



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

CHESHIRE STUDIO SCHOOL (CSS) LGB

Held at Knutsford Academy

MINUTES – Part I



Date: 26th September 2022 at 4:30pm

Present:

Mrs C. Millson (Chair) (CM)
Mrs A Sennet (Vice Chair) (AS)
Mr D Hermitt (DH)
Mr N Jackson (NJ)
Mr D Walton (DW)

Absent: - Mrs Jenny Brogan

In attendance:

Mr J Whittaker – Headteacher (HT)
Mrs K Key – Deputy Headteacher (KKY)
Mr C Leigh – Assistant Headteacher – (Items 8 & 10) (CLH)
Mrs N Phillips– Director of Operations (NPS)
Mrs H Weigh – Assist Headteacher (items 8, 9 & 10) (HWH)

Clerk: Mrs C Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and quoracy was confirmed. Jenny Brogan’s absence was noted and **ACTION:** the Clerk agreed to contact her to establish if she was able to continue as a governor.
2. There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.
3. The **Minutes** of the CSS LGB meeting held on **16 June 2022**, uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, were **approved**.
4. **Appointments**
 - 4.1 **LGB Membership** – The Chair welcomed the newly appointed governor David Walton to the LGB. It was noted that NJ’s term of office as an elected parent governor was due to end in December. The Chair asked NJ to consider staying on the LGB as an appointed governor and NJ agreed to contact the Chair directly regarding this matter. **ACTION:** It was reported that a parent governor election would be held in any event (next half term) to fill the parent governor vacancy.
 - 4.2 **Chair and Vice Chair for 2022/2023– Governors noted** the continuation of Catriona Millson as Chair and the appointment of Andrea Sennett as Vice Chair.
 - 4.3 **Link Governor Roles:**
 - 4.3.1 **Special Education Needs** – Confirmed as AS
 - 4.3.2 **Safeguarding** – Confirmed as CM
 - 4.3.3 **Health & Safety** – Confirmed as DH for both CSS and Knutsford Academy (KA)
 - 4.3.4 **Admissions’ Appeals Panel** – **ACTION:** The Clerk will ascertain how other TLA schools are administering admissions’ appeals (for the LGB to consider best practice) and report back to the LGB at the next meeting.
 - 4.4 **Governor Visits** – The 6th Form Centre refurbishment is on track and Governors will be invited on a tour when it is completed.
 - 4.5 **Governance Health Check** – **ACTION:** Governors will consider the Health Check on GH, in readiness for completion by the LGB as a whole, at the next meeting.
 - 4.6 **Website compliance** – It was reported that although KA and CSS are linked, the schools’ websites have been updated to reflect their distinctive status. **ACTION:** The Clerk will upload the website checklist to GH for the HT to complete and pass to a Governor to check. At the next meeting, it will be confirmed whether the school website is compliant.

5. School Vision and Values

5.1 Paper 5.0-11 School Performance Cheshire Studio School 2022-2023v3 (SLT Report), uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was **received**, covering items 5.0 to 11. **Governors approved** the Vision and Values as detailed in slides numbered 5.0 of the SLT Report.

6. School Performance

6.1.Examination Results and cohort profile – KS4 and KS5 – Slides numbered 6.1 of the SLT Report.

GSCE Results – It was reported that GCSE results were broadly in line with those discussed in June. The 16 pupils in this cohort who had taken exams all had challenging backstories. Given some of their complex and difficult situations the HT was pleased to be able to report that the students were able to achieve results to enable choices in continuing their education in KS5 or moving into employment/apprenticeship. **Governors requested contextual data and also asked if destination data for these students could be provided at the next meeting.** HWH had prepared case studies on these students which is anonymised and attached to these minutes for information (this information should be taken in context to the discussion at 9.1 on behaviour). *Since the meeting, destination data has been added and details are provided in the part II minutes.*

Governors were pleased that these students had had many intervention strategies which had enabled them to achieve results and all but one student had currently moved forward to new opportunities.

CHALLENGE: Governors noted that often students who opt for the Studio pathway are less academic and felt strongly that comparison to other schools locally was inappropriate and misleading.

