



Cambridgeshire
County Council



**Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Castle School
held on Monday 2nd October 2017 at 6.30 pm in the School**

Present: Mary Langran (Chair – ML)
Carol McCarthy (Head teacher – CM)
John Bastable (JB)
Helen Dolling (HD)
Donna Lovett (DL)
Katy Roberts (KR)

Also in Attendance: Sally Hempson (School Business Manager - SH)

The meeting was quorate throughout.

1	Apologies for absence / clerking arrangements Apologies were received and accepted from Nick Brenton, Kate Dove and Janice Frankham. Mark Littlewood had recently resigned with effect on the meeting date. The clerk post was due to be re-advertised following the resignation of the previous successful candidate before taking up the post. KR therefore took the minutes for this meeting.
2	Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda None.
	MINUTES
3	Minutes of the last meeting held on 3rd July 2017. Circulated in advance; approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.
4	Matters arising
4.1	(<i>item 4.3</i>) CM noted that there had been a large national rise in the

<p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p> <p>4.6</p> <p>4.7</p>	<p>proportion of weddings taking place during the week, affecting staff absence levels. Full details will be reported to the Finance and Planning committee.</p> <p><i>(item 4.4)</i> ML mentioned that governors had previously discussed the possibility of leading on specific topics and that this should be linked to other things such as the School Development Plan and Ofsted action plan or school visits.</p> <p><i>(item 7)</i> CM asked whether she needed to advertise for new governors. Mark Littlewood had been a co-opted governor from the parent body and in the short term we need to replace him. In the medium term we need to ensure we have a suitable pipeline of parent governors to replace any of the current parent governors as required.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: CM</p> <p>ML to contact governor support to investigate whether they have any potential candidates for co-opted governorship.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: ML</p> <p>There was some discussion of how we might attract suitable candidates for the clerk role following the resignation of the previous successful candidate before she was able to take up the post. Governors suggested exploring whether any parents might be interested in taking the role. CM will advertise it in the newsletter. Once available, HD offered to email details to medical secretaries at her place of work. ML noted that governor services are also pursuing with the Local Authority and with their clerking contacts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: HD Action: CM</p> <p><i>(item 5j)</i> ML recorded the governing body's congratulations for the school's success at the Cambridge News and Media Education Awards.</p> <p><i>(item 8)</i> ML asked governors for their views on daytime vs. evening meetings. In discussion it was noted that the advantage of daytime meetings is the opportunity to see the school in action more regularly, and that there was potential to conduct a visit at the same time. Some governors struggle to attend daytime meetings due to work commitments. We agreed that the meeting on 22 January should be scheduled for 9:30 for a 10:00 start.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Election of chair and vice chair</p> <p>CM took the chair for the discussion surrounding the election of the Chair. JB proposed ML and this was seconded by HD. Mary was accordingly elected unopposed.</p> <p>ML resumed the Chair. ML nominated NB as vice chair and JB seconded. NB was also elected unopposed.</p>

	<p>Given that there was only one candidate for each role, CM reminded governors of the importance of succession planning. Governors agreed that there was a need for some shadowing and other learning to help ensure that other governors develop suitable skills and experience to enable them to work towards these roles in future.</p>
	<p>REPORTS</p>
6	<p>Headteacher's report</p> <p>CM had circulated her written report before the meeting. She highlighted / updated the following:</p> <p>6.1 <i>1.1 Pupil profile</i> A total of 17 admission requests had been received, demonstrating a consistent level of demand.</p> <p>6.2 <i>1.6 Fundraising</i> CM drew governors' attention to recent fundraising successes.</p> <p>6.3 <i>2.3 Probationary period</i> CM noted that the probation period for two members of staff had been extended. Subsequently one had resigned and the other had passed probation.</p> <p>6.4 <i>2.5 School teachers' pay and conditions</i> the government has lifted restrictions on pay but there is no additional funding</p> <p>6.5 <i>3.1 HTPR</i> Maria Landy our School Improvement Partner has very sadly passed away. Maria has provided notes for CM's performance review.</p> <p>6.6 <i>3.4 School nursing</i> is on the agenda for the meeting with the Local Authority on 11 October</p> <p>6.7 <i>3.7 Finance</i> concerns are growing on finance, which is due to be discussed on 30 October and 17 December.</p> <p>With reference to potentially increasing numbers on the roll, JB asked by which criteria places are allocated. CM informed him this was largely on the basis of location.</p> <p>6.8 <i>3.8 Local authority keeping in touch (KIT) visit</i> The visit took place on 21 June the report arrived on 5 October. Carol proposes triangulating the KIT visit outcomes, Ofsted report and action plan. She will review the KIT report and then circulate to governors.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: CM</p> <p>6.9 <i>4.0 Examination results</i> This year's results were extremely positive, with all children meeting their predictions and some exceeding them. This included some GCSE passes. CM will send the results out to governors shortly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: CM</p> <p>In terms of 16-19 pathways we have withdrawn from some science EdExcel</p>

