

Date: Wednesday 27th September 2022 at 4pm.

Present:

Mr R. Benson (Chair)
Mr J. Green (JG)
Prof T. Sadat-Shafai
Mrs S. Jorgensen (SJ)
Mrs S. Hubball – (SH)
Mrs K. Powell (KP)

Apologies: Mrs J. Turner (JT), Mr P. Turner (PT), Mr S. Worthington (SW)

Absent: Mr U. Smith (US)

In attendance:

Mrs H. Thurland – Headteacher from September 2023 (HT)
Mr M. Warren (Interim Headteacher) (MW)
Mrs L. Darling – Deputy Headteacher (LD)
Miss L. Salt – Deputy Headteacher (LS)
Miss J. Boulton – Head of 6th Form (JB) (6th Form update at Item 7 only)

Dr A. Howells – TLA Director of Quality (AH) (Items 1 – 4 and 15-18 only)

Mr I. [] – Head Boy (Item 4 only)

Miss R. [] – Head Girl (Item 4 only)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from JT, PT and SW and the meeting was quorate. There were no Declarations. Unless stated otherwise, all papers and policies had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting. The agenda items were taken out of order for the benefit of those present who had to leave before the end of the meeting, but are recorded in agenda order for ease of reference.
2. The **Part 1 Minutes of the CHS LGB Meeting held on 12th July 2023** were confirmed as **approved**.
Matters Arising – Nothing to report. Actions all up to date.
3. Membership and Effectiveness Update AH uploaded the LGB self-review outcomes to GH and advised the LGB that it would be used to inform Governor development and training.
4. Annual Tasks **It was confirmed that** RB had been unanimously voted Chair, JT and JG unanimously voted Vice Chairs, for the academic year 2023/2024. AH confirmed that these recommendations had been ratified by the Trust Board.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

5. School Vision, Values and Ethos The Head Boy and Head Girl informed the LGB about the school podcast, used to celebrate positive student attainments and stories and as a platform for student voice question and answer sessions. Student Ambassadors are focusing on the priorities of courage, curiosity, ambition and leadership. Governors thanked them for attending and for their work and invited the Head Boy and Head Girl to the spring LGB meeting to update Governors on progress.
6. School Improvement Priorities (SIP) Papers 6a SDP 23-24 overview summary, **6b SDP 23-27 summary overview (1)**, were **received**. **It was reported that** the Trust Deputy CEO and Director of Education for Trust Secondary schools had been consulted on the SIP and were pleased with the school's ambitious targets. Governors were assured that micro-actions sit beneath the SIP, in a document detailing clear steps and milestones. The SIP is a work-in-progress document which is regularly analysed by SLT. The new, Trust format Self-Evaluation (SEF) will be available for Governors to view shortly.
Challenge: Governors asked whether there are any Teaching and Learning (T&L) objectives for the year. It was reported that T&L is deliberate practice and everyone is working on building a successful foundation for learning. The Headteacher continues to do class visits to ensure T&L is happening and challenge where it is not as strong. Once the foundations are complete, specific T&L objectives can be finalised. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) is being reviewed.
Challenge: Governors asked whether it is intended that SEND complaints are reduced or they are already reduced. Governors also enquired about Trust support for SEND. It was reported that the school is collating data from which to begin SEND analysis of complaints and the intention is to reduce reported concerns. The school has its own Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-Ordinator (SENCo) and there is a Trust SENCo

resource which the school can also utilise. Further support is provided by the resource bought in from the Local Authority and SEND toolkits and funding re-evaluations are being discussed with the Trust.

Education

7. Examination Results Yrs 11 and 13 Paper 7 2023 Outcomes – Autumn Term Gov Paper was received.

Yr13 **It was reported that** whilst Yr13 summer examination results were not where the school would like them to be, Governors were reminded that Covid had caused great disruption to the Yr13 group, for whom these examinations were the first ever external exams they sat. Therefore, the school had focused on their wellbeing as well as their outcomes. Governors were assured that many initiatives and action plans were in place to support students, including a focus on ensuring that the KS4 to KS5 pathways are right for the students. T&L is being reviewed and Fischer Family Trust data analysis has been replaced by ALPS to support improved target setting and more robust, effective monitoring. **It was reported that** whilst overall, 6th form numbers are down (reflecting the national and local picture) this academic year has seen 75% of CHS students who achieved 5 or more Grade 7 or more GCSEs, stay on in the CHS 6th form.