It was reported that behaviour, engagement, and positive destinations are indicative that the school provides well for all its students throughout the curriculum. Data trends and individual students show progress. There are not many studio schools to provide comparison data, but the school is confident that it is on the right track in terms of its students' needs. The latest data grab (July 2022) shows that the current Yr11 cohort are larger, and school is currently optimistic that results will improve.

A' Level results - were broadly as predicted. Individual subject outcomes have been analysed and improvement development plans have been adjusted where necessary.

KA and CSS will continue to work together to ensure each student is on their most appropriate path, whether it be KA, CSS, and appropriate qualifications.

Governors thanked SLT and staff for their hard work over the last challenging year.

6.2 Pupil Attainment Targets for 2022/2023 There were no concerns raised with the present progress data.

7. School Priorities – Slides numbered 7 of the SLT Report – To read 2022/2023

7.1 SIP 2022/2023 – It was reported that The School Improvement Plan (SIP) continues to be implemented and there is a triple focus on 1) the embedding of The Knutsford Way, 2) Further work to develop effective behaviour and skills for schools and the wider community and 3) Developing the personal development curriculum. **Governors received the SIP (Link in SLT Report)**

7.2 Update on SEF – It was reported that the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) is drafted under the Ofsted framework headings. **Governors received the SEF (Link in SLT Report).**

7.3 Curriculum Update – It was reported that there were currently no changes to the curriculum and **Governors received the Update (Link in SLT Report).** CPR would speak at the January meeting regarding the curriculum sketch for 2023/24.

7.4 Staffing Update – It was reported that across the two schools the teacher headcount had been increased to reflect increased number of pupils and students. There were currently vacancies in support staff positions.

8. School Welfare

8. Slide 8.0 of the SLT Report – It was reported that CSS is starting to see an uplift in the number of students

being referred for Early Help.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether the school has the staffing capacity to support those students. It was reported that staff are continuing to attend the external support meetings, (rather than run them), but Governors were asked to note that should these numbers continue to increase, it will become difficult to manage.

8.1 Admissions and Pupil Numbers – Slide 8.1 of the SLT Report

CHALLENGE: Governors noted that Yrs 12 and 13 boys/girls figures were disproportionate compared to other year groups and asked whether this was due to the existence of the Football Academy and if so, what is the school doing to encourage girls to join the Football Academy. It was reported that this was the reason and that currently more boys opt for the football academy than girls, however it is expected to attract more girls going forwards (especially after the effect of the successful Lionesses Euro 2022 competition).

Governors discussed ideas to promote the Football Academy to girls and noted that the school anticipates a gradual increase in girls joining.

Admission Policy – It was confirmed that there are no proposals to change the school’s Pupil Admission Number (PAN) and there are no other changes to the Policy and the **Policy was approved.**

8.2 Attendance – A report by the AHT – Slide 8.2 of the SLT Report

8.2.1 It was reported that national attendance figures are released 2 terms after dates recorded and Cheshire East Local Authority (CELA) has not yet released its figures for the previous academic year, so it is not possible to compare current data. However, CSS attendance figures overall are an improvement on last year’s, with the exception of Yr11, whose attendance was also lower than average when that year group was Yr10. Interventions and support remain in place and the school has appointed, from September, a Student Engagement Practitioner. This is a full-time roll designed to reach out to families who have children whose attendance is below the required level.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether all those students expected to return have done so. It was reported that they had.

9. Behaviour – A report by HWH

9. It was reported that prior to Covid, HWH had done a lot of work with the outgoing Year 11 cohort of students when they were in Yr9, to support behaviours and had worked hard with frequent parental communication to help support their children. Unfortunately, Covid closure of schools meant these students had to pick their GCSE Options online and the school did a lot of work to support them, particularly those who found it challenging not being in school. Individual support was given to encourage the best course choices. The school set up a transition programme to encourage engagement and support for these students to come back to school. A number of students were identified as needing high priority support. SLT have created ‘passports’ for those students, detailing challenges, and outside influences where appropriate, which are shared with all relevant members of staff to ensure consistent support for behaviour management and classroom learning. These have been very successful. HWH shared a few, anonymised case studies of passports with Governors and **CHALLENGE: Governors noted a pattern, that many of the students with passports had low reading ages and asked at what point the school knows students’ reading age.** It was reported that all Yr7 students take a reading test and there is a whole school literacy programme and literacy coordinator to support individual students to address any problems and aid the process of catching up. The school has also appointed a reading support assistant who works with individuals and small groups on a regular and timetabled basis to improve their reading.