	<p>and OCR exams. This will be the last year we can offer some RE, DT and Food Technology qualifications as they are being withdrawn by the exam boards.</p> <p>CM read extracts from some letters from students about their exam results. Examples include: 'really proud... thank the extremely hardworking staff' 'my teachers had worked incredibly hard to ensure I got the best possible outcome' 'my results brought me to a cheerful gesticulation, I didn't expect to do that well'</p>
6.10	<p><i>4.3 School improvement partner</i> We sadly need to find a new school improvement partner. CM is investigating a potential candidate on Maria Landy's recommendation. We concluded that we will return to this at the next meeting.</p>
6.11	<p><i>6.1 Rochford</i> The government response to the consultation on the Rochford Review has been published. We are well ahead of that with our own assessment procedures and CM will report more fully at FGB in November.</p>
6.12	<p><i>6.2 Funding formula for schools with high needs</i> This was published at the beginning of term, setting out how high needs (our bloc) will be funded. There was also recently a conference setting out the Cambridgeshire vision for education. Both of these will be discussed in more detail in at the next meeting.</p>
6.13	<p><i>6.3 Multi Academy Trusts</i> CM commented that she has found this work really interesting and has included details of what is happening locally in her report.</p>
6.14	<p><i>6.5 Data manager</i> We need to appoint or name a data manager who will be responsible for management of all data in the school. This is more than an administrative job.</p>
6.15	<p><i>6.6 Arrivals and departures.</i> CM explained that this system has changed as the foyer was becoming dangerous and overwhelming to children in the mornings and there was a risk of confidential information being overheard. The change has not been met with universal approval. DL mentioned that this week people had been more positive. The next step is to look at how bus drivers operate.</p>
6.16	<p><i>Appendix 1.</i> The Y6 adventure visit to Stibbington is going ahead on 30 November. Governors have previously given permission for this.</p>
6.27	<p>CM tabled the Ofsted strategy for 2017-2022 at the meeting and drew governors' attention to the full version on the Ofsted website.</p>

<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>Chair's report</p> <p>ML introduced the report, which she had circulated before the meeting. She noted that she had forwarded the presentations on Health and Safety, Physical Education and Sport Premium and Electronic Storage of Information. She invited questions.</p> <p>JB confirmed ML's summary of the termly briefing was accurate.</p> <p>There was a general discussion of the Health and Safety presentation and CM reported that because of a robust approach to risk assessment there had only been two Health and Safety incidents in the history of the school. JB asked whether there was a health and safety poster on display and CM confirmed that there is one in the staff room.</p> <p>ML highlighted that in Cambridgeshire in 2016/17 there had been incidents of violence and aggression against 27 teachers, 92 teaching assistants and 8 others, of which 33% were in Special Schools. CM noted that she felt that the language 'violence and aggression' was not appropriate for referring to children with additional needs.</p> <p>ML mentioned that governors are required to be sure how the Physical Education and Sport Premium money is being used. CM said that she is linking it to fine motor work in classrooms and clever fingers.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>KIT visit report – June 2017</p> <p>This was covered at 6.8</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Annual child protection monitoring report</p> <p>ML has submitted the online survey and will share the PDF when she receives it.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: ML</p> <p>We will update governor training on Safeguarding and Prevent December/January. ML believes she is the only governor who has done Safer Recruitment training for Interviewers, which the chair of recruitment panels is required to have completed. CM recommended that other governors do this training so that they are able to participate. The full Local Authority course is around 4 hours with an assessment, and other training is available e.g. from the NSPCC. As this training is not included under the governor services agreement, money would need to be found from the training budget. CM said she would provide an update for governors on safeguarding and prevent.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: CM</p>

	OFSTED
10	<p>Ofsted</p> <p>The outcome of the Ofsted inspection on 27 June was 'good' and the comments in the letter were largely very positive. There is uncertainty about the future Ofsted inspection regime.</p> <p>CM noted the low response rate on Parent View (17 parents at the time of the inspection) despite parents without access to the internet being offered the opportunity to use Parent View after parents' evening with assistance from a level 4 TA. She also commented on the divergence between the results on Parent View and those of the school's own parent questionnaire (which received 86 responses).</p> <p>A general discussion followed on how the school could engage the families who are unhappy or do not communicate. CM mentioned that there were plans for workshops e.g. on maths through stories, and that events like the primary nativity and leavers' assembly are very well attended, but that she was going to ask parents what more they would like to have the opportunity to find out about. ML offered governors' support if needed.</p>
11	<p>Action Plan</p> <p>Although the school is not required to produce a specific Action Plan document, work is underway to address the areas for improvement detailed in the Ofsted letter and to embed this in wider planning. All of the Senior Leadership team have been assigned roles in this process.</p> <p>The areas which Ofsted highlighted for improvement are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic planning to make clear who is responsible for which action, how progress will be monitored and how success is measured, backed up with strong paperwork and record-keeping; • small issues on the school website to be addressed; • parental engagement and involvement to be developed further. <p>CM noted that improvements were being made to strategic planning and the associated record keeping. She said that this would include ensuring absolute clarity on measures and who will monitor progress.</p> <p>The missing link from the school website to the Department for Education page on assessment was added on the day of the inspection. CM had previously considered it might be insensitive to include this link. Ofsted also suggested that the website was not user friendly. CM had sought feedback from a parent not known to the school (via Special Needs Jungle), who gave good feedback. Her only suggestion had been to include more video.</p>