Challenge: Governors had raised a question prior to the meeting regarding how Sixth Form students' grade attainment corresponded with the amount and type of qualifications undertaken and whether students undertake any additional qualifications this year such as an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). **It was reported that** the school typically encourages students to take 3 A 'Level subjects, rather than 4, but where appropriate, more able students can take 4 subjects. Where students take a mix of A' Levels and vocational subjects, their attainment outcomes are usually stonger in the vocational subjects. The Honours programme is in place to stretch and challenge those for whom it is appropriate and EPQs are offered to those students. However, whilst EPQs are of beneficial experience for students, they are not necessarily counted as entry points for all universities.

Challenge: Governors noted that despite a number of action plans being in place, it appeared that there had been no substantial outcomes' improvements since 2019 and asked how the current action plans would seek to make improvements where previous action plans had not. **Governors were assured that** the school had made gains to support students and the major difference in actions is that there is now a whole school approach, which will have an impact on the 6th form.

Challenge: Governors noted that a change throughout the school to encompass a whole school approach would take time to implement and create impact and asked what is being done to improve this year's 6th form outcomes in the meantime and whether the right staff are in place to support those initiatives.

Governors were assured that whilst a number of middle leaders are new to the role, the school has developed and improved the way it works with and supports them to ensure they are holding staff to account. A new strategic planning pro-forma is in place and staff are focused on what needs to be done; there is confidence that the school is focusing on the right actions and that outcomes' improvements will be evident at the next data analysis point in January. The school is also rebuilding community engagement, which was also affected by Covid.

Yr11 **It was reported that** whilst a significant number of the Yr11 cohort faced difficulties in the form of personal challenging circumstances, for which the school had provided support and interventions, there had been an element of surprise that some students, about which challenges and difficulties were not known, had not completed the full suite of examinations. The school is disappointed that the results are not where they need to be, but a great deal of analysis work has already begun, looking at a number of measures to push Progress8 (P8) towards the positive and to focus on what can be done differently to support the next cohort. **Governors were assured that** there were a number of individual examination success stories and if the results of those with significant challenges are removed, the P8 is -0.02, which is the national average. There is Trust support for the many quality assurance action plans and whilst the disadvantaged gap has widened, this will be a focus going forward and staff targets are linked to outcomes. Suitable support is in place for all those who need it, with c.£80k of the school's budget allocated for pastoral support and attendance. Revision sessions are well utilised and the school assists parents in understanding how to support their children with study skills and revision and the website is being updated to ensure it contains useful revision information for parents and students. The school is looking at its KS4 offer and made adjustments to its KS5 offer, looking to also ensure a smooth transition from KS4 to KS5 and the CPD plan has been mapped out for the year.

A Governor challenge had been raised prior to the meeting, asking that the purpose of distinguishing the grade attainment and attendance of boys and girls be explained with regard to the Governor's assertion that not all students, for example students who are non-binary, would self-sort themselves into the categories of girl and boy, so, when capturing such data, would those students excluded from the data? It was reported that the school is very aware and respectful of gender classifications, but reporting categories are those set nationally at DfE level, not by the school individually. The data includes classifications such as Pupil Premium (PP) and SEND and all students are included in data reporting.

Governors noted that the Spanish outcomes in particular were not strong and asked why a cohort of 1 ran for Spanish A 'Level. It was reported that the A 'Level cohort had begun with more than 1 student and whilst languages are not a popular choice, the school understands the importance of linguistics and is therefore keen to develop the department, strengthening it from KS3 upwards. The earlier years' development will feed through to GCSE and A 'Level outcomes, but the school will keep under review the matter of whether the whole cohort offer is what is best for the students. The Modern foreign Language (MFL) department is on a journey with a new, dynamic curriculum lead and leadership support, staffed with language specialists and curriculum planning is in place, all of which need time to roll-through.

