

**Cantell School**  
**Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting**  
**held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 via Zoom**

**Present:**

Glynis Alexander (Chair) (from 6.10 p.m.) -  
Chair from Item 7 onwards  
Matt Bunday (Associate)  
Chris Dancer (from 6.30 p.m.)  
Karen Gange  
Caroline Humphries  
Nicola Hunt - Chair Items 4, 5 & 6  
Harry Kutty (Head)  
Deb Sutton  
Warren Thomas

**In Attendance:**

Ian Creswell, Deputy Headteacher (Item  
Claire Herridge, Deputy Headteacher (Item  
Dave Gill, Assistant Headteacher (Item  
Michelle Burt, Clerk to Governors

**Apologies:**

John Draper  
Peter Hilditch

**01/22 Declaration of Pecuniary or Business Interests**

**Action**

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

**02/22 Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Clerk reported that there had been four nomination each for Glynis Alexander as Chair and Peter Hilditch as Vice Chair. Both nominees had also confirmed that they were happy to continue as Chair and Vice Chair for the academic year 2020/21. The Appointment of the Chair was Seconded by Deb Sutton and the Vice Chair by Caroline Humphries.

Following a show of hands, Governors unanimously APPROVED the appointment of Glynis Alexander as the Chair of Governors and Peter Hilditch as Vice Chair of Governors for 2021/22

**03/22 Chairs of Committees**

The Clerk reported that Peter Hilditch and Chris Dancer had confirmed their willingness to continue as the Chair of the Finance Committee and Chair of the Staffing Committee for a further year. Governors therefore unanimously APPROVED the appointment of Peter Hilditch as the Chair of the Finance Committee and Chris Dancer as Chair of the Staffing Committee for 2021/22.

**04/22 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Governors AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were SIGNED accordingly by the Chair.

**05/22 Matters Arising**

There were no Matters Arising.

**06/22 Behaviour and Attendance – the direction we are taking**

Ian Creswell joined the meeting and shared a Pastoral update PowerPoint with Governors.

Signed by Chair:



Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

Permanent Exclusion

- Two permanent exclusions took place at Cantell 2020/21 (0.17%)
- National Average for 2018/19, the last time the figure was published was 0.2% - Cantell was just below this figure for 2021/22.
- Permanent Exclusion is always a last resort at Cantell and are for serious issues rather than persistent disruptive behaviour.
- A system is in place to deal with the persistent disruptive behaviour.

Fixed Term Exclusions

- Fixed Term Exclusions are now called 'Suspensions'
- The figure for 2020/21 is 4.7%, taking into account the lockdown between January and February.
- Figures are below the national average at between 4 and 7%.
- Cantell's Fixed Term Exclusion figures are an indication that exclusion is a last resort.
- The lockdown explains the drop in the number of exclusions, but in previous years, figures were better than the City and National.

Internal Suspensions

- Internal Suspension figures show an improvement over the past three years in terms of the number of incidents due to the rigorous internal suspension process.
- Students are safeguarded whilst they are in school and are better off in school as long as they don't disrupt other students' learning.

Mediation

- Mediation calls for 2020/21 were 1.2%, as a % of the number of lessons taught over the academic year.
- Mediation is being requested earlier than before COVID, with students receiving three warnings.
- Patrol are called on the third warning and there are two people on Patrol at all times.

**The Head asked Ian to explain in his role as Deputy Headteacher, what his feelings are on behaviour over the last two weeks of being back in school and during the previous year.** Ian responded that behaviour across the school is extremely good and students are focussed on their learning. Disruption is dealt with in such a way as to maintain the learning culture of the school, allowing students to progress. The Head commented that the system is the same as was used throughout the pandemic, which is enhancing and helping the provision to move forward. Teachers are now used to and are on board with them.

Rewards

Ian outlined the rewards students are receiving in school, which continued throughout Lockdown and which includes House Points and Bronze, Silver and Gold House Certificates with reward prizes.

Attendance

- The attendance figures for the previous five years include a period of Norvo virus when 20% of students absent on some days.
- It is apparent from last year that as the pandemic increased in severity and peoples nervousness increased, some students stopped coming in because they were nervous and this had an impact on overall attendance.

