



## Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Castle School

held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 10.55am in the School

**Present:** Mary Langran (Chair - MLa)  
Nick Brenton (Vice Chair - NB)  
Carol McCarthy (Head Teacher - CM)

John Bastable (JB)  
Jude Coad (JC – until 12.20pm)  
Jane Elliot-Poxon (JEP – until 12.25pm)  
Janice Frankham (JF)  
Donna Lovett (DL)  
Jane Merrett (JM)  
Katy Roberts (KR)

**Also in Attendance:** Sally Hempson (School Business Manager - SH)  
Maria Landy (School Improvement Partner – MLY, from 1205pm to 12.35pm)  
Graham Whiting (Camclerk - GW)

The meeting was quorate throughout.

	<i>Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, governors present had divided into two groups to conduct learning walks around school. They now asked CM to pass on their thanks and congratulations to the staff concerned.</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>  Apologies were received and accepted from Helen Dolling (HD), Kate Dove (KD) and Mark Littlewood (MLi).
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda</b>  None.
	<b>MINUTES</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of the last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017</b>  Circulated in advance; approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

<p>4</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2.i</p> <p>4.2.ii</p> <p>4.2.iii</p> <p>4.3</p>	<p><b>Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017</b></p> <p>(Item 15) Head Teacher’s reports for the past 2 years have been uploaded to the governors’ secure area of the school website for information; more documents and information will be added after Easter.</p> <p>(Item 5.3.iv) A nurse is attending school one day per week, on Fridays. CM expressed some surprise at the delegation of this role away from the Local Authority.</p> <p>The nurse has no remit for administering first aid; rather, when this is required, the school office calls the designated senior first aider from a rota. The nurse’s role is e.g. to deal with medication issues, liaising with parents and the class teacher as appropriate.</p> <p>Similarly, a health care assistant attends on Thursdays. There is still some challenge around other support and assistance; however, the health care assistant was able to attend a multi-discipline meeting on a recent Wednesday.</p> <p>(Item 6) CM advised that risk assessments for the residential trips listed previously will be shared at the next meeting. <b>ACTION - CM</b></p>
	<p><b>REPORTS</b></p>
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p><b>Summary of Governors’ termly briefing</b></p> <p>MLa thanked JM for her summary which had been circulated in advance. MLa and JM commented that the session had felt rushed due to speakers’ running times not being adhered to.</p> <p>Highlighting the key points, MLa referred governors to the need to submit the personal information required by DfE for Edubase, as set out in her additional circular within the agenda bundle. She also discussed the need for a full record to be kept of governor training, e.g. how internal sessions might be included in addition to those formal courses attended via the School Governance Team. She also reported on problems various attendees had encountered around accessing the Learning Hub.</p> <p>JB advised that he had attended the Governors’ Annual Conference. This had also covered Edubase, as well as – inter alia - changes to school funding and problems relating to staff retention rates. He agreed to write up and circulate a similar summary. <b>ACTION – JB</b></p>
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p><b>Summary of outcome of Parents’ View Survey</b></p> <p>CM reported that a total of 68 responses have been received, which exceeds the previous rate of return. All parents either agreed or strongly agreed that their child is happy and feels safe at the school. These percentages, segmented on a pie chart, will be uploaded to the website. <b>ACTION – CM</b></p> <p>CM added that some parents had commented they felt unable to respond to questions around bullying since their child had at no stage experienced any.</p> <p>Future focus will centre on those concerns which had been expressed: e.g. around homework issues (whether it is given, how it is followed up, responses back to parents); CM acknowledged that the relevant policy is not being strictly adhered to. <b>ACTION – CM</b></p> <p>The equivalent staff questionnaire has just been completed; 81 out of 100 staff</p>

