



**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE CAREW ACADEMY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON THURSDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2014 AT 5.00pm**

Members: Mr S Vines (Chair)
Mr R Mills (Vice Chair)
Mr J Prior (Principal)
Mrs T Conaghan
Mr N Hall
Mr E Murphy
Mrs K Phillips
*Mrs J Sherborne

Also Present: Mr B Geen-Vice Principal
Mrs T Goodsell-Clerk to the Governors

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Janet Sherborne.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i) Governors were informed that the recent parent governor election had resulted in both candidates receiving an equal amount of votes. It was agreed to appoint Nicola Summers as a parent governor to the LGB and Annette Acik as a co-opted governor, as her experience and background match a skills gap on the LGB. Both governors will be invited to the next meeting of the LGB.
- ii) Governors were informed that Mrs M Bell had resigned from the school and was therefore no longer eligible to be the non-teaching staff member on the governing body. Mr N Hall has been appointed as the new non-teaching staff governor.

Governors **RESOLVED** to note this information and to welcome Mr Hall to the governing body.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Governors **RESOLVED** to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28th November 2013.

5. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

i) Portfolio Governors

Further to minute 5/13, governors **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Governors would be drawing up terms of reference for Portfolio governors.

ii) Policies

Further to minute 6/13, governors **NOTED** that the Appraisal and Pay policies had been circulated.

iii) Glossary of Terms

Further to minute 6/13, Governors **RECEIVED** the Glossary of Terms.

iv) Sixth Form Consultation

Further to minute 8/13, governors **RECEIVED** a paper on the proposal for the new sixth form and a further paper was tabled providing a summary of the responses to the consultation. Mr Prior said this was a largely positive document and explained that the next step would be for a business case to be submitted to the DfE for approval.

Governors asked about the proposed location of the new sixth form.

Mr Prior explained that the school would only accept up to 10 pupils from September 2015, as this would only be manageable on the current site. Provision is also likely to include elements off site provision, for example Carshalton College.

However, it remains a priority to find alternative accommodation in order to meet the projected numbers in the future.

v) Central Record

Governors **NOTED** that Mr Vines has seen and checked the school's Central Record.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Pupils

Mr Prior reported that pupils are making good progress and the quality of teaching continues to improve. Mr Geen would present further data to governors regarding teaching quality later in the meeting.

A review of space utilisation in the school has been carried out by Tracey Trotter, Vice Principal, Corporate Services at Orchard Hill and Paul Alston, an architect. Mr Prior is meeting with Tracey Trotter after half term to discuss the findings.

Although Mr Prior said that it would be difficult to accommodate the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 177 pupils, there is a need to increase the intake. However, he said governors should recognise that this will be incremental due to a number of factors, such as re-building the school's reputation and ensuring that only pupils who would be appropriately placed at Carew are added to the roll.

The school currently has 131 pupils on roll, but receives per place funding for 177. However, the top-up funding from the LA is only received for 131 pupils (which is correct). We have illustrated how the LA has offset the top-up against the additional place funding, so the school is not in actuality receiving additional funding for surplus places, as the LA contend. This means that top-up values are also suppressed for Carew pupils and the funding is not needs-led, as it should be, but rather, is a product of a formula applied to ensure a pre-determined figure is attained (broadly, parity with 2012-13 budget).

Mr Prior said the school is adopting a dual approach to this issue. Currently, the school does not consider that pupils are adequately funded by the LA under the present arrangements. Whilst it is always possible to balance the budget, the ultimate aim is to ensure outstanding provision; current funding levels make this extremely difficult to achieve. As well as the funding issues, Mr Prior said that there is scope for the school to consider amending its official designation to 'MLD and complex needs'. This would enable the school to tailor its provision to meet the needs of more complex learners being referred to the school. It would also have the benefit of increasing the numbers on roll. However, he said that this cannot be done successfully without the appropriate resources. Mr Prior and Dr Allen, CEO of the Academy Trust, are moving towards a more formal approach with the LA to move these issues forward.

Mr Prior asked the LGB to recommend to the OHCAT Board that the academy applies to amend its designation.

Governors **RESOLVED** to make this recommendation to the OHCAT Board.

There was some further discussion about the proposed 6th form provision, and Mr Mills asked whether the provision of a sixth form at Carew could have an adverse effect on numbers at Orchard Hill or vice versa. Mr Prior said that this would not be the case, as the pupils that would be entering the sixth form at Carew function at a higher level than learners at Orchard Hill. Mr Geen commented that whilst the sixth form provision is a positive move, the school must continue to keep on track with its ambition to be an outstanding provision. However, a successful 6th form provision can support that aspiration.

Budget

As previously mentioned, Mr Prior said that the school has a balanced budget with a small projected surplus of £13k at year end. However, this will need careful monitoring to ensure the school can meet all its ongoing liabilities.

The appointment of Corrina Jenkins as OHCAT Director of Finance and Resources has had a positive impact on the management of the budget.

Personnel

Mr Prior reported that interviews for Assistant Vice Principal had taken place that day, and interviews for teachers would take place on 14th February. Interviews for Teaching Assistants will take place after half term. The aim is to create greater consistency in the staff team and deepen operational and leadership capacity.