Signed by Chair:


Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

Key Group Attendance

- Key Groups including FSM and SEN have been more adversely impacted by the pandemic than other groups.
- There has been a growth in the number of FSM children on role, which may be due to the rise in unemployment.
- Ian is looking at this information in more detail, but is aware of the changing circumstances of students.

Looked After Children

- There has been a big change in this group of nine students.
- One of the two students who were affecting the attendance figures has left and the other is receiving medical care.

SEN

- SEN has been more adversely affected by the pandemic than other groups.
- Some of the attendance figures for SEN are due to vulnerable students, who were invited into school not being able to attend. Their non-attendance was recorded as an absence.
- These figures include students who have returned part-time, which has also affected the figures.

Attendance Drive

- The attendance drive has restarted and teachers have been asked to talk to students who have been absent, to see how they can be supported.
- This process was powerful pre-COVID for raising attendance.
- Attendance Tracker is back in use.

Other Pastoral attendance methods include:

- Daily attendance calls
- Home visits
- Mini bus pick up.

Ian commented that the relationships built up between parents and the Year Leaders is very important along with the knowledge that Year Leaders have been able to glean about families throughout the past year.

Current Situation

- FSM and SEN attendance for the first week back has been outstanding: FSM – 95% and SEN – 93.2%.
- Some students are still part time.
- CAP is closed to SEN students.

**A Governor said that it seems you are getting off to a great start – are you seeing any hesitancy from parents about sending their children back.** Ian responded that during the pandemic and lockdown, there was, particularly from vulnerable families, but he hasn't seen any COVID hesitancy since we've been back. Ian added that there are a few SEN students who were slow in coming back, but Karen Gange is taking a lead on this.

**The Chair asked Karen, the Staff Governor, how she is finding it.** Karen responded that because they supported parents so well through the pandemic, they trust the Year Leaders and regularly ask for advice

**A Governor asked if the fine system is back up and running and what happens if a student feels they can't come in.** Ian responded that because of the relationship with the community, they are able to intervene before it gets too far,

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Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

although fines have been brought in for people who went on holiday between lockdowns. There is a national freeze on fines during the pandemic, so fines are a last resort. A lot of work is carried out stressing the importance of attendance. The Head agreed that there are still some anxious parents, especially when we are seeing large rises in cases, such as in Scotland.

IC

The Head added that the world will carry on and leave students behind and it is about parents being confident that we will do the right thing at the right time. It is lovely to see kids get back to some sort of normality and a trip took place for the first time last week, which is important. Serious illness and hospitalisation remains low due to the vaccination programme and the advice is that children don't get it badly. The Head added that they have to balance the continuity of education with children's safety and, relationships are at the heart of this and the confidence they have in the community.

**Another Governor said that on the last slide, she noticed girls have overtaken boys in attendance and the number of girls has gone up.** Ian responded that the number of girls has crept up with the increase in the school population and it is about making sure they get the support needed. Girls have been a focus area in the past and are still monitored on a daily basis.

Ian informed Governors that he is pleased with all of this, but it is a matter of maintaining the processes and managing people in the community in a nice way – parents are key. The Head agree that the increase in girls attending Cantell is in proportion with the population increase.

IC

Ian informed Governors that in previous years, before COVID, Governors would be provided with Safeguarding training before their first meeting of the year, which he hasn't been able to organise. Ian proposed that online training be arranged so Governors can ask questions – Ian will arrange this.

The Head commented that the new Keeping Children Safety guidance has a lot of changes which Governors need to understand. It was an outcome of the results from the website where young people could report schools where they have experienced sexual harassment. The Head added that Cantell is not on this list, but OfSTED has been clear that we need to act as if we have cases. This is a huge cultural shift for staff and students. Staff had training and Governors would benefit from this as well. The Head has received training from various sources and has picked something up from them all.

**The Chair said that she also has some valuable information from the Key, which she will share with Governors.** Ian commented that he would also arrange for the Chair to attend a safeguarding meeting.

## 07/22 **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

Governors APPROVED the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The Chair will contact Ian Creswell with a couple of queries.

## 08/22 **Results 2021**

Dave Gill presented the Results Analysis for 2021.

