



**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE CAREW ACADEMY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON THURSDAY 6th NOVEMBER 2014**

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

Also Present: Mr B Geen-Vice Principal
Mr C Smillie-Assistant Vice Principal
Mr D Thomas-Head of Lower school
Mrs T Goodsell-Clerk to the Governors
Mrs C Jenkins-Finance Director

The meeting was preceded by a presentation from the Departmental Heads on the department action plans for 2014-15.

Mr Smillie introduced the presentation by informing governors that each department's targets feed into the Quality and Curriculum Plan, ensuring synergy across the school.

David Thomas (Head of Lower School – KS2 and Y7)

Mr Thomas explained that the longer term plan is to continue to improve teaching and learning, progress and achievement so that both are consistently good or better. This will be achieved by using increasingly personalised interventions and strengthening attitudes to learning. Pupils are encouraged to develop their self-esteem and confidence through high achievement and behaviour.

In terms of curriculum development, Mr Thomas said it was important to ensure the curriculum is relevant for the increasingly wide range of pupils with complex needs and to ensure a balance with their academic levels and age appropriate interest. A key area remains raising achievement in reading, and in particular, phonics. Many pupils struggle with reading and it can become a negative experience for them. The school continues to promote a 'love of reading' alongside a more structured

approach. To support this, interventions such as additional sensory input with low or high tech equipment, is being increasingly used to support access and engagement.

Emmett Murphy (Head of Middle School – Years 8 & 9 & Head of ASD provision)

Mr Murphy explained that Year 8 is the last year at school with a primary-school structure (i.e. the majority, if not all, of lessons/subjects taught by the same teacher in the same room). In Year 9 there is a more traditional secondary timetabling and pupils move around the school, having lessons delivered by the full-range of specialist subject teachers. This transition is significant and introduces different challenges for pupils, building their resilience and independence. Pupils have more responsibility, managing their own time and studying. The teaching staff within these depts are passionate and enthusiastic. The quality of teaching is typically good and behaviour is strong, not just in terms of conduct but also attitudes to learning.

Mr Murphy said there are five separate classes within the ASD provision. The school has moved away from solely year group-based classes (though retains key stage grouping) and there are now some mixed-year classes where the overall pupil profile is felt to be better matched. Pupils are grouped by their learning styles, which is more effective for promoting quality learning and behaviour. The curriculum content mirrors that of the rest of the school but there is a different delivery with more structure and emphasis on visual aids and other good ASD pedagogy. This area of the school is not exclusively for pupils with an ASD diagnosis. Some pupils without ASD benefit from this style of learning and support. Areas for development are to ensure that the overall teaching and achievement continues to be typically at least good. Longer term, the school's may have aspirations to develop a 'centre of excellence/hub' within the local authority, to work with other schools and provisions to supply appropriate outreach and support.

Craig Smillie (AVP and interim Head of Upper School - Years 10 & 11)

Mr Smillie said that pupils' learning in KS4 is focused on transition/destinations P16, preparation for adulthood and attainment (including GCSEs and Entry Levels). Pupils are given, and expected to take, more personal responsibility; they will access other provision such as travel training, weekly college and work experience. There is a keen focus on ensuring the highest quality attitudes to learning, which are good and continue to improve. Key areas for development are transition work, in particular tracking the success (or otherwise) of ongoing placements.

Mr Smillie summed up by saying that there are significant strengths in all the departments and questions were invited:

Mr Mills commented that there is already an ASD provision at Stanley Park High school and asked whether Carew would be in competition with them, if the school decided to pursue the 'centre of excellence' notion. Mr Murphy explained that the provision at Stanley Park High is typically for higher cognitively functioning pupils, although recently one Carew pupil has migrated from SPH.

Mr Vines asked about the staff/pupil ratios in the ASD classes. Mr Emmet said that this varies based on pupils needs, but is typically 1 teacher and 2 TAs to approximately 8-10 pupils.

Governors thanked the department heads for their interesting and informative presentation.

Action: Mr Smillie to email the presentation to all the governors,

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Conaghan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i) There were no declarations of interest.
- ii) Governors were asked to complete the annual declaration of interest form and return to the Clerk as soon as possible.

3. SKILLS AUDIT FORM

Governors were asked to complete the skills audit form and return it to the Clerk. The forms would be analysed as part of the governing body's self-assessment to identify any skills gaps on the local governing body. This would help to address training and recruitment needs.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

- i) Governors **RESOLVED** to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd May 2014.
- ii) Governors **RESOLVED** to confirm and sign the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 25th September 2014.