	members have responded; all commented that they are proud to be part of the school and that there is a strong focus on pupils. CM expressed her pleasure at such outcomes, given the large, disparate staff body in place; for their part, governors wished formally to note their recognition of this highly positive picture.
<b>7</b>	<p><b><i>OFSTED Inspection of Cambridgeshire's SEND provision – verbal outline</i></b></p> <p>This has been a paper-based exercise across the board, with inspectors actually visiting Spring Common (though they may subsequently visit Castle too). Helen Phelan (Head of Service) will answer inspectors' findings in terms of the current climate in the County. CM will include the outcomes in her next Head's report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION – CM</b></p>
<b>8</b>	<p><b><i>SFVS Assessment Report 2016-17</i></b></p> <p>8.1 The draft annual self-assessment - including MLa's commentary - had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>8.2 Addressing the queried areas in red, CM and SH clarified the following points: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That reference to ESPO will be added to line 18.</li> <li>• That the energy contract has just been signed (line 19).</li> <li>• That the Whistle Blowing policy can be accessed in the staff shared area (line 22).</li> <li>• In terms of asset register and adequate insurance, a business continuity plan will be created in the 2017/2018 financial year (line 25).</li> <li>• That there is a need to review the Critical Incident Plan (which refers to something the Head cannot deal with under delegated authority); CM advised that a 'light touch', phased response lock down will be practiced as part of the upcoming training day on 23 March 2017 (CM explained this is a different scenario to unauthorised entry, in the event of which a different practice is followed).</li> </ul> <p>8.3 It was agreed MLa will submit the self-assessment, without further review by the GB, once these amendments have been included.</p>
	<b><i>GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT</i></b>
<b>9</b>	<p><b><i>Discussion following the learning walks</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Update on recent governor meetings with the Headteacher:</i></b></p> <p><b><i>a) Coaching and Mentoring</i></b></p> <p><b><i>b) Therapies</i></b></p>
9	Noted separately by CM, who emphasised that this item forms part of the development plan.
10 (a)	KR has viewed documentation relating to coaching as part of the process of familiarising herself with the school generally. Next steps are scheduled to be taken forward on 23 March and a further update will be given in due course.
10 (b)	JC has viewed behaviour tracking, and progress for each of Music, Creative Arts and Play therapy. As a starting point, CM identified 3 students who have had therapeutic support. This served to facilitate evaluation of the following key areas: what has been useful? when? and who with? what can be added on to
	<b>ACTION – KR</b>

	<p>what has already proved useful? JC also shadowed break time and observed a lesson; again, she assessed what works and why? what drives behaviour? How can skills acquired from therapy be replicated in lesson time and, especially, at unstructured times (i.e. by spreading such knowledge to midday supervisors.</p> <p>JC also makes regular Thursday morning visits as part of the process of joining up with the leadership plan.</p>
<b>11</b>	<b>Sharing and Recording Governor Training – internal and external</b> (see also item 5.2 above)
11.1	A draft ‘Governor Training evaluation form – Internal and External’ had been circulated in advance. Completion of it will be trialled next term; it is also intended to be used for e.g. safeguarding and PREVENT updates.
11.2	The aim is for this template to assist in identifying the next steps; i.e. how does training develop the GB’s role and assist the overall performance of the school?
<b>GOVERNING BODY ORGANISATION</b>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017</b>
12.1	Circulated in advance and noted.
12.2	An initial budget-build meeting with the financial adviser would be held later in the same week. SH advised this exercise is likely to indicate a £180k shortfall in terms of achieving a balanced budget for 2017/2018; she added that this should be seen in the context of staffing accounting for 90% of expenditure (plus, funding will not include the latest 1% pay rise). In these circumstances, the school may request to defer submitting its budget (as has been the case in previous years).
<b>13</b>	<b>Governor vacancies:</b> <b>a) Parent Governors – no applications have been received to date.</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Clerking – update</b> Deferred.
<b>16</b>	<b>Items for the next meeting:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governing Body Development Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Governors role (in) Health and Safety</b> - i.e. dual reporting: when pupils visit other settings any safeguarding issues need to be advised to the safeguarding lead (a named contact) at both schools; it was agreed this provision should be added to the policy immediately, then ratified at a later date.</li> </ul>
<b>15</b>	<b>Maria Landy (MLY), School Improvement Partner – discussion of her work/role and the impact this has had on our school development.</b> This item is recorded in a confidential annex.
<b>17</b>	<b>Date of next FGB meeting:</b> Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 12.35pm.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

**CONFIDENTIAL ANNEX (Item 15) - Maria Landy (MLY), School Improvement Partner – discussion of her work/role and the impact this has had on our school development.**

MLY joined the meeting at 12.05pm.

She opened discussion by confirming that, whilst an Ofsted inspection is imminent, this will be carried out under the short format given the school's current rating as 'Good'.

Governors gave feedback on their earlier tour, commenting in particular on multi-faceted teaching. They had also been impressed by the behaviour witnessed.

MLY asked governors to give a perception of their role; in response, they highlighted the following key areas: -

- Strategic leadership and direction
- Holding the Head to account and judging performance
- Achieving financial best value
- Effectiveness of governance and practice – based on a wide range of skills, to be ascertained via a skills audit

MLY was pleased to advise that the governance section of the school website meets statutory requirements.

Next, MLA asked governors to state how good the school is; and how did they know this? They said they receive the necessary assurance via: -

- Regular Head's reports
- The SEF
- The SDP
- Details of the Head's performance review

MLA suggested governors draw up a personal check list which they could refer to immediately upon being notified of the inspection.

MLA then asked governors what they are proud of about the school. They replied as follows:-

- Leadership
- Creative Staff
- Pupil engagement, given the level of need and behavioural factors (referring back to the previous inspection report)
- Facilities

Finally, MLA recommended that governors take time to identify the school's current priorities, i.e. 4 to 5 key issues contained within the SEF and SDP, adding that they should be able to explain clearly to the inspector why they believe the school is now 'Outstanding'.