Dave explained that the National picture shows that there has been grade inflation across all subjects last year and this year in particular, at the top end (Grade 9). Dave added that as can be seen from the next slide, we don't inflate our grades at Cantell for the reason that we know our students and were rigorous, consistent and fair and carried out a robust job in predicting grades last year. Dave added that he

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stands behind the grades rewarded and students demonstrated that they achieved the grades they received. **Action**

Dave explained that last year's cohort had slightly lower prior attainment and there were similar numbers of High Prior Attainers and Middle Prior Attainers as the previous year, although there were a larger number of Low Prior Attainers.

Dave outlined the Headline figures:

- A slight increase in % at 4+, 5+ and 7+ English and Maths, given the larger proportion of Low Prior Attainers, these are good results.
- 7+ is up 1.7%, 5+ is up 8.7% and 4+ is up 3.7%

Dave drew Governor's attention to the Key Groups and explained that they were disappointed with the Pupil Premium vs non-Pupil Premium results and he commented that they are aware that the gap has widened as Pupil Premium students have performed worse than non-Pupil Premium. Dave added that this continues to be a priority as the situation has been compounded by the two lockdowns.

EAL and Non-EAL – Dave explained that EAL perform better than Non-EAL students and it is a similar picture this year, although there has been some improvement in Non-EAL.

Boys vs Girls – Dave reported that there has been a drop in girls performance this year, but this was more due to there being a large cohort of Non-EAL and Pupil Premium students in this group, not because they are girls.

SEND – Dave commented that this is a difficult group, because they aren't easy to measure. They are a diverse group and difficult to compare year on year, but are broadly where they we would expect them to be.

Dave informed Governors that Attendance in particular is a priority for the year and picking up the students that are behind because of their attendance. Dave added that in Year 11 attendance is really strong despite a significant amount of COVID cases in Year 11.

Governors NOTED that there are 43 Non-EAL and Pupil Premium students who are a priority as they are the group that has been most impacted by the pandemic as they have struggled to access learning outside of the classroom. There is also an overlap of 22 students in these groups.

**The Chair asked how many Year 10 (new Year 11) didn't attend and didn't do much work during lockdown.** Dave responded that in terms of lockdown they were ticking along at 60/70% attendance and engagement levels. This was for a number of reasons and it was the groups mentioned earlier that they struggled to engage with the most.

**The Chair commented that this will have a knock-on effect on their learning this year. What has been put in place?** Dave explained that a lot of the provisions include targeted tutor times and P7, which is being used in a really directed way. There is also really good tracking in place so teachers can focus on those students most affected by lockdown and help them catch up on work, filling the gaps they need to.

Dave explained that they used the National Tutoring programme last year, which was delivered off site. As they are now overstaffed in English, Maths and Science, it is being delivered in school, which gives more control.

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**The Chair commented that it is about encouraging these students to accept what has happened and to move on.** Dave agreed, commenting that they believe the students will be ok, but they need to make sure they do everything they can for them. **Action**

**A Governor asked as last year's Year 11 underperformed, was the transition rate to FE good?** Dave responded that he hasn't got the overall figures at the current time, as students have to be on roll and stay on their course for a number of weeks. The Head commented that last year's cohort didn't underachieve, as explained earlier in the meeting, Cantell students made good progress. Other schools have overinflated their grades, but Cantell's system was robust and students have received the best grade based on their work. The Head added that this year group was highly successful for their progress and they worked hard during and after the pandemic.

Dave added that they will need to wait a few weeks for the data to come in from the colleges, but they have identified 40/50 students who have been tracked on a weekly/fortnightly basis to make sure they reach all the key points to secure their college attendance. There are only 2/3 students who haven't done so and we are now supporting them to apply for a different college.

The Head said that this is a good question that Dave Gill will report back on at the November meeting. **Agenda Item**

The Head added that they have always struggled with the Transition of students and their 'stickability' in their first year at college. This affects the figures and they don't want this to happen, they want them to go to the right college and stick at it. It is through working with key partner colleges and the work of staff here at Cantell. Dave commented that the IAG team, led by Andy Paterson, have tried many things to make sure students went on the right courses to start with.

**The same Governor said that the success rate is partly to do with early intervention in Year 11 and getting college applications in early – by January most of Cantell's college's applications had gone in.**

## /22 **Curriculum**

Claire Herridge shared her Curriculum 2021/22 presentation with Governors and explained she would be talking about the Curriculum, Teaching & Learning and the journey we have been on over the last 18 months and the return to school.