5. MATTERS ARISING

a) From FGB meeting on 22.5.2014

- i) Staff Handbook

Further to minute 13, Governors **NOTED** that the staff handbook has been sent to all staff.

b) From Extraordinary meeting on 25.9.2014

- i) Further to minute 4c), Governors **NOTED** that the non-teaching staff governor election had been run again but no nominations were received.
- ii) Further to minute 6b), Mr Mills reported that had produced a dashboard for his 'Governor of the Month' visits, which he had linked with the key areas in the QCP. He said this had provided a good evidence base for his visits and encouraged other governors to use this when they were visiting during their allocated 'month'. Mr Mills had visited two student council meetings. At the second meeting, students had discussed the anti-bullying policy. There had been an excellent attitudes to learning. He had also toured the school and spoke about the good energy in the playground at lunchtime. He had also seen evidence of the use of phonics in a Year 10 literacy session and he commented on how calm the session had been, and how the pupils were confident to engage. Mr Geen thanked Mr Mills for his time and his willingness to participate in the student council meetings.
- iii) Further to minute 6b), Mr Prior reported that he was meeting with Mrs Sherborne after the governing body meeting to discuss career pathways and Information and Advice Guidance (IAG).
- iv) Further to minute 6b), Mr Prior reported that he will be looking at comparisons for NEET figures as a benchmarking exercise.
- v) Further to minute 8iii), Governors **NOTED** that the Child Protection policy has been amended to show Mrs Sherborne as the safeguarding governor and to reflect new DfE guidelines and advice from Sept 2014.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr Prior reported that he had previously presented his report as a condensed version of the SEF. On this occasion, he has provided a 'one-sheet' overview of the full SEF and condensed his 'standard' report onto two sides of A4 for brevity and clarity of focus.

Pupils

Mr Prior reported that there are 25 new pupils this year compared with 12 last year, which indicates that the reputation of the school is improving. Positive feedback has been received from parents but there is still work to do in this area.

There will be 10 students in the first year of the sixth form when it opens in Sept 2015. The DfE asked the school to reduce the maximum number of students in the business case from 50 to 25, because of the limitations of the current building.

Due to highly effective gatekeeping and close work with the LA during 2013-14 the new intake for Year 3 and 7 are all appropriately placed at Carew and their needs can be met without compromising the education of the other pupils.

Budget

Mrs Jenkins, Finance Director, provided an overview. She reported that the predicted surplus for 2013-14 had been £19k, but the final figure had been £23k. There had been a one off payment of £50k from Sutton LA, as a minor recoupment for under-funded pupils, and £72K has been paid by OHCAT for services they had received. This amount will not be repeated next year to the same level and this was factored into the budget that was presented to the governors in May. The school continues to advocate for a more appropriate level of top-up funding and governors recognised that remains an ongoing risk to the school and the quality of provision it can provide.

A one-day audit was carried out at the school in August. It was good report and the auditors had been impressed with the school's financial management as an academy opener. There had also been a 6 day audit for the statutory accounts for the Trust and the school is currently working through the queries.

Mr Prior thanked Mrs Jenkins for the successful audit and the work she has done to improve the management of the school's finances.

Mr Prior further reported that he had now received the consultation on top-up funding from the LA, the contents of which are disappointing. He said that the governing body needs to make a rigorous, corporate response. Mr Prior said that the OHCAT Board retains the option to escalate this matter to the DfE, and will discuss their next actions at their meeting on 27.11.2014. Mr Prior concluded by saying that the school is improving despite the financial situation but could achieve even more if more appropriately funded, which would allow for greater diversification and innovation.

Governors **RESOLVED** to delegate the response to Mr Mills and Mr Prior. Mr Mills will also raise the matter with local MPs and council members. The response would be circulated to all governors before it is sent.

Personnel

Mr Prior said that a small number of key vacancies remain, particularly in the KS3 teaching team. Full recruitment to these posts has been unsuccessful so far but

he emphasised that the school must not compromise on quality as a result of a need to fill a post. Governors agreed that there is need to concentrate on the school developing their own staff for posts, including senior posts where appropriate. TA recruitment has been more successful and the support team is now circa 95% substantively staffed.

One teacher is leaving at Christmas, following a resignation when this colleague was moved onto capability procedures for continued under-performance.

