



**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE CAREW ACADEMY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON THURSDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2015 AT 4pm AT THE SCHOOL**

Members: Mr R Mills (Chair)
*Mr J Prior (Principal)
*Mrs A Acik
Mr S Brooks
Mrs T Conaghan
Mr E Murphy
*Mrs K Phillips
Mrs J Sherborne
Mrs N Summers

*Denotes absence

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

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Prior, Simon Vines, Annette Acik, Kelly Phillips and Nicola Summers.

Governors **APPROVED** the apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Constitution and Appointments

Governors **NOTED** that Mr Stephen Brooks has been appointed as the non-teaching staff governor representative on the governing body, subject to the OHCAT Board's ratification of his appointment at their meeting on 27.2.2105.

Governors welcomed Mr Brooks to the governing body.

4. Minutes of Last meeting

Governors **AGREED** the minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 6th November 2014.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

i) **Presentation**

Further to minute 5i), governors **NOTED** that last term's presentation from the Departmental Heads had been circulated with the papers for this meeting.

ii) **Budget**

Further to minute 6, Mr Mills reported that he had emailed several councillors on behalf of the LGB and had met with some of them to discuss the inadequate top up issue at Carew. Governors also **NOTED** Mark Whitby, OHCAT's Financial consultant's response to Sutton's High Needs Funding Consultation. The consultation has now been deferred for another month. Mr Mills reported that there is likely to be a solution at least for 2015-6 and governors will be kept updated.

iii) **Vision and Values**

Further to minute 7, Mr Mills reported that this subject would be covered later in the agenda under his portfolio governor visit report. (See 6iii)

iv) **Training**

Further to minute 8, Governors **NOTED** that Jackie Van West, Safeguarding Lead at Orchard Hill College, will run a safeguarding training session for governors immediately prior to the (taken out the word next) governing Body meeting on 21st May 2015.

v) **Sixth Form**

Further to minute 6, Mr Mills asked for an update on the sixth form applications for September. Mr Smillie reported that 2 applications were submitted at the recent sixth form parents evening and there has been Considerable interest from Year 10 and Y11 parents/carers. Governors **AGREED** that the sixth form will need at least 8-10 pupils to be viable due to both financial and quality issues.

Action: Mr Geen to provide a provisional list of sixth form applicants for the next meeting.

6. Portfolio Governor Visits

The following portfolio reports were RECEIVED:

i) Teaching and Learning-Kelly Phillips

Governors noted the comments in the report about some inconsistencies in the application of the marking and assessment policy and asked what actions were being taken to address these inconsistencies. Mr Geen reported that there has been a consistent focus on marking and assessment with the whole school staff for this academic year, and going back to last summer term. It is a complex issue that needs time to refine in such a specialist setting as Carew. He said it is important to evidence good progress over time, which the school is increasingly doing. Regular (at least twice-termly) work sampling and scrutiny from the SLT is ensuring that we are monitoring quality improvements and keeping track of areas for further improvement.

ii) Finance-Annette Acik

Governors noted that the DfE had carried out an external audit and asked whether there were any comments from that audit that governors should be aware of. It was agreed that this would be useful for Ofsted purposes.

Action: Tracey Goodsell to ask Corrina Jenkins, the Finance Director to provide governors with any comments arising from the audit.

iii) Ethos and Vision-Roger Mills

Mr Mills had met with Mr Prior to discuss the ethos and strategy for Carew. The statements were agreed and have been placed in the website. Governors **NOTED** that Mr Prior had proposed that the school undertakes to obtain the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award and Mr Mills had agreed to this proposal. Governors also discussed the importance of the vision statement being placed somewhere predominant in the school.

Action: Tracey Goodsell to arrange for the vision statement to be put in the reception area.

iv) Safeguarding-Janet Sherborne

Mrs Sherborne reported that she had been into school several times this term to focus on various issues including safeguarding and e-safety She had also attended a parents evening to talk about e-safety in school and

parents were keen for the school to arrange an e-safety event for parents, particularly with regard to social networking. Governors also discussed the recent guidance on 'Disqualification by Association'. The new regulations apply to under 8's in social care settings, which includes school breakfast clubs. Carew staff have been asked to disclose if they are living with someone who may be barred from working with children, or who may have other orders/convictions against them that would make them unsuitable. Mrs Sherborne, as safeguarding governor, has also agreed to undertake this check.

The process has been sensitively managed by the school with HR and staff have responded positively to the request. No significant issues have arisen from the checks.

7. Chair's Report

Governors **RECEIVED** the Chair's report.

Mr Mills reported that he has been attending National Leadership Chair's Training run by the National College of Leadership. The main focus of this training is to emphasise the importance of impact, and because of this focus, Mr Mills said that he always asks about impact during his fortnightly meetings with John Prior. Aside from these fortnightly visits, Mr Mills said that he visits the school once a week, usually on a Friday when he joins the assembly. These visits enable him to develop his knowledge of the school and to continue to scrutinise the work of the school.