8. **Admissions and Pupil Numbers** It was reported that Yr7 has a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 230 and 221 students. 850 individuals have signed up to attend the school's Open Evening on 28th September 2023, which is a figure significantly higher than previous years. The 6th form has c.109 students which may have a lagged funding impact for the next academic year.
9. **Attendance Paper 9 Attendance Summary 2023.doc** was received. It was reported that attendance is currently in line with national data, but 130 sessions have already been lost to holidays this year, which is considerably more than this time last year, so staff remain vigilant about unauthorised absences, the Local Authority are providing further support, issuing more fines and the school continues to develop bespoke support for families.
10. **Behaviour Paper Behaviour Summary 2023/24** was received. It was reported that the Reset room continues to have a positive influence on behaviour and interventions have been developed, resulting in fewer repeat offenders. **Challenge: Governors asked about the House system. It was reported that** not only will the House system create a community structure with an element of competition, it will create management and leadership opportunities for staff.

Welfare

11. **Safeguarding Paper 11 Safeguarding Summary** was received. The Safeguarding Children in Education Settings (SCiES) review in the last week of the summer 2023 term, was very positive and the school continues to value SCiES support. **[ACTION GOVERNORS: With regard to NGA advice being that LGB Chairs should not be Safeguarding Link Governor, the LGB needs a new Safeguarding Link Governor and the Chair will discuss this further with Governors outside of the meeting].**
12. **Welfare and Wellbeing – Pupils** Nothing further to report.
13. **Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff** It was reported that feedback from a new staff survey, as to wellbeing and support, has been very positive so far.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

14. **Local Policy Approval** Governors were advised of changes made to the Policies and Governors had read the Policies prior to the meeting.
 - 14a. **Safeguarding Policy** **Challenge: Governors asked whether all staff have school IT equipment and if not, whether there is any risk of staff holding data, which they should not hold, on a personal device. It was reported that** all staff sign the Acceptable User Policy and only access data through the school's Cloud access which has live tracking systems. **Approved**
 - 14b. **Behaviour Policy** **Approved**
 - 14c. **Attendance Policy** **Approved**
 - 14d. **Uniform Policy** Subject to it being called Uniform Policy, rather than Uniform Guidance, **Approved**
 - 14e. **Admissions' Policy 2025/2026** **Approved**
15. **Stakeholder Engagement – Parents/Carers** It was reported that the school will have held all of its information evenings by the end of the next 2 weeks and everyone is looking forward to the prize evening at the town hall. HT and LD have been to visit all partner primary schools and took a number of Yr7 and 6th form students

to talk to those primary students. Primary Headteachers had been pleased to see their ex students again, doing such positive work.

16. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community **The Chair reported** being pleased that the school is increasing its wider community exposure in many positive ways.

17. Communication to Trust Executive, Board, Education, Standards and Performance Committee (ESP) **Governors and staff agreed that** there had been some surprise that the school had been asked by the Trust Executive, to use TLP branded lanyards. It was felt that this was not consistent with the Trust’s assurances that its schools would be encouraged to retain their own, unique identities and that it could cause confusion as to which staff work at which school, which would not be helpful at networking events.

18. Communication from Trust Executive, Board, Education, Standards and Performance Committee (ESP) **AH reported that** the merger with The Learning for Life Partnership (LflP) had completed on 1st September, as planned and TLA (soon to be The Learning Partnership (TLP)), is now the largest MAT in Cheshire. The Shadow Board had approved the policies and governance structure needed to function in the coming months. Trust schools’ collaborations are well-underway and Headteachers and central shared service leads have met to consider the alignment of the schools’ and Trust’s vision, values and ethos. There will be very little change to the TLA governance structure, but the Trust is in a position to provide more support to senior management. Challenge and performance meetings between senior leaders and the Trust Executive are going well and Trustees look forward to visiting all Trust schools in the coming months. The implementation of a Trust Board Education, Standards and Performance (ESP) Committee will empower LGBs with accountability and provide further Trust oversight, interventions and support. **In response to Governor Challenge, it was reported that** the Trust has appointed a primary and a secondary Director of Education, as part of the Trust management structure.

19. AOB HT reported that staff have been reminded about having a professional dress code and Governors were reminded to dress appropriately and smartly when visiting the school. Governors were pleased to see the school site new builds complete and HT confirmed that there will be a formal launch event soon. Staff were praised for their supportive team attitude in getting the new humanities block up and running, which is a great teaching space. There have been a couple of teething problems with the new catering block, but they are being addressed.

Meeting Closed at 6:15pm

Next Meeting Wednesday 24th January 2023 at 4pm at Congleton High School

Signed.....Date.....

