

**Approved Minutes for the meeting of the Capella School Local Governing Board held on November 2023 at 2.00pm at Capella House Secondary School (RTS Conference Room) and virtually on Teams.**

**Members of the Local Governing Board (LGB) :** Peter Bailey, Niale Cleobury, Michele Coleman, Julia Morley, Kate Nepstad, Claire Richmond, Dominic Sunderland (Headteacher) and Andrew Whiteside (Chair).

**Clerk:** Julie Adams

**Also in attendance:** Maria Landeira Frias (Assistant Headteacher -Primary) and Philip John, Assistant Headteacher – Secondary)

## **1. Welcome, apologies and Declarations of Interest**

- 1.A. The Governing Board **received** apologies from Simon Gordon and **agreed** to consent to his absence.
- 1.B. The Governing Board **noted** that all members of the Board must abide by the Auriga Academy Trust Declarations of Interest Policy and should declare if they have an interest in any matter that comes before them. There were no Declarations of Interest made.

## **2. Presentation – Assessment**

- 2.A. The Governing Board **received** a presentation from the Headteacher on assessment processes and tools used in the school.

The Headteacher **presented** the Earwig progress monitoring software used by Capella House and a Whole School Assessment Overview on reading, writing, spelling/phonics and maths. All the standardised tests are used by special schools on a national basis and recommended by the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP). The Chair **asked** about continuing these standardised tests over the next 5 years which the Headteacher responded was the plan.

The tests include New Reading Group Tests (NGRT) and Maths Assessment for Learning and Teaching (MaLT) to assess new students when they start at Capella to plan future pathways. Test of Written Language (TOWL) is also used for writing and Little Wandle for spelling/phonics. SaLT and OT use a range of formal assessments when pupils start school and the Headteacher **proposed** to revisit these tests. Assessments take place throughout the school year. Assessment weeks including MaLT take place at the end of each term. NGRT is used as a baseline and is assessed in July. Writing tasks are assessed intermittently on a termly basis. Earwig is used for ongoing assessment tool across the school.

Moderation compares Capella House assessments and samples of student work with other main stream and special schools in the local network through the English and Maths Leads on an ad hoc basis. Capella House also compares with AfC moderations and the other primary schools within the Trust. The goal is to inform teachers on gaps in the curriculum teaching and learning. The Chair **asked** about moving to other benchmarking opportunities nationally. The Governing Board **asked** what testing is undertaken when a student joins from a mainstream school in terms of their assessment history. In these situations Capella will undertake baseline assessments (NGRT, MaLT, spelling) as new pupils often join during the school year. The Governing Board **queried** how scoring takes into account communication (speech and

language) needs of children.

The Earwig software, introduced in September 2021, is for teachers to track students progress against learning objectives. In January 2022 secondary stages were developed based on the national curriculum followed by primary stages in January 2023. A new bespoke maths framework was introduced in September 2023. This month the new bespoke english framework will be launched which will be used to inform future pathways and shape curriculum, intervention and support.

The Headteacher demonstrated in the core subjects of english, maths and science how each pupil is scored against individual subjects and objectives. The Governing Board **asked** about the level of detail available for each student and **queried** whether there is an assumption that progress will always be upwards. The Headteacher explained Earwig produces a snapshot of progress in time and is constantly monitored.

There are 5 or 6 stages of objectives within each core subject in order to track pupil progress. PSHE is assessed on a contextual basis for the different year groups. Assessments on foundation subjects at the end of Key Stage 3 gives a good indication of the pathway for qualifications pupils are on. The Chair **noted** the time the school has invested in developing Earwig and **asked** if the objectives are still the right ones and whether there are opportunities for improvements going forward.

The Governing Board **noted** they were impressed with the level of detail in Earwig and **queried** how the framework compares with other special schools. The Headteacher responded the framework is based on the national curriculum. Every special school uses different systems but the strength of Earwig is that it can be tailored to specialist schools. The Governing Board **noted** Earwig can be used to build Capella House's reputation as a provider for the range of special needs in the local area.

Earwig also enables teachers to track progress that would not be captured by more traditional methods. The Governing Board **asked** if Earwig is linked to Education and Health Care Plans for the pupils. The Headteacher confirmed Earwig is linked to EHCP targets.

### Ofsted

The Headteacher presented the draft Ofsted report received last week. The school has achieved a rating of 'Good for Overall effectiveness', 'Good for Quality of Education', 'Good for Leadership and Management', 'Outstanding for Behaviour and Attitudes' and 'Outstanding for Personal Development'.

The Governing Board **noted** that Personal Development was rated as 'exceptional' in the Ofsted Report highlighting the quality of the relationship between the staff and pupils. The Governing Board **congratulated** the Headteacher and Capella House staff on the result which was thought to be fair. It was also **noted** that the Ofsted inspection was impressed with the safeguarding which was rated as 'effective' based on the school's meticulous records and follow up.

