

**Approved Minutes for the meeting of the Capella House School Governing Board, held on 19 June 2024 following the Strategy Session at RTS Conference Room and via Teams**

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

Link to Meeting Folder: [Strategy Session LGB meeting](#)

Key:- ○Note; ●Discussion; ●Discussion and Decision; **XX** Sponsor/Lead; **X mins** allotted time.

Items in square brackets are references to documents related to this agenda found in the folder CAP-LGB-23-5 190624

**Members of the Local Governing Board (LGB) in attendance:** Niale Cleobury, Michele Coleman, Kristy Craik, Meredith Hamilton, Kate Nepstad, Dominic Sunderland (Headteacher) and Andrew Whiteside (Chair).

**Members of the Local Governing Board (LGB) in attendance virtually:** Peter Bailey, Simon Gordon

**Members of the Local Governing Board (LGB) absent:** Julia Morley and Claire Richmond,

**Clerk in attendance:** Julie Adams

**Also in attendance:** Kerri Morgan, Director of Therapies.

## 1. Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest.

- 1.A. The Governing Board **noted** apologies had been received from Julia Morley and Claire Richmond who had attended the prior Strategy Session, and agreed to consent to their absence.
- 1.B. The Chair reminded all governors that all members of the LGB 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 the LGB.

There were no declarations of interest made.

## 2. Minutes of the previous Governing Board meeting

2.A. The Governing Board **received** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2024 [[CAP-LGB-23-5-02A Previous Draft Minutes 2304524](#)] and **approved** them as an accurate record of the meeting.

2.B. The Governing Board **noted** the completed actions from the previous meeting.

Number	Extract	Status	Due Date
4	Safeguarding link governor report for recent visit to be shared	Completed	Papers for this meeting
8	Chair to prepare update to the Board of Trustees highlighting successes and concerns	Completed	May-24

2.C. The Governing Board **considered** actions arising from the meeting that were incomplete.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	The Headteacher / Maria Landeira Frias to present to the Local Governing Board on Carecalc	DS /MLF	when confirmed
2	Kerri Morgan, Director of Therapies to be invited to a future meeting to present on the plan for outreach plan	DS /KM	when appropriate

3	Headteacher and Chair explore options to increase contact with parents including the recruitment of a family liaison worker. - -	DS / AW	Jun-24
5	Presentation to be given on parental engagement, student voice etc at future meeting	DS/PJ	Jun-24
6	All governors to arrange a visit before the end of term	All	Jun-24
7	All governors to complete training as requested by end of term	All	Jun-24
8	Chair to prepare update to the Board of Trustees highlighting successes and concerns	AW	May-24

Action #1 The 2024-25 funding figures have been given to the Trust Finance Team by AfC, however, some expected pupils have not been included at all and pupils from LB Kingston will not be put onto Carecalc until 2025-26. Currently underfunding is approximately 30% of expected income. This will continue to be a major challenge for the school.

**ACTION:** The Headteacher / Maria Landeira Frias to present to the Local Governing Board on Carecalc at the next meeting, when a fuller understanding of Carecalc is available.

ACTION #2 The Governing Board would like to receive the presentation from the Director of Therapies on Outreach when it is appropriate **(ACTION)**.

ACTION #3 The Governing Board had an extensive discussion on the options to increase contact with parents, including the recruitment of a family support worker at the Strategy Session. This will feature on the Schools Development Priorities as well as an item for governors on their development plan **(ACTION)**.

ACTION #5 The Governing Board **received** a presentation during the Strategy Session on pupil voice and analysis of the surveys. Arising from the discussions which followed it was agreed that the Governing Board should explore methods to engage with the pupil and student councils. **(ACTION)** The Governing Board **agreed** to continue to use presentations at the start of each meeting in the next academic to inform and give them a better understanding of the school, and or update progress on development priorities. A timetable for these will be produced **(ACTION)**

ACTION #6 The Headteacher **thanked** governors who had visited the school and advised he was finalising dates for the end of the school year activities. Governors would be warmly welcomed to attend them. **(ACTION)**

ACTION #7 The Governance Professional **advised** that safeguarding training would need to be redone in September due to the new release of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Governors were encouraged to complete the Prevent and GDPR training if they had not completed. The Chair of the Governing Board **noted** issues with accessing the NGA Learning Link Equality and Diversity training which would be investigated by the Governance Professional. **(ACTION)**

2.D. The Governing Board **noted** that the Headteacher had not needed to involve the Chair to escalate the issues with the fire doors at the Primary site, as all snagging had been completed during the Easter break.

The Governing Board **noted** that the presentations received at the Strategy Session would be added to the meeting papers. **(ACTION)**

There were no other matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

### 3. References from the Board of Trustees

The Governing Board **noted** the Board of Trustees met on the 8 May 2024, discussions had been around the succession and recruitment of a new Chair and Trustees, budgets and liaison with AfC. Board minutes are available on the Trust website.