On the INSET day, Claire spoke to staff about the learning journey and asked them to reflect on the last 18 months and to think about what they are doing in their classrooms, why they are doing it and how it fits into the learning journey.

Aim High was launched this last year and Hayley Sheath has presented to Governors before about the programme. Claire said they want students to be advantaged by the pandemic, not disadvantaged and to take forward all the good things they learnt during the lockdowns and use them in the classroom.

Claire outlined Phase 1 & 2 of Aim High, which took place between March and July and explained that they are now in Phase 3 – Extend, which aims to extend learning across a broad range of experiences, both in and beyond the classroom. The aim is to extend learning and asks 'where do we want to be' and 'how will we get there'.

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Claire explained that they are mindful of Year 7 into 8 and Year 8 into 9, as they have only experienced school through lockdown and they will be looking at what knowledge/skills are needed and the experiences they have had.

During Phase 3 they want students to 'know more', 'remember more' and 'apply more' and the Learning Journey will consist of quality first teaching, with the following Teaching and Learning priorities:

- Attack words
- Sequencing – The Learning Journey
- Checking for understanding
- Work pride

Claire explained Attack Words, which are words that unlock learning for students, as they need to understand the words behind a lesson. They have also asked staff to think about the words that can be in other areas of the school that might have a different meaning in a different context.

Reading is another important area and the Library is open again and is being advertised to students. Teachers are also teaching Literacy this year so students have this expertise.

Claire explained that all of this information has been shared with students' assembly in detail, giving them the responsibility for their learning journey. Students will also have their learning journey in the front of their books so their teacher can refer to where they are. This will vary from student to student, but communicating this to students is very important.

Claire outlined the Curriculum Next Steps, explaining that the role between teachers and LSAs is really important and the SEN team have been asked to share regular feedback to see how this is going.

Claire informed Governors that she would like to have a Governor link for each curriculum area so they can join the relevant Faculty to see what is happening and to ask questions in the classroom about students' learning journeys.

**The Chair asked if the students themselves support other students in their learning journey.** Claire responded that she has seen examples of students working together to support each other and this is encouraged.

The Head and Governors discussed the assignment of Governors to curriculum link roles and the following were agreed:

Science – Chris Dancer

Languages – Deb Sutton

Maths and Computing – Warren Thomas

English – Nicola Hunt

Humanities – Caroline Humphries

Healthy Lifestyles – Glynis Alexander

Creative Arts – Matt Bunday

The Head informed Governors that a list of the agreed links will be sent out to them and Claire will come up with a schedule. The Head added that it is important that Governors have an opportunity to get in to school and see what is actually happening and to get involved in the really exciting things that are going on.

**A Governor asked whether the Head is happy for people to make direct contact initially.** The Head responded that the schedule is more around the parameters of how this will work, with guidelines for Governors on what they will be

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expected to do. The intention is to get you in before half term and certainly before Christmas. **Action**

Claire commented that it has been great over the last two weeks to see the exciting Teaching & Learning happening back in school. The Head added it would be interesting for the Parent Governors to talk to their children to ask what an Attack word is and what do they understand by this and to email Claire and himself about what they said.

## 10/22 **Strategic Direction of the School**

The Head presented a PowerPoint, commenting that COVID is still very much around and in the City and there has been an exponential rise in cases to what was seen before the summer holiday. The Head explained that a series of control measures were in place before the break and students have tried their very best with very clear restrictions. This has got tougher, but there is a light and it is that serious illness and hospitalisation is low and children don't get it very seriously.

Students need to be able to get on with their learning in the safest way possible, although there are a range of measures still in place including ventilation, with windows and doors open. On top of this, there is regular testing, LFD and saliva and the rates of testing in school are higher than nationally – Cantell students are regularly testing and are chased if they don't.

The Head commented that there is life after COVID and we have to get on. There is a need to pause and reflect on student Learning Journeys to see where they are and where they have been and in the same way, over the last 18 months as an adult working in education, we have to reflect on where we have been and where we go next. The Head thinks that whilst we strive for continued improvement, it is never good enough and they are always striving to improve. As a school, Cantell is a great place to be and students are very happy.