The final Ofsted Report is expected to be received at the end of next week. The Chair **asked** about the communications strategy once the Ofsted Report is live and whether it will be sent to parents and published on the school website. The Headmaster confirmed that a notification will go out to parents and be live on the website within five days.

**ACTION:** Ofsted Report to be published on website and parents to be notified.

### 3. Minutes of the previous Governing Board meeting

3A. The Governing Board **received** the minutes of the meeting on 27 September 2023 [[CAP-LGB-23-2-03A Previous Draft Minutes 270923](#)] and **approved** them as an accurate record of the MEETING.

3B. The Governing Board **considered** other matters arising from the minutes that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**ACTION:** Item 4. An abridged version of the updated School Development Plan (SDP) to be published on the school website termly.

Item 6. The Chair **noted** at the last Chairs meeting there is support for publishing minutes on the school website. This will be GDPR compliant and exclude confidential items.

**ACTION:** Item 8: Governor visit to focus on behaviour as a priority

**ACTION:** Item 11. Headteacher to review lockdown procedure with SLT with term.

Item 12. Discussion on governor representation and elections. Kirsty (teacher and parent) has joined as a teacher governor. The Governance Professional **advised** the school has reached out to staff and the Headteacher has written to parents (twice). As there was no response the Governance Professional suggested Governing Board networks for parents with a school aged child and reaching out to co-located schools, for example St.Marys, for SEN parents who may be interested. Grandparents of pupils were also suggested however the Governance Profession indicated that parental responsibility is a criteria for eligibility. The Governing Board **asked** for a summary of a parent governor role and the Governance Professional informed them these details can be found in the governor recruitment pack.

**ACTION:** To recruit a parent governor. The Governance Professional to reach out to Aspiring Governance and Governors for Schools for primary school parents.

**ACTION:** The Governance Professional to find out if parental responsibility is still a criteria on eligibility for parent governors or whether grandparents can be included.

Item 13: Governing Board Meeting dates. The Chair confirmed it had been **agreed** to move this meeting on Tuesdays on a permanent basis and alternate working hours.

**ACTION:** The Governance Professional to circulate new meeting dates/times.

3C. The Governing Board **approved** the Annual Governors Report to be published on the school website [[CAP-LGB-23-01-3C 2022-23 Annual Governors Report](#)]

**ACTION:** The Governing Board Report is currently being finalised and cross referenced with the School Development Plan to be finalised by Chair, Simon Gordon and Kate Nepsted.

### 4. References from the Board of Trustees

The Governing Board **received** and **noted** a report from the Board of Trustees following their Board meeting on 19 October 2023. [[CAP-LGB-23-2-04 Update from the Chair of Trustees](#)]

The Chair **noted** reference on Headteacher performance management has been fed to the Trust Board. One external panel had an update [.....?]

The Chair **asked** if there are any comments for the Chairs/Vice Chairs Group or the Trust Board

in two weeks time. The Governing Board **asked** for Trust Board comment on the 30% funding cut and if the Trust is actively leading on this issue across the schools. The Governance Professional **reported** there are discussions in the Finance and Resources Audit Committee on this question and the Trust is having meetings with AfC to try to resolve this issue as it affects all the schools in the Trust.

**ACTION:** Chair to add LGB concerns to these discussions at the next Trust Board and Chairs/Vice-Chair meetings.

## 5. Governing Board Membership and Development Plan 2022-23

5.A. The Governing Board **reviewed** the membership overview and **agreed** actions required. [\[CAP-LGB-23-2-05A Governor Overview inc. Training\]](#).

The Governance Professional gave an update on training for governors. Governors across the Trust are being transferred onto the HR staff Every system to log and record governor training. The most relevant training courses are currently being identified by governors for particular areas in NGA and AfC. There was a reminder to update Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks have been completed in Capella House. At present, the Chair is the only governor who has completed the AfC Headteacher Appraisal Course and there is a requirement for one other governor to do this course.

**ACTION:** To update confirmations re Keeping Children Safe in Education.

**ACTION:** One governor to volunteer to do the AfC Headteacher Appraisal Course.

5.B. The Governing Board **received** and **reviewed** the Governance Development Plan [\[CAP-LGB-23-2-06B Governance Development Plan 2023-24\]](#), and **noted** key actions arising from it.

The Chair **noted** and recapped on items for Earwig for assessment, succession planning which has been completed and training. It was noted that the Governing Board should have a role in wider stakeholder engagement in the school drawing on experience and skills on the board. It was **noted** The Trust Board have appointed Adele Kimber as a new stakeholder trustee.