	<p>CM said that parental engagement has been one of the school's key priorities for the last two years. The school has gathered a lot of data on engagement so that approaches to individual families can be tailored. For example, families who have never visited school during the course of the year are invited to engage in different ways, such as by having an annual review meeting at their house.</p>
	<p>GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT</p>
12	<p>Governor visits Deferred to next meeting alongside discussion of strategic plans</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: ML</p>
13	<p>Governing body skills audit</p> <p>The Department for Education has changed the recommended format for the skills audit and it now takes a very different tone. In light of this governors agreed to defer the skills audit until we have familiarised ourselves with the new format, which is available on the Department for Education website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: all governors</p>
14	<p>Governing body training log</p> <p>We are now required to have a log of governor training. We propose keeping a record of training completed over the last three years. All governors need to provide this information to ML as previously requested.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: all governors</p> <p>There will be a requirement for some training about the new data rules as they will cover information we might hold as individual governors, including on email. ML mentioned that we had previously discussed putting governing body meeting papers on the secure area of the website. Each governor will also have a school email account.</p>
	<p>GOVERNING BODY ORGANISATION</p>
15	<p>Committee structure and membership We agreed to maintain the existing structure of the Full Governing Board and Finance and Planning committee.</p> <p>Previously Finance and Planning committee membership was CM, NB, ML, JB, KD, and Mark Littlewood. There is therefore a vacancy following Mark Littlewood's resignation. We agreed to defer the nomination of a replacement to the next meeting, at which attendance is likely to be higher.</p>

16	<p>Head Teacher’s Performance Review, Head Teacher’s Salary Panel and Child Protection and Safeguarding</p> <p>NB, JB, JC confirmed as members of the Head Teacher’s Performance Review group.</p> <p>Head Teacher’s Salary Panel membership to be agreed at next meeting, with an explanation of what the role entails. Last year the members were Mark Littlewood, Jane Elliott-Poxon and HD.</p> <p>ML agreed to continue as nominated governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding.</p>
17	<p>Standing Orders and Terms of Reference</p> <p>Governors noted and agreed the amendment to the standing orders, allowing removal of appointed governors in extreme circumstances.</p>
18	<p>Pledge and code of practice</p> <p>Deferred to November meeting.</p>
19	<p>Register of pecuniary interest</p> <p>Governors present updated their declarations of interest. Other governors need to do this at the next meeting.</p> <p>Action: governors who have not yet completed a declaration of interest for 17/18</p>
20	<p>Delegation planner</p> <p>Adopted without amendment. No changes.</p>
21	<p>Carol announced her intention to retire at the end of the academic year, having informed staff earlier in the day. She also asked for and received permission to inform parents the next day.¹</p> <p>Governors expressed their thanks for Carol’s wonderful work for the school during her many years as head teacher, and reflected that she would be sorely missed.</p>
22	<p>Items for next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Funding for schools with high needs ii) School Improvement Partner iii) Governor Visits iv) Head Teacher’s Salary Panel membership v) Pledge and Code of Practice
23	<p>The date of the next meeting is 20th November 2017</p>

¹ CM has supplied a summary of her announcement to governors which is attached to these minutes at annexe 1.

Annexe 1: summary of Carol's announcement to governors

As some of you may now be aware I have made the decision to retire at the end of this academic year.

This decision is one of the hardest I have ever made and has taken some time to reach. As always the support of my family is crucial to me and they have helped and guided me along the way...not necessarily with a completely impartial view! I am also conscious that having enjoyed 40 years (in February) in this amazing profession and still feeling strong and healthy, I really want to spend some days with my Steve, my boys (now 31 and 26!) and my ever growing family and friends that perhaps have been neglected over the past years. I also want to have some more adventures!

There will be time for reflections and reminiscing and remembering the era that is coming to an end, there will also be time for excitement, looking forward and planning for the next era and all that it will bring.

I am making my decision known early in the year for good reason. I pledged to myself that I would ensure there was enough time to recruit a new leader and allow for any situations that may occur in the process to be managed effectively.

I also wanted to give everyone time to get 'used' to the idea of change and I wanted to ensure that the process was a shared one and not one that excludes people.

From this point the Governors take over with support from the L.A to advise them. I will play a significant part in the early stages of the process and have made clear to the Chair and Vice Chair my commitment to supporting them as well as to securing the very best future for our school.

There will, I'm sure, be a period of unsettledness but I am equally sure this will pass quickly.

I want to hand our school over with a smile and with confidence that over this academic year we have continued to build onwards and upwards.

This school, our families, the amazing children and staff have been my pride and joy and I have had the most incredible 11 years as the headteacher of this remarkable, special, unique and outstanding place to be.

So, I look forward to the year ahead reassure you that I will continue to lead and manage our school to the very best of my ability and with your support, until 31st August 2018 at 11.59 pm!