The Head said that break and lunchtimes feel like a university campus, with quiet areas where students sit with their friends and other areas where students are doing what they like to do. Other outside areas are full of children playing sports, other students go to the Library or to Art for clubs. The Head informed Governors that the Year 11 Common Room would be open in the next week. There is something for everybody and Cantell is about every single child, where relationships and friendships are key.

The Head said that the one thing they said last year that they wanted to tighten up on is mobile phones. Phones are not being banned because they are a 20<sup>th</sup> Century tool and got us through the pandemic, but they can be a distraction and as a result need to go away when students are in the school building. This is explained to students and they co-operate as a result.

The Head commented that before the pandemic, 67 after school clubs ran at Cantell, and he is confident that more will happen.

The situation in Afghanistan and the EU are a concern and as a result, some of the Romanian students have gone back, which is sad and equally sad is what is happening in Afghanistan and we have students and families that are stuck over there and we are keeping their places open. In Year 11, we have a young man who is himself a refugee and he wants to do something to help others. The Head said that he has put this to the Aspire Trust Headteachers and as such on the 8<sup>th</sup> October, we will be doing some fundraising.

Signed by Chair:



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The Head explained to Governors that this year the Trust will be training new teachers on the Early Careers Framework themselves across the Trust. **Action**

What's Next? The Head said that the last thing students and staff need is significant change. The ambition is that our children in our school will be advantaged through the pandemic, so that when they are older and can look back with their children and grandchildren, they can say that it was this time that has enabled them to do what they have done. This is not about more, but doing things differently and using what we have learnt over the last 18 months to progress and 'flip learning' is part of this and we want this for our young people.

"What, Why & How" – the Head said that the two most important Cs in addition to the Cantell Cs, are Consistency and Community. Consistency across the school, with the same progress being made and Community will be key.

Staff motivation is another important area, as it will be difficult to get back to normal and staff will need support and care. The Head informed Governors that the SLT are there to support and challenge staff to enable them to do their role and to maintain a positive work/life balance.

It has been a really good start to the academic year and the Head is really pleased with where they are. Staff are working really hard and need to be rewarded and happy in their roles. Motivated staff lead to motivated students.

COVID is still around and the Head has reintroduced masks in Year 11 classrooms and for staff. This isn't for all year groups yet, but will be introduced if needed. The Year 11 students currently at home with COVID are tired, but not that ill, their biggest angst is not having their freedom and not being in school. Their biggest challenge is continuing their education.

The Head added that it has been a great start and we are getting back to normal, but it is hard.

**A Governor asked the Head whether he is confident that the SLT have the tools and agreement from the DfE to manage COVID as it flares up in school. Are you confident you can go where you need to, to do this?** The Head replied that the DfE have their own agenda he is working closely with Debby Chase at the LA, who is doing a great job and if there is a significant outbreak, he can speak with Debby's team and get advice on where to go next.

## 09/22 **Annual Review**

Please complete your Annual Return paperwork and return to the Clerk as soon as possible. **All**

## 10/22 **Chair's Update**

The Chair reported that things are going far better than she thought they would in Education in particular – people are doing their best. It is a very difficult situation in any school and we have students and parents who are suffering and there is no answer.

The Chair said that she looks at emails from school every day and the staff are doing a fantastic job and Governors thank the Head, SLT and staff for all their hard work.

The Chair has also emailed all the new staff on behalf of Governors and will email them again later in the term.

Signed by Chair:



Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

**11/22 Any Other Business****Action**

There was no other business.

**12/22 Date of Next Meeting**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 at 5.30 p.m., via zoom. That concluded the business of the meeting. The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

<b>Page No</b>	<b>Minute Number</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
3	04/22	Ian Creswell to arrange online Safeguarding training for Governors – date to be confirmed	Ian Creswell	As soon as possible
3	04/22	Ian Creswell to arrange Safeguarding Meeting with the Chair	Ian Creswell	As soon as possible
5	06/22	Dave Gill to report on Transition figures from Cantell to FE.	Dave Gill	November meeting/ Agenda Item
9	09/22	Governors to complete and return their Annual Return paperwork to the Clerk.	All	By the next meeting in November.

Signed by Chair:


Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021