### CareCalc

The Governing Board **raised** concerns regarding the inaccuracy in funding and **asked** if there is a case to argue against the cuts. The Headteacher has pointed out to AfC there is no mechanism to take into account Capella is a small school. More generally the local area Ofsted inspections have noted there is an issue with AfC that plans need to be updated in more detailed for the CareCalc. The Governing Board **discussed** the importance of using specific wording (rather than being too generalised) in the EHCPs to avoid CareCalc being able to cut funding but **noted** the overall objective of CareCalc system is to bring in fairness and standardisation for children in with particular types of needs in different situations. It was **suggested** it may be difficult to make a case as a smaller school with higher costs to deliver the same provision. It was noted the key difficulty for Capella is that additional details required in CareCalc software which the Headteacher is working on with AfC.

The Chair **noted** this funding issue is being acted on at a Trust level and the Governing Board will continue to express concern to the Trust and support the Headteacher. The Headteacher reported an informal impact assessment on the funding cuts has been carried out with AfC. The point was made that this new system is being tested on Auriga and has not been rolled out to other schools yet.

### SIP

The Chair **noted** the School Improvement Partner suggested a subset of SDP priorities and proposed four instead than six priorities. The Headteacher confirmed the school is continuing to use six priorities.

### Social Dates

The Head teacher confirmed the following social dates for Christmas Term 2023 for Governors to attend:

- Christmas Jumper Day - December 17
- Christmas Dinner Secondary – December 19
- Social – December 15

It was requested Governors to consider a contribution of the hospitality budget

**ACTION:** Head teacher to confirm dates to Chair

## **6. Lead Governor and Other Visitor Reports**

6.A. The Governing Board **received** the reports of the link governors for Safeguarding and Finance. [[CAP-LGB-23-02-07A XXX Lead Governor Report](#)]

**ACTION:** A safeguarding visit to primary school is booked next week and will focus on safeguarding *and* behaviour.

6.B. The Governing Board **received** the reports of other Governor Visits not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

6.B.i English and Maths [[CAP-LGB-23-2-06Bi LG Eng and Maths MC 131023](#)]

6.B.ii English, funding and Preparation for Adulthood [[CAP-LGB-23-2-06Bii LG Eng, finance and P4A 191023](#)]

Claire Richmond met with the Headteacher and **discussed** the CareCalc system, preparing the first pupil cohort for adulthood and where they will move onto. It was feedback that the school and parents are feeling less confident of what is available for pupils at post age 16 providers and more support is needed. AfC have invited the Headteacher to the SEN Employment Forum starting in February 2024, a programme of supported internships and work placements leading to permanent work. Claire Richmond also met the English lead and **discussed** opportunities for Capella pupils to explore and improve their reading and phonics. The Board would also like to see the results of the GCSE English exams sat in the Autumn Term to compare predictions with what has been achieved. The Governing Board **noted** the comprehensive insight given by this governor visit. The Chair also **commented** it was important

to show evidence demonstrating the Governors are visiting and monitoring for the Ofsted inspections

Building on this, Kate Nepstad gave feedback on her Governor Visit with the English and Maths Leads and **asked** what plans are in place to support the English Lead in terms of leadership and management experience. The Headteacher informed the Governing Board that the English Lead is undertaking a national professional qualification with Best Practice Network (BPN) for leading literacy and has joined an AfC Leadership Forum. Moderation for the Maths Lead is looking specifically at leadership and management. The Chair **proposed** the Subject Leads give presentations their subject areas at a Governing Board meeting next term as part of their development as Middle Leaders and to raise Governor awareness and knowledge of the school.

**ACTION:** English and Maths Leads to be invited to give presentations at a Governing Board meeting in the Summer Term.

#### Finance Lead Governor Updates

The Headteacher has liaised with Simon Gordon to monitor pupil numbers, budget. The Chair **asked** about staffing changes and converting some longer term agency into permanent staff.

**ACTION:** Chair to arrange date to visit this term on Social Emotional Learning.

## 7. Headteacher report

The Governing Board **received** a report from the Headteacher [[CAP-LGB-23-2-07 Headteacher Report](#)] to include:

- 7.A. Key risks
- 7.B. Behaviour and Attendance
- 7.C. Safeguarding (inc. Lead Governor Report)
- 7.D. Pupil Performance – destinations, extra-curricular provision, attendance
- 7.E. Update on [School Development Plan](#) and [Self Evaluation](#) **agree** programme for governor monitoring and priorities
- 7.F. Learner, family & community voice
- 7.G. HR Commentary
- 7.H. Finance Commentary (inc. Lead Governor Report from 6A)

The Governing Board **noted** that the Ofsted Report covers most of these items.

The Headteacher **reported** staff recruitment continues to be very difficult. A key issue is the cost of transport for support staff. The Governing Body **asked** if there is a season ticket loan availability for staff. The cost of car parking is also an issue for staff.