Mr Mills spoke about the initiative in school to encourage pupils to identify a special person that they can talk to if they have any issues and no obvious adult is available at the time. This ensures that pupils feel comfortable with others which in turn helps to develop a settled school life which benefits learning and teaching.

Mr Mills said that he had also met with Corrina Jenkins, Finance Director and he will continue to meet with her once a month to scrutinise the school finances.

Mr Mills said that he has joined the Heritage Lottery Fund bid team who are developing plans for a £3million improvement to Beddington Park. He said that he hoped that the project will offer strong opportunities for work experience for pupils at Carew.

Mr Mills then spoke about his visit to watch the Lion King rehearsal in the Great Hall. He asked Mr Murphy to pass on his congratulations to all the

pupils who had performed so excellently in the rehearsal. However, he also commented on how cold the hall had been on that day. He said that he is due to attend a meeting with Tracey Trotter, Vice Principal of Business Services at Orchard Hill College and representatives from the London Borough of Sutton to discuss future premises for the school.

Mr Mills said that he had attended the Secondary Schools Partnership meeting, where members had discussed the performance of the Borough's Social Services department. Members were concerned that matters have reached a critical point in this department. Mr Geen confirmed that there has been some 'drift' in the services the school has received, caused by a perception of diminishing resources and increasing caseloads (although this is contested by Richard Nash, Executive Head of Safeguarding). Mr Mills said that there should be an update at the next meeting Mrs Sherborne suggested that governors may want to write to the local safeguarding board once this report has been received. Following the meeting it was established that the Partnership of Sutton Secondary Schools has written a collective letter to Richard Nash, and have received a response. This will be available for governors at the next meeting.

Action: The latest correspondence about this issue to be available for governors to consider at the next meeting and establish whether a Carew-specific overview in response to the letters was necessary.

Mr Mills said that he had attended an art exhibition at the Europa gallery in Sutton where Tahsin, a Carew student, had had an excellent piece of her artwork displayed. He had been to visit Tahsin to congratulate her and he will ensure that a good news story about this is put on the website.

8. Effective Governance

Mr Mills said that the governing body needs to develop a formal governor induction. He said that he would meet with Stephen Brooks, the new non-teaching staff governor to talk to him about his new role. He will also provide governors with a monthly briefing. He suggested that the governing body should move to having two meetings per term to increase their focus on learning and teaching and Mr Geen said he endorsed this.

Action: Mr Mills to talk to Mr Prior about this suggestion. The clerk will advise governors of the outcome of these discussions and, if agreed, will arrange an LGB meeting before the Easter break.

9. Update on Learning and Teaching

Mr Geen had previously circulated the latest data from the observations of Learning and Teaching, January 2015.

He explained that these had been fully announced observations, which had produced the following results:

Approx 65% grade 2

Approx 20% grade 3

Approx 10% grade 1

There were no grade 4 lessons observed.

These were the best results since the academy conversion with an overall average of grade 2C-2B.

There will now be focused training for staff on 6 key points:

Books/folders

Energy (commitment and enthusiasm in class)

Targets (clear learning intentions)

Teaching Assistants (Using support staff effectively)

Environment (use of resources, displays etc)

Differentiation (learning challenges are well matched to individual pupils)

The next steps are to ensure that there is even better marking and assessment, that there is a re-focus on teaching assistants to ensure that they are consistently supporting learning and for SMSC to be habitually developed during lessons.

Mr Mills asked how often further observations will be carried out. Mr Geen said that this will depend on the progress being made but senior leaders will need a suite of evidence which gives a robust judgement. The Teacher Evaluation Schedules will judge the typical quality of teaching from each teacher over each term. Mr Smillie said that teaching assistants need to be actively contributing to and impacting on pupils' learning. The leadership team are continually monitoring. Teachers deemed to typically require improvement at the end of each term are placed on a six-week Teacher Support Plan (which is still within the appraisal process) that targets specific areas for improvement and offers further monitoring and coaching.

Mr Geen confirmed that there are currently four teachers on a TSP. This is a six week plan and the teachers are given a mentor to support them to improve the quality of their practice.

Mr Brooks asked what process was followed after the six week plan. Mr Geen explained that if the teacher is not consistently performing well during the six week plan, they may be moved to a further, shorter (4 week) TSP, or they will be moved onto the capability procedure which could ultimately lead to their dismissal. He emphasised that whilst this would only happen as a last resort, after all other support strategies had been used, it is a measure that will be used if necessary to ensure that the pupils at Carew are receiving the best quality education.

Governors **RECEIVED** the summary of OLTs.

