

# Capella House School

## Local Governing Board Meeting

### using Microsoft Teams

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 at 6.30pm.**

#### **Attendance**

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Andrew Whiteside (AW) – Chair of Governors

Peter Heyer (PH) – Vice Chair of Governors

Peter Bailey (PB)

Naomi Greaves (NG)

Michele Coleman (MC)

Melanie Bywell (MB)

Dominic Sunderland (DS) - Headteacher

Vacancy (Co-opted Governor)

Vacancy (Staff Governor)

Vacancy (Parent Governor)

#### **Apologies**

None

#### **Absent w/o apologies**

None

#### **Also, attended**

Helen Bridge (HB) – Clerk, Ivan Pryce (IP) - Trust CEO, Susie Connor (SC) - Trust Finance Director

#### **Meeting Minutes**

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**All meeting attendees agreed to the meeting being recorded.**

#### **1. Welcome**

1.1. The chair welcomed governors to the first meeting of the academic year.

#### **2. Apologies/Declarations of Interest**

2.1. There were no apologies for the meeting.

2.2. Governors were asked to declare any interests relating to any item of the agenda for this meeting. None were declared.

2.3. Governors were asked by the clerk to update and confirm their declarations of interest on Governorhub

**Action: ALL**

### **3. Election of Chair & Vice Chair**

3.1. Andy Whiteside was elected as chair for a period of office until the first full governing body meeting of the academic year 2022-23. Peter Heyer was elected as vice chair for a period of office until the first full governing body meeting of the academic year 2022-23 although he noted that it is likely that he will step down from the governing body at the end of the calendar year so a new vice chair will need to be appointed at that point. It was noted that succession planning and recruitment to fill governor vacancies is key.

3.2. Governors agreed that a skills audit needs to be carried out to identify gaps and to aid governor recruitment.

**Action: AW**

3.3. The CEO noted that the chair of trustees should be prompted to do a search for potential trustees and governors using a checklist of knowledge and skills required.

**Action: HJ**

3.4. There has been no response to the parent governor vacancies notice. The head undertook to speak to parents at the upcoming parents meeting.

**Action: DS**

### **4. GB Code of Conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2021**

4.1. The Capella House Governing Body Code 2021/22 is to be uploaded to Governorhub as a declaration and governors undertook to read and confirm their agreement to the code.

**Action: ALL**

4.2. Governors undertook to confirm that they have read at least Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2021 legislation on Governorhub.

**Action: ALL**

### **5. Approval of Minutes/Actions Arising from the Meeting held on Wednesday 7th July 2021**

5.1. There were no changes to the minutes of the GB meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 - they were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the chair.

5.2. 2.3– Actioned.

5.3. 3.3 – It was agreed that the chair and the trust CEO should provide their photo to be displayed on the school noticeboard.

**Action: AW/IP**

5.4. 3.5 – On agenda

5.5. 5.4 – To be covered by the PAAW committee

5.6. 10.1/12.1 – On agenda

## 6. LGB Structures

6.1. Personnel Committee – it was noted that the first meeting is to be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Committee members are AW, DS, MB & PB.

Items to cover at the meeting include –

- Update on staffing changes/recruitment and an overview of personnel issues following the expansion of the school

- Teacher rewards and progression (Georgia Birch to provide information)

- Overall professional development strategy & plan

The chair noted that performance management of the headteacher objective setting will be carried out on 23<sup>rd</sup> September with HJ, IP, AW, and the school improvement partner.

6.2. PAAW Committee – The head will talk through the strategy for attainment and assessment at this meeting - the head undertook to arrange a date. Committee members are AW, MC, NG & DS.

**Action: DS**

6.3. The CEO noted that any further feedback on the terms of reference should be fed back to himself and SC by committee members and lead governors so that they can be finalised by the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The terms of reference are to be considered as working documents.

**Action: LG/COMMs**

6.4. Safeguarding – NG to take on the lead role. She noted that the terms of reference for safeguarding was a very useful document. She noted that she had recently met with the school designated safeguarding lead, and they agreed that the main focus for this term would be –

- compliance issues (with help from the school improvement partner)

- sexual harassment (which is an Ofsted focus for this year) and how this fits in with the behaviour policy and safeguarding policy as well as the curriculum.

- embedding a safeguarding culture within the school

The safeguarding lead noted that she will going into school for half a day before the half term holiday – date TBC – she noted that any governor is welcome to join her on this visit.

6.5. Finance – The trust finance director noted that monthly management meetings take place with the HT and SLT and the finance lead governors are invited to this. She noted that monthly meetings are a big commitment for governors, so she is happy along with the trust finance manager to give a separate finance update to lead governors if necessary.