### 4. Safeguarding

The Governing Board **received** the Safeguarding report from the Headteacher / DSL and the Safeguarding Link Governor Report

The Safeguarding Link Governor had met with the Headteacher before the Strategy Session and discussed arrangements for filtering and monitoring online activity in the school and on its devices. She would write up a report and circulate to all governors. **(ACTION)**

The Governing Board **asked** if the complaints which had been mentioned at the last meeting had been resolved. The Headteacher **advised** that the underlying trigger for the complaint was related to safeguarding concerns. By having robust policies and protocols in place he was pleased to state that solutions had been put in place and the relationship with the complainant had been rebuilt.

The Safeguarding Link Governor **advised** that the Link Network meeting had been delayed until 25 June.

The Chair of Governors **acknowledged** the prior discussion of SDP Priority 2, 'Ensure safeguarding standards and practice remain consistently high across the school' which had been rated as completed. The subsequent discussion **agreed** that having an Action Plan which the DSL and Safeguarding Link Governor would review on a regular basis, would ensure that oversight of this is continued and the further embedding of the actions from this academic year can be monitored.

Supporting Papers: Headteachers Report (Item 7E) and Safeguarding Link Governor Report]

*Kate Nepstad left the meeting.*

### 5. School Development Plan, School Self Review and SDP Link Governor Visit Reports

The Governing Board **received** the School Development Plan 2023- 24 [[CAP-LGB-23-5-05 School Development Plan 2023/24](#)] and noted progress including any related governor visits.

5.A. [[CAP-LGB-23-5 LG KN Safeguarding 080524.pdf](#)]

5.B. [[CAP-LGB-23-5 LG NC Primary 250324.pdf](#)]

The Governing Board **noted** the safeguarding report had been discussed at item 4.

Niale Cleobury brought to the Governing Board's attention some issues arising from his visit to the Primary campus (report in item 7b). **Noting** the ongoing issues of recruitment and retention, he **highlighted** an issue with the shared school playground area. The Headteacher **explained** that the shared usage of the playground was a direct arrangement between the DfE and St Mary's when the school opened, which Capella House School cannot influence. He further **explained** that the issues relate to the timing of the lunches, the lack of ability to use it

spontaneously and having sufficient space for PE lessons. Teaching staff **advised** that as the lunch is quite late (12.45pm) this can affect the behaviour and attention of some of the students. The Headteacher **explained** that he considered options to resolve, but apart from moving to a larger space, there was nothing viable which could be done now.

The Finance Link Governor met with the Chair of the Board's Finance and Resources Committee. This meeting had been useful to understand the current financial position of the school and the pressure on Trust reserves. The Finance Link Governor had received the period 9 Management Accounts on the 24 June. The Governing Board **asked** about the cost of agency personnel, which is one of the higher costs in the accounts. The Headteacher **advised** that this figure is high nationally, and that for Capella House School this also includes 'finder's fees' for agencies when the school employs someone. This helps schools with recruitment but comes at a cost in some instances of up to 20% of annual salary.

The Governing Board revisited the discussion during the Strategy Day about the Headteacher's approach to staff wellbeing, and that by giving staff time, it is reducing the amount of sickness and that this may be an approach that would benefit the Trust as a whole. They also **commended** his approach to accelerating staff through from TA, to HLTA and then Lead (for example, in Maths). This incremental approach helps with budget forecasting as much as with retention.

The Governing Board **discussed** pupil movement and were advised that there was currently one place under roll in primary and one place over in secondary; current Published Admission Number(PAN) is 65. The Headteacher **advised** that the information on Get information in Schools (PAN 72) is incorrect as it also allows for sixth form places, which the school does not have at present. The Headteacher is unable to amend these as they have been set up by the DfE when the school was established. The Headteacher **advised** that he believed payments to the school are made half-termly and invoices are raised monthly.

The Governing Board **agreed** that all SDP priorities had been completed except for Priority 3 (Focus and enhance the teaching of phonics and spelling, across both sites, to develop writing fluency and consistency) and Priority 6 (Develop middle leadership skills amongst the staff), which would be adapted and continued based on progress to date.

The Governing Board **agreed** to retain, but consolidate under broader headings, all the proposed SDP priorities.