Mr Prior asked for governors' views on staffing for the new sixth form. He explained that whilst the school potentially has the capacity within the current leadership team to manage this process from September 2015, there is a clear development opportunity for the right person who could also assume the head of sixth form role, perhaps in tandem with the head of upper school role, currently being carried out highly effectively by Mr Smillie. Governors discussed this matter and **AGREED** that the sixth form could be managed within the existing resources of the Senior Leadership Team while they were able to understand the full extent of the impact of the new intake and if a new post was required governors would seek to appoint from within.

Mr Prior also presented an updated one page Self Evaluation Form (SEF). He explained that this is a 'live' document that is continually updated. Pupil progress over 2013-14 was good and there has been rapid improvement, augmented by the GCSE results and other attainment measures. A 'mock Ofsted' inspection has been arranged for 24-26th November and governors were asked if they could be available to visit the school over the course of the three days.

Mr Geen commented that there is a link between the SEF and the earlier presentation from the departmental heads. The last Ofsted inspection had commented on the development of middle leaders and it is likely that inspectors will ask how this matter has progressed in the school. Governors can now be confident to respond that middle leaders are contributing directly to quality monitoring and improvement. They are also carrying out peer observations and performance management and appraisals, ensuring that pupils not making good progress receive appropriate interventions, e.g. booster groups.

Mr Prior said that whilst he has currently graded Leadership and Management as Grade 2, it might be appropriate to aim for Grade 1, given how far the school has come in this area (working on the premise that if L&M were not outstanding, then teaching and achievement would still require improvement). However, he said that this is highly aspirational and would see how long the school gets before the Ofsted call before making that decision; to achieve a grade 2 overall at the next Ofsted would be an outstanding achievement in itself.

Health and Safety

Mrs Sherborne reported that she had carried out a portfolio visit to check risk assessments in the school following the recent building works. Mr Prior thanked Mr Smillie for overseeing the building works during the summer holidays. The building works will have an impact on school improvement, enabling the school to further diversify its provision. e.g. using breakout areas.

School Events

Mr Prior had included a sample of school events. A new family survey is being sent out and the results will be collated by Christmas. Mr Mills said he would like to include the results of the survey in his celebratory document.

Mr Prior reported that he has been attending the Partnership of Sutton Secondary Schools which has helped to raise Carew's profile. The partnership has been supportive and has changed its constitution to allow Carew to join (i.e. the Headteachers of each school can join, but not the 'trust' id it is a MAT).

Governors **RECEIVED** the Principal's report and agreed that they were happy with the new format and **AGREED** that this report should continue to remain the main focus of the LGB meetings.

7. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR VISITS

- i) Governors **RECEIVED** the portfolio governor visit report from Janet Sherborne, who had visited the school on 8.10.2014 to review risk assessments following the building work.
Governors also **NOTED** that Mr Mills had visited the school in his 'Governor of the Month' role.
- ii) Governors considered the current portfolio roles in light of recent constitutional changes on the LGB. The following was agreed:

Portfolio	Member (1)	Member (2)
Ethos, Vision, Strategy	Roger Mills	John Prior
Learner Achievement/Teaching Quality	Kelly Banton	Vacancy
Health & Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding	Janet Sherborne	Kelly Banton
Finance	Annette Acik	Roger Mills
Human Resources	Simon Vines	Janet Sherborne
Premises and Equipment	Emmet Murphy	Nicola Summers

Marketing and Business Development	Roger Mills	Tricia Conaghan
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iii) It was reported that Mr Vines would be visiting in his portfolio role for leadership and HR on 12th November.

Clerks note: This date has now been rescheduled to 26.11.14.

Mrs Phillips was asked to provide the clerk with some dates for her to visit in December in her portfolio holder role for Teaching and Learning.

It was confirmed that Mrs Acik would be coming in to school on 27th November for her finance portfolio visit.

Mrs Sherborne and Mr Mills will visit during the mock Ofsted visit, along with Mr Vines. Other governors were also encouraged to attend.

Mr Mills reported that he had received an open letter to Chairs of governors from Lord Nash. Lord Nash had spoken about the importance of governors setting the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school. Governors discussed the need for them to be aware of the school's vision statement and values.

Action: Mr Geen and Mr Mills to look and, and possibly revise/refresh, the school's existing vision statement (agreed last year) and circulate to all governors and staff.

8. GOVERNOR TRAINING

- i) Mrs Acik reported that she had attended a Financial Efficiencies Workshop training in June. The training had been basic but relatively useful.
- ii) Mr Mills reported that he will be attending a Chairs Development programme this term being run by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.
- iii) Governors **NOTED** that they have been given membership to 'The Key', a useful website for school governors.
- iv) Mr Mills reported that it would be useful for governors to receive Safeguarding training. Mrs Sherborne agreed to speak to Jackie Van West, Safeguarding Lead at Orchard Hill College to arrange training immediately before the next governing body meeting.

