



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL LGB

Online Meeting via Teams

MINUTES – Part I



Date: 22nd June 2021 at 4.00pm

Present:

Mrs G Cumberlidge (Chair)
Miss J Jardine (JJ)
Mrs M Lord (ML)
Mr T Pear (TP)
Mrs J Lowe

Absent:

Mrs L Bialek, (LB)
Mrs D Fish

In attendance:

Miss J Mason - Headteacher
Mrs N Phillips– TLA Director of Finance & Governance
(From 4.45pm)
Mr D Twambley – TLA COO (From 5.15pm)

Clerk: Mrs C Gritton

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from LB and the meeting was quorate. The Chair confirmed that Mrs Fish had been expected at the meeting. JL was welcomed to this, her first LGB meeting and introductions were made. NP had sent apologies that she would be late to the meeting.
- 1.3 The COO had also sent apologies that he would be late. It was therefore **agreed** that item 6 – Finance would be deferred to later in the Agenda. Item 6 is recorded herein in Agenda order for ease of reference.

2. Declarations of Interest - There were no declarations of a personal or prejudicial nature.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - The Minutes of the CPS LGB meeting held on **8th March 2021**, were **approved as a true and correct record**.

4. Composition of LGB – It was **reported** that the Trust Governance and Search Committee had approved the appointment of Mrs Bialek as Appointed Governor for a term of four years, immediately upon the expiry of her current term as Parent Governor. This leaves a vacancy for a CPS LGB Parent Governor and NP, the Chair and Headteacher will discuss this further in the Autumn term, now that the Trust Governance and Search Committee has approved the Parent Governor Elections process.

Strengthening Leadership, Collaboration and Governance

5. Matters for the Trust Board to Share with LGB – The Trust Board’s thanks to all staff and Governors for their work during Covid was shared.

6. Finance – Paper 6.0 Castle Finance Report had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting and was **received**. In the COO’s absence, NP offered to present this item. The Headteacher **reported** that she had spoken with the COO earlier that day, who had confirmed that due to receipt of additional funds, the finance position will be stronger than Paper 6.0 shows, but the Headteacher and COO will discuss this in more detail. In the meantime, it was **reported** that the school has a budgeted deficit of £17k and reserves of £34k, which is 9% of GAG. The Headteacher and COO will work together to assess how to best reinvest into the school, the reserves over the Trust target of 5% of GAG. The School Condition Allocation (SCA) funds were received late in the year and have therefore been allocated to Trust schools on a pro-rata basis, based on student numbers. CPS’ allocation was £16k and the Headteacher is drawing up an action plan for utilisation of those funds, to be discussed with the COO. Future SCA schools’ allocations will be based on need, following a detailed survey of the TLA estates in the coming months, to enable the drawing up of a Trust 10-year plan.

6.1 Budget – The COO and Headteacher have assessed 2021/2022 staffing costs and over the next few weeks will address non-pay costs. The budget will be put forward for the Trust Board’s approval at their 12th July

meeting. Governors **noted** that in the circumstances, school finances were looking strong. **Governors asked whether they would be receiving monthly finance updates.** It was **reported** that as far as NP was aware, there is a plan to provide detailed monthly updates to the Headteacher and less detailed monthly updates to Governors on GH.

6.2 The COO joined the meeting at 5.15pm and apologised that monthly reporting had not yet begun, due to slower finance systems' transitions than expected. It was **reported** that there were no major changes in the finances since the start of the year. The Headteacher **noted** that there would be a £5k boost to finances due to increased numbers of full-time nursery children attending.

7. Governors' Skills' Audit – Governors were thanked for completing the Skills' Audit and the results will be utilised to inform LGB training needs, when completed by JL.

8. LGB Self-Assessment – LGB self-assessment questions are available on GH for all Governors to consider and NP and the Chair will liaise to ascertain a suitable Autumn term date for Governors to meet to complete the self-assessment.

9. Risk Register – The Trust Risk Register has been completed and work has begun on individual schools' Risk Registers, which will be available in the Autumn term. The COO will discuss the CPS Risk Register with the Headteacher and Chair to RAG rate its contents.