Initial agreement on the headings for the 2024/25 School development priorities were:

- Raising the ambition on the post-16 group and wider cohorts
- Stakeholder engagement and collaborating with parents – this would include advocating for a family support worker and engagement with governors, feeding into the governance development plan.
- Developing 'word-aware' and phonics strategies and other differentiation strategies to move to the next stages of classroom intervention, differentiating for each individual pupil.
- Developing middle leaders

The Chair and Headteacher, alongside Niala Cleobury would work together to refine the wording of the SDP's ensuring that it links to the Trust's 5-year plan. **(ACTION)**

The Governing Board **noted** that a school improvement partner's visit would take place w/c 24 June and would focus on Key Stage 4, post-16 pathways, curriculum leaders work and planning for next year. His report would be circulated to governors immediately and included in the papers for the first meeting of the next academic year but would provide a further point

of triangulation for the plans for next year and current position of the school. Parent, staff and pupil surveys would also help to inform this.

The Governing Board wished to **acknowledge** that all the school's priorities were rated either green or amber and congratulated the Headteacher in delivering these especially because of the staffing challenges that the school had faced.

Supporting Papers: HT Report items 6G, 6H and 6I) , SDP, SEF, SIP Reports, relevant Link Governor Visit Reports

## 6. Headteacher report

The Governing Board **received** a report from the Headteacher [[CAP-LGB-23-5-06 Capella House School Headteacher Report](#)].

The Headteacher **highlighted** the continued growth of the school with six new pupils joining since January. Whilst this was a success, the school had received a further twenty admissions consultations, bringing the total to 145 for the year to date. Parental tours are still occurring for pupils wishing to join in two years' time. This is a drain on time especially as it is unlikely there will be any spaces.

The Headteacher **explained** that the externally assessed exams had been completed and had been an 'overwhelming success'; there had been no meltdowns or walking out which had been experienced during the Mock's . This was a credit to both the staff and students for their preparation. The Headteacher also **commended** the other students who understood the floor being off limits for that period. He was particularly proud of the progress of students taking the English GCSE, from their starting point in Year 7.

The Governing Board **asked** about the recent work experience placements for students. The Headteacher **advised** that this had worked well but that more opportunities need to be secured for next year. He illustrated the success of one student who had been confident to stay on for an additional hour in the workplace and has now begun volunteering there. The Governing Board **agreed** that many students benefit from the social progress brought about by the school, but recognised that these are not easy to measure.

The Headteacher **noted** his concern about levels of contact with the Educational Welfare Officer, which he believes is being experienced across the borough. He has plans in place for school refusers and getting early help for students. He has noticed that there has been an increase in term-time holidays, which are sometimes understandable, but these do have an impact on the routine and structure given by school. Parents do not see the impact of settling students back into school life. Governors **agreed** that they would be happy to address this with the wider school community should the Headteacher feel it is necessary.

The Headteacher **explained** that there had been a reduction in behaviour reporting which when investigated was due to newer staff not being used to the process. Further training has been given.

Pupil Progress would be discussed in next meeting, and learner voice is due to be received later in the term.

The Headteacher **reported** that recruitment had gone well for a teacher for maternity leave and a therapist. Since then, two more therapists will require maternity leave cover. As there is a national shortage, this may prove challenging for September and December. One new speech and language therapist has been recruited as a permanent member of staff. The Governing Board **queried** if the therapists required would be another full-time role. Kerri Morgan, Director of Therapies **explained** that one of the roles requiring cover was a lead therapist. She anticipated that current SLT may be able to step into that role and a more junior role could be recruited for. She **explained** that this should be achievable for January and that she was working with a new agency. She is also working on a promotional video which will detail the benefits of working in Auriga for therapists, acknowledging that staff turnover once recruited is extremely low, due to the consistency of the work and pupils themselves.

With regards to health and safety there have been several critical issues resolved at the primary site, however, there remains some snagging. A lockdown scenario test is planned for this term.

Supporting Papers: SDP, SEF, SIP Reports, (Clarendon Published Ofsted report), Management Accounts, Final Budget and 3-year budget forecast, Finance Link Governor visit report.

## 7. Governance Development Plan and other Link Governor Visit Reports

7.A. The Governing Board **noted** that the Governance Development Plan 2023-24 had been reviewed and discussed at length during the Strategy Session. The Governing Board **agreed** that the developing the knowledge of the whole LGB would continue through inviting senior leaders to present to each meeting on specific areas, addressing vacancies amongst parents and staff governors and succession planning. In addition, consideration will be given to stakeholder engagement for parents and the wider community and where this will link with the ongoing work of the Board.

7.B. The Governing Board **noted** they had previously discussed items arising from the link governor visit (item 5).

[7.B.i. \[CAP-LGB-23-5 LG NC Primary 250324.pdf\]](#)

## 8. Update from Strategy Day (Planning for 2024-25)

8.A. The Governing Board formally **agreed** the areas of focus for the School Development Plan for 2024-2025, arising from the Strategy discussions. [SDP Priorities 24 -25.pdf](#)  
The Governing Board **agreed** to retain, but consolidate under broader headings, all the candidate SDP priorities, which had been provided by the Headteacher with an additional item on further developing (Middle) Leaders.