Governors noted also there was a link between challenging circumstances and need and asked how the school supported this group of students. HWH stated that early recognition and support is key, and the creation of the passports has had a positive impact on behaviour, attendance and learning outcomes. The passports are constantly monitored and updated and enable further understanding of the needs of individual students. They often help identify behavioural and learning issues. A number of strategies and interventions have been used including reduced timetables, mentoring, referrals and meetings with

parents.

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is easy to access. It was reported that there are long waiting lists, which make it even more important for the school to identify and address behaviours early, to provide best possible outcomes. **Governors noted that the school is doing a good job of training staff in identifying and supporting students with challenging behaviours and special needs.**

9.1 Exclusions Policy – Governors noted the updated statutory guidance and **approved the policy.**

9.2 Behaviour Policy – Governors noted the updated policy and **approved the policy.** Governors thanked HWH for her work on the policy.

9.3 Uniform Policy – Governors reviewed the policy that had been circulated with the agenda.

CHALLENGE: A governor recommended that reference to religious/cultural attire should be included.

ACTION: It was agreed that this change should be made, and subject to that, **the policy was approved.**

CHALLENGE: Governors asked whether skirt length should be included. It was reported that an assembly is planned to advise students on issues such as appropriate skirt length.

10. Safeguarding

It was reported that the Trust's central services IT team had migrated their documents to a new area over the summer, but this was not communicated to schools, therefore access at the start of term was not straightforward. CLH was now able to access the Single Central Record (SCR) and ensured governors that it was up to date. Safeguarding governor confirmed that, as part of a recent visit to school, she had undertaken some random checks, which were all satisfactory.

11. School Pupil Premium (PP)

11.1 Receive and review the impact of PP – Slide 11 on the SLT Report (Link to the PP Statement). It was reported that all necessary information is on the school website and the **PP Statement was received and agreed.**

11.2 Receive and review the impact of Covid funding – Update received.

12. Local Matters

It was confirmed that the 6th Form Centre is on track for completion by the end of October. It will be a great resource and study area and a good selling point to attract students.

13. Finance

There was no report from the central Finance Team. **Governors reported that** they had not had sight of P10, P11 or P12 monthly management accounts to date although it was acknowledged that it was unlikely that P12 would be ready for circulation this early in the school year. The last set of published accounts were for May 2022. Governors agreed that without this information, it was difficult to fulfil their duty of challenging and holding the Headteacher to account -for example examining the pupil premium spend and/or supporting new staff appointments. **Governors agreed to share this concern once again with the Trust Board.**

14. Matters to Share with the Trust Board

1. The school's difficulty in accessing the correct SCR on the first day of term was an issue. Governors ask that a process be put in place by the Trust to enable effective and timely management of the SCR.
2. The LGB have been requesting a TLA Central Services Service Agreement for some time, to ensure they know what services to expect and to ascertain value for money for the school's 5% of GAG contribution.
3. The school have not received any monthly management accounts since May 2022, making it difficult to challenge or support HT's decisions on matters such as staffing.
4. It was noted that the school have reported 'Matters to Share' with the Trust Board previously but have not had responses. Governors ask if the Board could consider how matters are reported back to complete this process.

15. Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB and 16. AOB. Nothing to report

Date and Time of Next Meeting – Monday 16th January 2022 at 4pm

Meeting Closed at 6:30pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

Action Log – Post March 2022 Meeting		
Action and Item Number	By Whom	By When/Complete
4.1 To hold a parent governor election	School	Next half term
4.3.4 The Clerk will ascertain how other TLA schools administer Admissions' Appeals and report back to the LGB	Clerk	16 th January 2023
4.5 Governors will consider the NGA Health Check questions and the LGB as a whole will complete the checklist at the next meeting	Governors	16 th January 2023
4.6 The Clerk will upload to GH the Website Check list for completion by the HT/SLT and check by a Governor to confirm compliance at the next meeting	Clerk/HT/Governor	16 th January 2023
6.1 Destination data to be provided for students	HT	Included within these minutes
9.3 The Uniform Policy will be updated with reference to religious/cultural attire	SLT	ASAP