Safeguarding** **Governors received** a copy of the safeguarding annual review for 21-22 via the papers circulated in advance on Governor Hub. **The HT reported that** actions identified on pages 1 & 2 of the report had been progressed further since the report was compiled for governors. These would be shared with the Safeguarding Link Governor. **The HT confirmed that** DBS were in place for staff. Governor DBS checks and updates were ongoing. Governors present were reminded of the importance of maintain training records on Governor Hub, especially in relation to safeguarding. The Clerk agreed to issue a reminder **[Action Clerk: 31/10/22]**  
*[post meeting Clerk note: Governors are asked to ensure that the documentary evidence that supports DBS checking are made available as soon as possible in order to complete the DBS process].*
19. **School Pupil Premium and Sports Premium Reports** The impact report for **sports premium funding** for 21-22, circulated in advance on Governor Hub was received and **confirmed.** Governors discussed the difficulties in providing access to swimming facilities, in part due to the closure of a local authority facility previously used. One suggestion explored was the use of a temporary swimming pool hosted on the school site. However, the HT highlighted that water and power constraints couple with a suitable location on site had not enabled this option to be pursued. The Chair offered to speak to a provider to explore whether

alternative (and cost effective) options to power supplies and site location might be available. If this was the case, then he would introduce the provider to the HT.

**Information Sharing**

**20. Finance**

The HT confirmed that the school budget was in place for 22-23. The Trust continued to support the school with the production of monthly management accounts, the first of which was due shortly. Governors requested that the COO provide the Headteacher with an update on capital developments planned for the school. The LGB Chair highlighted that a request for covered outdoor space had been submitted by the HT. This was considered a priority by the school since without it there was very limited appropriate outdoor space for pupils during inclement weather. **[Action COO 15 Nov 22]**

**21. Local Matters**

The HT noted the increased appetite from parents to engage with a Parents and Family Association.

**22 Matters to Share with the Trust Board – none.**

**23. Matters for Trust Board to Share with the LGB–** The Clerk reported that the Chair of the Trust was maintaining close oversight on the financial impact arising from cost of living and energy measures. The Board agreed that the Chair of the Trust should write to the Department for Education to highlight the impact that might arise from any real term reduction in government funding. The Board also discussed the need to ensure that appropriate arrangements were in place for officers to close the loop on matters raised by LGB with the Board.

**AOB**

**24. LGB Meeting Time.** As part of the wider conversation seeking increased governor engagement, the HT **agreed to** circulate to governors a questionnaire to identify the optimum time for the LGB to meet. Governors were mindful of work and family commitments of governors as well as their responsibility to staff wellbeing. The start time of the next meeting would be confirmed following this survey. **[Action HT 30/11/22]**

**Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 24th January 2023. (Time to be confirmed)**

**Meeting closed at 8.07pm**

Minutes approved: .....

Date:.....

**Meeting Action Log**

7	Outstanding declarations required from Governors to be completed on Governor Hub	JL & LB 31/10/22
8 & 14	Develop a schedule for governor monitoring visits	TP & JJ 15/11/22
13.	Governors to approve pupil attainment targets following circulation by HT -	HT 31/10/22
18:	Reminder issued to governors to maintain training records on Governor Hub, especially in respect of safeguarding-	Clerk 31/10/22
20.	COO to update HT on estate development plans and timing for outdoor covered space facility –	COO 15/11/22
24.	Head to canvas governors for LGB meeting times –	HT 30/11/22