10. Principal's Report and SEF Summary

Governors noted that Mr Prior had been invited to shadow an Ofsted inspection as part of his OfSTED inspector training and had sought permission from Mr Mills to be excused from this LGB meeting to attend. Mr Mills said he had agreed to this request, recognising that this was an important development opportunity for Mr Prior and also the benefits that this could bring to Mr Prior's role at Carew.

Governors fully endorsed Mr Prior's comments in his report that the school must continue to be robust against unsuitable admissions.

Mr Mills asked about the progress in Key Stage 3 and Mr Geen confirmed that there is some vulnerability at KS3 that needs monitoring. However, whilst not all pupils in KS3 have made as rapid progress as their peers in KS2 and KS4 Mr Geen said it was still very important to acknowledge that their progress is still strong; this is a matter regarding relative comparisons. This can partly be attributed to the difficulty in recruiting high calibre teachers in this key stage. Strategies have been put in place to address this, including links being forged with Avenue primary school, an outstanding school in Belmont which is also a teaching school. Mr Prior has also secured a partnership with Sutton SCITT the initial Teacher Training provision run from Glenthorne High school. Carew will act as a host school for alternative placements. Mr Prior has also worked with OHCAT's marketing team to expand the recruitment strategy.

Mr Geen concluded by saying that progress and attainment at Key stage 4 is a particular strength and this year's Y11 pupils at Carew are on track for good accreditation, building on the success of 2013-14.

Mr Geen confirmed that this data would be presented to Ofsted.

Governor **RECEIVED** the Principal's report and the 2 page SEF summary.

11. Finance and Funding

i) Monitoring of Financial Performance

Governors noted the red risk relating to the reserves of £4k. Governors discussed the tension between carrying forward a small surplus as opposed to a large surplus. Mr Geen said that there has been a significant reduction in agency staff. Governors noted that a target had been set to reduce agency staff by 5% year on year, which was considered reasonable.

Mrs Conaghan asked why it was difficult to recruit teachers. Mr Geen said that this could be down to a number of factors. Firstly, there is a national issue in recruiting high quality teachers; there are likely to be some residual reputational issues with Carew, given its rapid improvement from a very low point; the location of the school and the quality of the building could be a factor; the school is very 'niche' in terms of its complex and varied cohort and this may not readily have wide appeal. He spoke about impactful strategies being implemented to improve recruitment including Sutton SCITT and the links with Avenue Primary school, as previously mentioned in Mr Prior's report. Mrs Conaghan emphasised the need for the pupils to have consistent teaching and she was reassured by Mr Geen that the school has a small number of excellent agency teachers who have been working at the school for some time, covering long term sickness absences and cover for middle leaders' development. It should be noted that in January 2013 the school was running at circa 40% substantive staffing; as of January 2015 this was circa 90%.

Governors recognised that the school needs to continue to work hard to improve the reputation of the school and asked how the school is being marketed to attract good teachers. Mr Mills said that a new building may help to attract a wider field. The school offers competitive salaries to highly capable candidates. The school is also working closely with Orchard Hill College's marketing department to improve the job adverts. Going forward, a 'grow your own' approach will need to be strongly in the recruitment mix. There are some very able TAs here who could make excellent teachers.

Mrs Sherborne said that the format of this financial report (i.e.RAG rating) would be useful to see in other governing body documents.

Action: Mr Geen to consult Mr Prior about producing a monitoring item on the agenda focusing on the four areas in the SEF.

ii) Buy back of Services from the London Borough of Sutton

Governors **APPROVED** the buyback of services from LBS as listed in the document. They also **NOTED** that, in time, these services will be provided by the Orchard Hill College Shared Services.

12. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL

The following policies had been circulated for approval:

Anti-Bullying Policy (pupil's version attached as an appendix)
 Children with Medical Needs
 E-Safety Policy
 Equality Policy
 Freedom of Information Policy

Mr Geen explained that the pupils had devised a pupil friendly version of the anti-bullying policy that they had presented to the student council, governors and assemblies.

Governors **NOTED** that the school would complete the equality objectives and action plan.

Governors **RESOLVED** to approve all the policies.

13. Any Other Business

i) Parent Survey Feedback

Governors **RECEIVED** this useful feedback report. Mr Mills asked for all of the staff to be congratulated on behalf of the governors for what were extremely strong results. The improvements survey on survey showed how much progress had been made and it was excellent to have the parents/carers validate through the survey their perception of the improvements in the school.

14. Dates of Next Meeting

Governors **NOTED** the date of the next LGB meeting on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 4pm, whilst noting that another LGB meeting may be also set this term (see minute 8).

15. Confidentiality

There were no items of confidentiality

The meeting was followed by a Ofsted training session run by Mr Geen.

CHAIR-----DATE-----