The Headteacher **reported** that the results of the pupil surveys do not reflect what the staff see or pupils say when speaking to them verbally. At secondary Behaviour Action Plans have been prepared and an Anti-Bullying Strategy is in place. The curriculum has changed again to explicitly teach pupils on aspects of the survey. The Governing Board **asked** what the school responses are to specific comments and queries that arose in the staff survey. The school follows up and responds to the staff and students.



## 8. Approval of Policies / Statements

The Governing Board **received** and **approved** the following school policies / statements

- 8.A. Pupil Premium Statement and Strategy [[CAP-LGB-23-2-08A Pupil Premium Strategy](#)]
- 8.B. Term Dates 2024-2025
- 8.C. Low level Concerns Policy

**ACTION:** Governance Professional to circulate term dates

## 9. Review of Impact, planned actions and feedback to the Board of Trustees

The Governing Board **agreed** the impact of this meeting, **confirmed** planned follow up actions by Governing Board members and references to be made to the Board of Trustees.

The Chair **noted** the impact of the meeting including the feedback from Ofsted, review of governor visits, new governor recruitment, concerns of CareCalc and that the school will return to other priorities now Ofsted is completed. The Chair **reiterated** the theme of raising awareness this year and the useful presentation on Earwig, will spend more time with middle leaders for subjects so by end of the this year co-opted parents and staff governors will have greater insight into curriculum areas and subject leaders.

**ACTION:** Chair to draft a note on the impact of meeting for the Trust Board

The Governing Board **suggested** for more focus on quality and diversity at future meetings. Asked the level of understanding governors have of CareCalc and EHCP given that they are the main funding mechanisms into the school?

**ACTION:** To present to Governing Board on how EHCPs are used in relation to CareCalc

## 10. Confidentiality

The Governing Board agreed that the discussion at the meeting, the background papers, and any reports identified as confidential above, should remain confidential and be excluded from the published minutes and papers.

The date of the next meeting is **28 February 2024**

1	Ofsted report to be published and added to the website	DS	Completed	
2	Safeguarding Lead to conduct Safeguarding visit to primary school and will focus safeguarding <i>and</i> behaviour.	KN		
3	Chair to arrange visit focused on social emotional learning	AW		
4	Dominic to review the lockdown procedure with SLT (Senior Leadership Team) this term and arrange for an appropriate drill to be undertaken	DS /MLF /PJ		
5	Continuing to work to find another parent governor to fill the vacancy. Julie to reach out to Aspiring Governance and Governors for Schools for primary school parents. Governors to network.	JA	Completed	
6	GP to find out if parental responsibility is still a criteria on eligibility for parent governors or whether grandparents can be included.	JA	Completed	
7	Move Governing Board meetings from Wednesday to Tuesday starting in January , Julie to circulate new dates/times	JA	Completed	
8	Chair to add LGB concerns to discussions at the next Trust Board and Chairs/Vice-Chair meetings (Carecalc ).	AW	Completed	
9	To update Keeping Children Safe in Education. One governor needed to volunteer to do the AfC Headteacher Appraisal Course	All Governors		
10	HT to notify governors of Christmas events they can attend at school	DS	Completed	
11	HT to provide governor visit dates to the Board	DS	Completed	
12	HT to look into having subject leaders present to governors as part of their development as Middle Leaders and to raise Governor awareness and knowledge of the school	DS	Completed	
13	JA to circulate Term Dates	JA		
14	Contributing some of the governor staff hospitality budget towards Christmas event on December 15th	DS	?	
15	Chair to draft note on the impact of meeting for the Trust Board	AW	Completed	
16	Dominic/Maria to present to Governing Board on how EHCPs are used in relation to CareCalc	DS/MLF		



Andrew Whiteside (Aug 5, 2024 16:02 GMT+1)

Chair of the Capella House School Local Governing Board



# CAP-LGB-23-2-00 Approved Minutes 221123

Final Audit Report

2024-08-05

Created:	2024-08-05
By:	Julie Adams (jadams@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAQdw1WvPsMYI_sagpvKzbCd8cmW7dygM1

## "CAP-LGB-23-2-00 Approved Minutes 221123" History

-  Document created by Julie Adams (jadams@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk)  
2024-08-05 - 12:05:48 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to Andrew Whiteside (awhiteside@capellahouse.org.uk) for signature  
2024-08-05 - 12:05:52 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Andrew Whiteside (awhiteside@capellahouse.org.uk)  
2024-08-05 - 3:01:45 PM GMT
-  Signer Andrew Whiteside (awhiteside@capellahouse.org.uk) entered name at signing as Andrew Whiteside  
2024-08-05 - 3:02:42 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Andrew Whiteside (awhiteside@capellahouse.org.uk)  
Signature Date: 2024-08-05 - 3:02:44 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.  
2024-08-05 - 3:02:44 PM GMT