Improving Education and Opportunities

10. Covid-19 Recovery Strategy (including Staff Wellbeing) – The Catch-up Planning Document June 2021 had been uploaded to GH just prior to the meeting and was **received.** Governors were invited to email the Headteacher if they had any questions, following the meeting. An external professional has been coming into school to do one-to-one work and small group work, which is having very positive results, particularly in writing and early reading. The Government is prioritising communication, language and early reading and in response the school has signed up to the Nuffield English Early Literacy Institute. All resources are provided and because there will be only thirteen children in Reception next year, every child can be part of the programme. There is also a nationwide focus on ensuring reading books match phonics' learning. The CEO has offered Trust funding for this and the Headteacher awaits further clarification from the COO as staff are keen to start using the books. Staff are working hard and there is some flexibility for them to do report writing at home if needed to support their wellbeing. Other wellbeing activities, such as chair yoga, safely sharing a coffee at the end of the week and cakes in the staffroom are popular and also having positive impacts. Governors **noted** that the staff are a very supportive, small team and to not be able to collect together as usual must be difficult, so these wellbeing activities are very important and staff are to be congratulated for their collective support of each other.

11. Strategic Vision:

11.1 School Performance - The children have bounced back well on their return to school and are not a long way off where they would be expected to be. Younger children are taking a little more time to catch up, as they had not developed their independent learning skills before lockdown.

11.2 School Improvement Priorities:

- **Review of action plan 2020-2021 – Castle Primary School Development Plan 2020/2021** has been reviewed and was uploaded to GH prior to the meeting and was **received.** Governors were invited to send comments and questions to the Headteacher after the meeting. Early reading remains a priority as well as closing of gaps in learning.
- **Draft 2021-2022 action plan** – The 2021/2022 Plan will be ready for the Autumn term.

12. Student Welfare (including Safeguarding)- The school is a calm environment and enabling the juniors to move a little more freely around the school is having a positive impact on their welfare. Staff remain vigilant about the safeguarding and safety balance. Various wellbeing and welfare activities are planned, such as Olympic Day, Survive and Thrive Team Building and Sports Day (without parents). Staff are doing as much as they can for Yr6 – Yr7 transition and a Governor added that their children had settled into school very well and thanked staff for this. **Governors asked whether there is any wellbeing support for the children's mental health.** It was **reported** that the school in its entirety is a nurturing environment; part of the daily routine always includes an activity with an element of mindfulness and Personal, Social, Health and economic (PHSE) Live Well lessons once a week, also include mindfulness. A SWaNS counsellor comes

into school for one-to-one and small group sessions and is having a very positive effect on children's self-confidence and self-esteem.

12.1 There was a minor data breach of the company from whom the school purchases wellbeing support, two weeks ago, which led to the names of the CPS children appearing on Google. As soon as the breach was noticed, the Headteacher immediately notified the Trust Data Protection Officer (DPO) and did everything possible to ensure the names were removed. Unfortunately, this took four days. The Headteacher sent a letter to parents explaining that it was not the school's breach and that the names were not listed as attached to CPS, but to another school. **Governors asked what had the parents' reaction been to the letter.** It was **reported** that the school had received no feedback from parents.

12.2 The Police were recently called by the school with regard to an incident outside of school. NP joined the meeting at 4.45pm.

13. SEND update – JJ had prepared **paper 13 Revised SEND Governor Report June 2021** which had been uploaded to GH prior to the meeting and was **received**. JJ thanked the Headteacher and ML for their assistance with the report. It was **reported** that JJ had been impressed with the staff understanding of need; the school provides excellent support and the focused teaching is having positive results.

Fostering Identity and Ethos

14. LGB Roles & Training Update –

14.1 Thanks were offered to all Governors who attended the recent online safeguarding training and a link to alternative training will be provided, before the end of term, for those who could not attend. Governors thanked NP for the safeguarding training, remarking that it had been very good.

14.2 Link Governor Update – Nothing to report

15. Local Matters – Staff are very pleased with the results of the recent works around the school, particularly in the staff room, which is now a pleasant environment for staff to spend time. Governors were invited to visit the school to see the works' outcomes as soon as it is safe to do so.

16. LGB Policy Review - NP confirmed that the school is compliant and thanked the Headteacher for her work on the Policies. The following Policies had been uploaded to GH prior to the meeting and were **received**. There were no questions and all **Policies below were approved**.

First Aid Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Medical Conditions in School Policy

Charges and Remissions Policy

Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy

NQT Policy

17. Matters to Share with the Trust Board – Governors asked that the hard work of the Headteacher and all staff, for which they are very grateful, be noted.

AOB

18.1 The Chair has spoken with LB, who has confirmed that she finds it difficult to attend meetings with a 4pm start. The Clerk will contact LB to ascertain a more suitable time. The Headteacher and all Governors present confirmed that they should generally be available for meetings during the school day, or later than 4pm.

18.2 The Clerk will send to JL, details of GH log-in and a link to the Governors' Skills' Audit.

18.3 Governors thanked staff for their hard work and noted how smart the school looks following the recent works, particularly in the staff room.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: TBC Autumn 2021 term.

Meeting closed at 5.31pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....