8.B. The Governing Board formally **agreed** the areas of focus for the Governance Development Plan 2024-25, discussed under Item 7 arising from the Strategy discussions and the LGB Self-Evaluation. The Governing Board **agreed** that these had been previously

agreed at Item 7 and Kate Nepstad agreed to develop these into a more detailed plan for agreement and monitoring during 2024-25. (**ACTION**)

8.C. The Governing Board **agreed** that Simon Gordon would draft the annual report with the Chair and Co-Vice Chair for approval and subsequent publication on the school's website in September 2024. (**ACTION**) The Governance Professional **advised** that this report will then feed into the Governance Statement accompanying the Annual Report and Accounts.

The Governing Board **noted** that the Chair was currently providing informal support to the incoming Chair and governing board at Clarendon School.

There were no other actions arising from the Strategy Day.

8.D. The Governing Board **noted** and **agreed** the calendar of 2024-2025 meetings as proposed.

## 9. Election / Appointment to key LGB roles for September 2023-24

9.A. The Governing Board **noted** that Andy Whiteside expressed an interest in remaining as Chair. The Governing Board **agreed** to recommend Andy Whiteside to the position of Chair of the Governing Board for a term of one year commencing 1 September 2024.

9.B. The Governing Board **noted** that Simon Gordon expressed an interest in remaining as Co Vice-chair. It was expected that Kate Nepstad would also be interested in remaining Co-Vice-Chair. The Governing Board **agreed** to confirm these appointments in the first meeting of the academic year.

9.C. The Governing Board **agreed** to appoint Simon Gordon to the role of Finance Link Governor.

9.D. The Governing Board **agreed** to appoint Kate Nepstad and Niale Cleobury to the roles of Safeguarding Link Governor.

9.E. Other link Governor roles which had been discussed during the strategy session and would be incorporated in the Governance Development Plan for 2024-25.

The Governing Board **queried** if the staff governor position could rotate around all staff. The Governance Professional advised that this was not permitted within the current operating procedures and would not be generally looked at as good practice.

## 10. Approval of Policies / Statements

The Headteacher **explained** that a high number of Subject Access Requests (7) had been received this term. This had taken up a good deal of his time. The Governing Board **asked** if there was any learning he had taken away from them. The Headteacher **explained** that there

was often a wider underlying issue with them, but that he was asking staff to consider what they were writing in behaviour reports and to be proud of what was written.

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

The Governing Board **agreed** they would feedback to the Trust Board on the successful exams season, the work on school development achieved during this academic year and the proposals for the coming year. The Chair would also flag for the Board's attention the lack of EWO support and need to recruit a Family Support Worker.

## 12. 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.

### Actions arising from this meeting

Number	Extract	Owner
1	The Headteacher / Maria Landeira Frias to present to the Local Governing Board on Carecalc at the next meeting, when a fuller understanding of Carecalc is available.	DS / MLF
2	The Governing Board would like to receive the presentation from the Director of Therapies on Outreach when it is appropriate	DS / KM
3	The Governing Board had an extensive discussion on the options to increase contact with parents, including the recruitment of a family support worker at the Strategy Session. This will feature on the Schools Development Priorities as well as an item for governors on their development plan	DS /AW
4	Arising from the discussions which followed it was agreed that the Governing Board should explore methods to engage with the pupil and student councils - this would be captured on the Governance Development plan	AW
5	The Governing Board agreed to continue to use presentations at the start of each meeting in the next academic to inform and give them a better understanding of the school, and or update progress on development priorities. A timetable for these will be produced	DS
6	The Headteacher to circulate the dates for end of year activities.	DS /PJ
7	The Governance Professional would investigate and resolve the issues with EDI training from the NGA	JA
8	Presentations from Strategy Session to be added to the meeting papers	DS /PJ
9	Kate Nepstad to provide a safeguarding link Governor report covering filtering and monitoring and share with the LGB following the meeting	KN
10	Headteacher, Andy Whiteside and Niale Cleobury to refine the wording of the School Development Priorities ensuring they link to the Trust 5 year Action Plan	DS /AW / NC
11	Kate Nepstad to develop a detailed Governance Development Plan for 2024-25 for approval in September	KN (AW)
12	Simon Gordon to draft the annual governance report for 2023-24 for approval in september	SG (AW/KN)

Andrew Whiteside  
Andrew Whiteside (Oct 16, 2024 09:39 GMT+1)

Andrew Whiteside

16/10/24

Chair of the Capella House Local Governing Body



# CAP-LGB-23-5-00 Approved Minutes 190624

Final Audit Report

2024-10-16

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