At the recent management meeting, the focus was on last year's accounts.

The risk for next year is centred around pupil numbers – the primary site is not an issue (NB there is fixed funding for primary for a year). The secondary site needs to be full - there are currently 28 pupils (although the school may lose 2) but several consultations are being looked at which should fill the places.

The trust FD noted that if the school finances move into the black, there will be investment in staffing. Currently, Capella House owes Clarendon £100k. This financial year, the school will start to pay monthly for utilities. If pupil numbers were to go down, Clarendon will be able to support the school as they are in a better financial position.

- 6.6. Premises – the chair noted that he is to visit the new primary site on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Issue to focus on this term –

- stabilisation of issues at the new primary site (with the help of the trust estates co-ordinator)
- to understand how facilities support will work across 2 sites
- compliance

## **7. Sub Committees – Terms of Reference**

- 7.1. See point 6 above.

## **8. School Update**

- 8.1. The head noted that there had been 3 full inset days at the start of term where the following was covered –

- Setting expectations/standards
- Safeguarding
- SLT therapy
- Upskilling staff to move the school forward
- Focus on high quality teaching and learning.

- 8.2. Secondary centre – the head reported –

- There has been a calm focussed start
- Changes are being embedded
- SIP to visit soon
- Pupils are enthusiastic and settled
- Staff morale is high – staff are appreciating clarity
- Focus on value/characteristics in pupils

- 8.3. Primary centre – the head reported –

- Pupils have coped well with the delay in opening
- He is grateful for all the efforts of the staff
- There are snagging issues, but the building is safe

MC noted that she had visited the primary centre on 21<sup>st</sup> September, and she reported a very positive start - the pupils were engaged, and the school had a calm atmosphere. The teaching and learning were excellent.

## 9. Strategic Development Priorities/Plan

9.1. The chair noted the Capella House Organisation Plan 2021/22 that had been uploaded to Governorhub – a very useful document. The head noted that this is a document that will evolve throughout the year.

9.2. The head noted that the trust schools are using a common document format for the school self-review document and the school development plan (SDP). These are live working documents. The SDP will be updated termly – the SDP shared with governors is a first draft and will be updated/developed.

9.3. Governors adopted and approved the SDP whilst noting that it is a working document.

9.4. The chair thanked the head for all his hard work on the website.

9.5. *Q: How do you plan to engage parents?*

The head noted that there will be a welcome meeting for parents on 12<sup>th</sup> October. The SaLT and OT will run sessions for parents. Throughout the year there will be regular meetings with parents to cover a range of issues and topics.

9.6. *Q: What support can the trust and governors give moving forward?*

The head noted that governors should immerse themselves in the documents he shares and provide questions/challenge.

9.7. *Q: Can the head expand on his plan to develop relationships with SENCOs?*

The head noted that he plans to hold professional open mornings for SENCOs, speech therapists and other professionals that would work with pupils that fit the Capella House profile to make them aware of the school and for them to see the work that is being done there.

9.8. *Q: Could local authority caseworkers be involved in the professional open mornings to give them a sense of the school?*

The head noted that he had recently met with the CEO and AfC to discuss the issues around consultations. He has a further meeting next week with AfC and the Clinical Commissioning Partner for Richmond and Kingston about this issue and believes that raising issues with management is the best approach and then information will filter down.

9.9. Governors noted that the head should invite SENCOs in neighbouring boroughs to open mornings.

9.10. The chair noted that governors would be happy to support a primary opening event when it is arranged.

## 10. Chair Appraisal

10.1. The clerk reminded governors to email her their chairs appraisal forms. The trust CEO undertook to summarise the results and feed back to the governing body.

**Action:** ALL/IP

**11. Self-Evaluation/GB Recruitment Plan/Training**

11.1. The clerk reminded governors to email her their self-evaluation forms, the results of which will be used to form a governing body development plan.

**Action: ALL**

11.2. The chair noted that plans are underway to recruit 2 parent and 2 staff governors. Succession planning needs will be registered with the chair of the trust – see point 3.3. This is to be supported by a skills audit and self-evaluation.

11.3. The CEO noted that there will be support mechanisms throughout the network of the trust e.g., the Capella lead safeguarding governor has agreed to initiate a meeting of the other lead safeguarding governors across the trust.

11.4. The clerk noted that the latest version of the AfC CPD online training schedule has been uploaded to Governorhub and she drew governors’ attention to the developmental recommendations for training on pages 5&6.

**12. AOB**

12.1. The chair reminded governors to write up visit reports to keep an accurate record of challenge. The template can be found on Governorhub.

**Action: ALL**

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

13.1. The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.

Signed by the Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_