9. UPDATE ON STUDENT COUNCIL

Mr Geen reported that the student council has been changed from a single group of 32 pupils, which was proving unworkable, and has been divided into Lower and Upper school. There is a possibility that the lower school group could be further divided into two groups. Pupils have a well-led discussion with their teacher beforehand which helps to achieve high quality decisions at the council meetings.

Pupils have contributed to the Marking policy and have also looked at the Anti-bullying policy. Mr Geen is now formulating the anti-bullying policy which will be sent to governors when it has been finalised for approval/comment.

10. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

The following policies were presented for approval:

Admissions Policy
Sex and Relationships Policy
Critical Incidents Plan
E-Safety Policy
Attendance Policy

Governors **APPROVED** all the policies, except for the e-safety policy. Mrs Sherborne **AGREED** to review this policy and governors **AGREED** to delegate final approval of the policy to Mrs Sherborne. Mr Geen **AGREED** to look at the policy at the next student council meeting.

Clerks note: Following the meeting, further revisions were made to the Attendance policy which was circulated to governors for email ratification.

The following policies were presented for discussion:

Pay Policy
Appraisal Policy
Capability Policy

With regard to the Pay Policy, Mr Prior explained that he wanted to take an amendment to the OHCAT Board meeting, shown on page 14, with regard to unqualified teachers. This recommendation had been endorsed by the Pay committee. This amendment would give the school greater flexibility to retain good staff if they are not fully qualified teachers.

Mr Prior further explained that the Capability and Appraisal policies have been separated following a recommendation from the Pay committee.

Governors **NOTED** that the following policies are currently under review and will be ratified imminently:

Anti-Bullying Policy
 Freedom of Information Policy
 Medical needs Policy
 Missing Child Policy
 Severe Weather Policy

11. KEY OHCAT DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

The following documents had been circulated for information:

- i) Programme of Works
- ii) Schedule of Roles and Responsibilities
- iii) Scheme of delegation

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i) Consideration of requests for leave of absence from staff

Governors considered what approach should be taken for requests for leave of absence following a recent request from a member of staff which had been declined. Governors **AGREED** that this should be a management decision and each case should be judged on its own merit. However the needs of the pupils is paramount and this should always be the underlying principle when considering requests.

- ii) Governors **NOTED** that the Pay Committee had met on 17th October 2014 to approve teacher salary recommendations for 2014-15.
- iii) Mrs Jenkins reported that the school had been approached by the makers of the TV programme 'Most Haunted' to film an episode at the school. Governors **AGREED** to refuse this request, on the basis that the school could suffer reputational damage.
- iv) Mr Prior reported that the Trust has been asked to sponsor Chantry Special School in Hillingdon, and there are other informal conversations ongoing with other schools who have approached OHCAT with a view to finding out more information about the trust, including possibly joining or working in partnership. There is a fast pace of change, which needs monitoring. Mr Prior, Mr Geen, Mr Smillie and Mrs Jenkins are all providing

support to Chantry school at this moment in time, which is manageable to the current extent of it.

- v) Mrs Sherborne reported that the new Carew Academy website has been launched and she showed it to governors on her iPad. The website includes a governors' portal where they will be able to access papers for meeting and reference documents. Governors will be asked to provide a photo and short blog for the website.
- vi) Mr Mills reported that he has been in contact with the Friends of Beddington Park, who have been awarded a lottery grant to restore the park. He said it could be an excellent opportunity for pupils to carry out their work experience placements on the project.
- vii) Mr Murphy reported on the recent year 11 residential trip and he tabled a brief, highly impactful report. Mr Murphy said that the residential have always been a high quality learning experience, but the visits have been revamped, and the experience for pupils has been enhanced. The year 11 trip has been moved from June to October to maximise the learning and relational benefits early in the year, rather than at the end. In response to a governor's question, Mr Murphy said that for the pupils who did not attend the residential, they still have a high quality learning experience at school during that week. Pupils are set targets on the residential, which are worked on during the trip and evaluated when they come back. Governors were particularly pleased to see the quotes from pupils attached to the report and thanked Mr Murphy and all the staff for the excellent work carried out on the trips.

13. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Governors **NOTED** the dates of the next meetings as follows:

Thursday 12th February 2015 at 4pm

Thursday 21st May 2015 at 4pm

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no items of confidentiality

The meeting closed at 6.10pm

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