Mr Prior now meets half termly with the therapists to improve partnership working and secure better outcomes for the pupils. These meetings have been well received.

Staff attendance continues to improve. There remains one member of staff on long term sickness absence, since before the school became an academy. Discussions to move this forward are ongoing with Orchard Hill and Sutton HR.

School Improvement

The quality of teaching continues to improve. One teacher has been moved onto the formal capability procedure.

Mr Prior said he would circulate accurate data on pupil progress to the LGB.

Mr Geen then gave governors a presentation on the Observations of Learning and Teaching (OLT) Round 3. He explained that it is an improving picture showing that across the school, the quality of teaching is just starting to be

typically good (grade 2). This is not a secure '2' yet, but indicates excellent progress over the preceding months. One grade 4 teacher is an agency teacher and is leaving the school. There is a culture of high support but the school continues to hold teachers to account for their performance.

Mr Prior said that the school has received a better field for the teaching posts, but there is still a need to be creative in how teachers are employed i.e. temporary contract, agency staff. In response to a governor's question about the retention of good teachers, Mr Prior acknowledged that it is vital to have strong recruitment and retention of teachers, although this is inextricably linked with appropriate funding.

Behaviour and Safety

Pupil behaviour continues to improve but there is room for further improvement. There is a need to recruit an attendance officer/family support worker and we are looking creatively at the budget to see if this can be achieved ASAP. The quality of pupils' behaviour, their safety and their attendance remain crucial factors in Ofsted judgements.

David Scott, external advisor, has carried out a Section 11 safeguarding audit and actions have been put in place to address some of the findings that have come out of that report, including the setting up of a new safeguarding team. This team includes Janet Sherborne as the safeguarding portfolio holder on the LGB.

Exclusions

Mr Prior explained that the data for 2012/13 was unreliable and couldn't be used as a baseline.

Accurate data is now been collected. There have been a number of exclusions during the autumn term and there is a need to see an ongoing reduction in these statistics, such as that we are now seeing in the Spring Term. The Behaviour team is working well and Mr Prior and Mr Geen will continue to work with them to develop their practice.

Governors noted that the school is working through a period of change, and there may be an increase in reported incidents because of better reporting structures.

Mr Geen gave governors a presentation on analysis of incidents of challenging behaviour. The school is using a new classification document which is improving the quality of the data. There is a whole school policy on reward and praise, using a holistic and consistent approach. The school is clear about the strategies to reduce incidents bullying, including using restorative practice.

Mr Hall said that he would like to see a report showing a larger scope to include positive behaviour as this data doesn't tell the whole story. Mr Geen said that this was a valid point and he would try to capture positives when presenting his report in future.

Mr Prior said that once comparative data is collated, the school can target particular areas of bad behaviour with direct effect.

Leadership and Management

Mr Prior explained that he and Mr Geen continue to coach middle leaders through the observation process. A key objective of the school improvement plan is to strengthen the middle leadership capacity with respect to impacting positively on monitoring the quality of the school's performance in addition to operational management.

Governance

Mr Prior emphasised the importance of effective governance in the school and the LGB being informed as to how the school is performing against its stated objectives.

Governors said that the presentations they had received at this meeting had been extremely informative and has given them good evidence base towards their knowledge of how the school is addressing areas in the school improvement plan.

Mr Prior had circulated a governors' Ofsted checklist and asked governors to let him have any comments/thoughts on this document.

7. POLICIES

The following policies were submitted for review and approval:

- Educational Visits Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Conduct Policy
- Equality Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Reorganisation Procedure
- Redeployment Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Governors were advised that all the HR policies had been transferred across to the Academy following the TUPE process when the school converted to academy status on 1.9.2013.

Once approval has been received from the LGB, these policies will then be submitted to the OHCAT Board for final approval.

Governors **RESOLVED** to approve all the policies for submission to the OHCAT Board, apart from the Intimate Care Policy, which requires further consultation with staff.

8. APPROVAL OF STAFF HANDBOOK

This item was deferred to the next LGB meeting.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governors discussed the importance of their support and challenge role and recognised that they needed to be rigorous in holding the leadership team to account for the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Mr Mills commented that governors were also keen to praise and acknowledge good behaviour and attendance by pupils and there was a discussion about how this could be managed, i.e. theme of the week, postcard system.

Mr Hall also spoke about the competition that the school recently entered to win money for the pupils to renovate 'Zippy the Boat' to make it seaworthy. The competition involved pupils given a presentation as to why they should win the competition. Unfortunately they were not successful, but the project will go ahead nevertheless. Mr Prior thanked Mr Hall for his excellent efforts in this regard.

Pupils are also working on the school allotment.

ACTION: Mr Geen to produce a document for development points to be circulated to governors.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The following meeting dates were noted:

CAREW ACADEMY LGB

Thursday 22nd May 2014 at 4pm

OHCAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thursday 13th March 2014 at 2pm

Thursday 19th June 2014 at 2pm

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no items of confidentiality.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm