

**Cantell School**  
**Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting**  
**held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, via Zoom**

**Present:**

Glynis Alexander (Chair)  
Chris Dancer  
John Draper  
Karen Gange  
Nicola Hunt  
Harry Kutty (Head)  
Deb Sutton  
Warren Thomas

**In Attendance:**

Hayley Sheath, Assistant Headteacher (Item 5)  
Michelle Burt, Clerk to Governors

**Apologies:**

Peter Hilditch  
Caroline Humphries

		<b>Action</b>
26/21	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary or Business Interests</b> There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.	
27/21	<b>Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b>  Governors NOTED the amendments to the minutes forwarded to the Clerk prior to the meeting and AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on the 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were SIGNED accordingly by the Chair.	
28/21	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
04/21	<u>Safeguarding Training</u> Those Governors that haven't completed their training to do so as soon as possible and forward confirmation to the Clerk.	All
07/21	<u>Glossary of Terms</u> The Clerk to forward a glossary of terms of Governors as soon as possible.	Complete
11/21	<u>Appraisal Process</u> Governors NOTED that Claire Herridge is unable to attend this evenings meeting and would present the Appraisal process at the next meeting.	WGB Agenda
16/21	<u>Literacy</u> On the agenda at Item 5.	
19/21 a)	<u>Email to School Business Manager</u> The Chair of the Finance Committee has written to the School Business Manager.	Complete
21/21	<u>Complaints Policy</u> The Head agreed to review the Complaints Policy re: designated person.	Before Next Mtg
21/21	<u>Policies additional sheet</u> The Chair has forwarded this information to the Head.	Complete

The Chair welcomed Hayley Sheath to the meeting to talk about Literacy. Hayley reported that they have been looking at Literacy again this year, which as always, is important, but this year, they have been using a lot of the COVID Catch Up funding to support students, especially those in KS3

Governors NOTED some of the difficulties that a lack of literacy can cause, including:

- One in 11 disadvantaged children don't have a book to call their own.
- Children born into communities with the most serious literacy challenges, have some of the lowest life expectancies in England.

Hayley outlined some of the whole school focus around literacy:

- All Year 7 students this year will be able to choose a book from a list for Christmas and they will also receive a copy of the Christmas Carol.
- The focus on Attack words that start last year will continue to be a focus this year and will also feature in staff CPD and Teaching & Learning briefings.
- The school continues to have a full time Librarian. Although the library isn't as accessible as usual, KS3 students can access it, along with the top sets. KS4 students are able to book a slot. The Librarian has also put together a 'click and collect' services.
- Vikki Foster in the English Department is still in charge of Literacy lessons, which has a non-fiction focus this year.
- KS3 students are having their Star tests to determine their reading age – this would normally have happened by now, but has been restricted by COVID.
- Top set KS3 students have been given access to e-books.
- KS3 English lessons are being planned around inspiring a love of reading.
- Year 7 are being allocated a space in Lesson A to read.

Hayley informed Governors that she wanted to make Governors aware of how difficult things are at the moment, as students have to stay in their Year group 'bubbles' and are unable to mix with other year groups. Hayley added that logistics are also a problem, as there are no spare rooms for students to use that aren't used by a different year group, although they may be able to potentially use outside later in the year.

KS3 have also been having low-stake assessments, which have been RAG rated and there are 20/25 students in Year 8 and 9 who have been rated as red in both reading and writing. Two key skills have been identified for each student and Hayley commented that they are looking at who can teach this students. Hayley added that they have been looking at various companies, but some are only available for GCSE, not KS3 and others would need a room to teach in, and as a result, so far they are struggling to find anything good to do. Some of the options have been:

- Possible TUTE sessions
- Reading mentor/reading volunteers
- Bedrock Learning
- Rapid Reader for students with a reading age below 9.

Hayley informed Governors that Year 10 will use their Tutor Group time, which is split into subject groups and the Faculty Leaders are really keen to put Literacy back on the agenda and will think about how they will do this within these subjects, with three main targets for reading, writing and talk. Hayley commented that she will be meeting with the Faculty Leaders in the first week back in January, and will relaunch Literacy with an assembly for students across the curriculum.

Hayley read out the next steps for Literacy, which includes:

- Analysis of reading ages (from STAR tests)
- Upgrade groups finalised.
- Bedrock Learning to be trialled in Year and 8 Literacy lesson.
- Launch Year 10 Literacy in Lesson A
- Launch Year 7 reading session each week in Lesson A.
- Relaunch of Literacy – DEAR/literacy across the curriculum.

**A Governor commented that Hayley had talked about the Library being open – he asked whether she had a sense of how many students were using the facility: who tends to use it and what proportion.** Hayley responded that unfortunately the Library is restricted at the moment, with no free access, so this limits the amount students can use it. She added that it is a nice area and it is a shame that students can't use it. Sessions have been offered to Year 10 and 11, but the uptake hasn't been huge, probably due to the structure of their day. KS3 students can use the Library during Literacy lessons, but not at any other time.

**Another Governor asked about the lack of content for KS3 students with some companies and whether Hayley had looked at the Oak Academy content.** Hayley responded that she hasn't for Literacy and will read up on this. **The same Governor commented that Oak Academy did have secondary school content for various subjects, but maybe not just for Literacy.** The Head commented that they had reviewed Oak Academy during lockdown and it does have great resources – Hayley will go back and have another look.

H.  
Sheath

**A Governor asked whether Hayley has noticed any impact with Year 7, especially as they haven't done their SATs and whether there are any areas of learning that have been lost.** Hayley responded that a member of the English team have been looking at this and reading is the biggest issue so far. As Year 7 students didn't have their Transition, it is taking them longer to get into Cantell's mind set and they haven't had the mental change and they are a bit behind. Hayley added that interestingly, Years 8 and 9 don't look much different to the previous year, but vary by less of a gap.

**The Chair thanked Hayley for her presentation, commenting that Governors understand that literacy is very important and it is a shame that Primary school children have lost so much knowledge.**

### 30/21 Professional Development Process

The Head reported that as Claire Herridge is unable to attend today's meeting, she will attend the next meeting to talk about the Professional Development process in more detail.

WGB  
Agenda

The Head reported that vision of the process is about sharing good practice in the classroom with the COVID measures that are in place. The Head added that they are looking to create a bank of excellent teaching strategies, to meet the range of different students in the school.

The Head said that since half-term, they have moved more into a strategic role, focussed mainly on the long term and with regards to the professional development cycle, they have informed staff that everyone will receive two points and will have one question to work towards, which is: "How do you support students in and out of the classroom so that they know more, remember more and can apply more?"



The Head said that the real benefit of this is the conversations that are happening and the collection of a suite of best areas in the school and linking with other teachers, so they can work together. We will probably be living with these control measures at least until Easter, if not until the end of the academic year, so this is about collaborating on what we are all doing.

### 31/21 **Staff Well-being**

The Head reported that CPD is virtually all on line and all briefings are pre-recorded, with staff viewing them on the same day - Faculty meetings are also virtual and this has all worked very well.

The Head said that in terms of staff wellbeing, they check the temperature on the ground regularly and so understand that morale is high, but that everyone is really tired and therefore need to be clear what can be done to support staff until the end of term. As part of this the CPD cycle has been suspended, as this is getting to be too much for staff – although it is important, which staff agreed with, staff wellbeing is really important, no matter what job they do and although morale is really strong and everybody is working really hard, it is about keeping our provision and making it work for staff.

**The Staff Governor said that they are all working really hard and along with the negativity, there are a lot of positives. There have been a lot of changes, which have embedded in really well. The Staff Governor commented as a Year Leader, she loves her year group and working within her bubble has given her a good outlook of where things are and she has a better understanding of her year group. When there are issues they all share them and work together for good outcomes and the students know that their Year Leaders know them. The information that the Head shares is particularly helpful and although they are in separate bubbles, everyone is very much working together.**

**The Staff Governor added that the Year Leaders had felt strange when they came back, but have found ways of working together, but separately and they are much more confident now in what they are doing – it felt very cold to start with, but the way things are organised has helped students and staff attend school.**

The Head said that the Staff Governor has hit the nail on the head – for the first two weeks he struggled to see how these new measures would work, but because of the Cantell community, they worked out their own ways to work in their own zones. The Head went on to tell Governors about a conversation he had with a member of staff, who has been struggling mentally and it was good to hear how much resilience she has and to have an open and transparent conversation.

The Head added that staff morale is strong and as a result, we know that students are happy. A student survey was carried out and overwhelmingly, students said they understand the control measures that are in place and they are just getting on with it – there were no negatives about this.

**The Chair commented that one of the things that comes to mind is that a member of staff was able to go to the Head and this shows how open the school is and that they help people deal with their problems.** The Head thanked the Chair, as this is really important to him – to know all the staff is a challenge, but a priority to him – the same for students. The Head added, that they are a talking school, they don't just keep it inside and built up, there are opportunities to speak to people – it is all about the team.

The Head asked the Chair and Governors to email all school staff to pass on their views on how things are going. The Head added that they have given all students and staff an advent calendar and staff will also be receiving at £10 John Lewis gift voucher – it's all these things that count.

**The Staff Governor said that she was speaking to the Chair before the meeting and just wanted to say it is also about the SLT and she will send them note of thanks tomorrow.**

**A Governor asked the Head that everyone else's wellbeing is high on everybody's list, but what can the Head do for his own wellbeing?** The Head responded that he meets with the Chair every week and he is able to be open and transparent with her and he has also got the Trust Headteacher to talk to, particularly John Draper, who is always at the end of the phone and this is one of the reasons why it is a good time to be part of a Trust. The Head informed Governors that he will do everything to avoid another lockdown, as this is when his wellbeing suffered.

All

The Chair asked Governors to send her a statement, which she would then forward onto staff.

### 32/21 Headteacher Update

The Head shared some information about positive COVID cases that have been picked up by the Saliva testing programme, when students were asked to self-isolate at home. He added that the testing programme has been incredible in tracking cases, whether they have been transmitted in school or outside. The last positive case was twelve days ago and because there had been a flurry of cases in Year 7, and because he couldn't be confident that this hadn't happened in school, the precaution of sending home the Year 7 year group for 14 days had been taken.

The Head added that there had been a case yesterday, but over the past two/three weeks, the rate of infection has been much lower. In total 511 students have had to self-isolate from the start of term on the 1<sup>st</sup> September and only two of these went on to contract COVID-19.

The Head shared a line graph with Governors, which showed that cases have slowed down and as a result, he has been able to spend more time looking at a strategic summary of teaching & learning, which is really strong, with staff and student adapting well to the COVID measures in place. The Head added that technology is being used better to provide work for students and to model best practice – it has been really impressive and pleasant to see what is going on throughout the school.

The Head informed Governors that a number of new members of staff started at the school in September and there are four members of staff that are raising the standards and as a result, we should see an improvement in English and Science. The Head is hosting lunches with all the new starters over the next couple of weeks, to say thank you and equally important, with their mentors, who have done an incredible job, managing everything really well and need equally rewarding.

The SLT review the behaviour points every morning, along with mediation and attendance, all of which they know inside out, along with the Year Leaders. Students that have returned to school are glad to be back as they have missed school and are more engaged than ever before – it is not a wonderful situation and things go wrong from time to time, but the systems are in place to deal with it.



**The Staff Governor commented that she had welcomed back one of her groups today, who all said they are happy to be back and had missed school – all but two out of thirty had returned and those students that were overwhelmed are being looked after.**

The Head informed Governors that he has been keeping a diary of all the good things that have come out of the pandemic – for him this is that youngsters have seen that the grass isn't greener on the other side and that being in school is really important and that staff are working hard to continue this and his hope that this will keep going when we get back to normal.

**The Staff Governor said that lots of students were worrying about catching COVID, but she feels that they are now in a good place and catching up – the new way of working is now embedded in and this will be a positive going forward.**

The Head informed Governors, in terms of Leadership and Management, the Faculty Leaders have been driving from the front and SLT are amazing and he has been trying to look after them as much as possible. The Year Leaders are also doing an incredible job – if there has ever been a time when leadership and management has been across the school, it is now.

**A Governor asked about Learning Walks and whether this will be something they can do more of after Easter?** The Head responded that as soon as this is possible, but not quite yet – visitors aren't allowed in school at the moment, but there will be a time when they can and they will really value this. The Head suggested perhaps having a range of members of staff attend Governor meetings, to talk about how they have got on in the current conditions, or even better, linking a Governor up with a member of staff to talk about what they have been doing. **The Governor agreed that this might be a good chance for the new Governors to experience this, to give them the opportunity to see what is happening in school.**

Chair/  
Head

The Head agreed to work with the Chair to make this possible. The Chair commented that she has done this in other schools and it was very interesting and she felt privileged to talk to members of staff the way she did.

The Head explained the work they have been doing around 'Cantell Cares' – they have been able to set up a generous fund, with a click and collect service for hard up families. Over 140 families have signed up to this and Year leaders have also been organising uniforms and PE kits for families that need them, as well as a 'grab and go' breakfast club. The City are also providing food boxes and school meal vouchers. The Head added that every Friday from now until Christmas, is a non-school uniform day, with food donations to three local charities.

**A Governor commented that Cantell is a Community school, which is really looking after the local community around it.**

### 33/21 Chairs Update

The Chair reported that she has spoken to the PGCE students individually and received positive responses back of how they feel – they all said that they hope they are going to be at Cantell along time, which is really positive.

The Chair also informed Governors that all staff will be receiving a £10 gift voucher, which she spoke to the School Business Manager about, as she felt the school needed to do something.





The Chair continues to meet with the Head every Friday and hopefully he feels he can offload with her. The Chair is also meeting with Ian Creswell on Friday to talk about safeguarding and the SCR (Single Central Record), which has been done and is all very positive.

34/21 **Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

Governors NOTED the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

35/21 **Minutes of the Staffing Committee Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

Governors NOTED the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

36/21 **Any Other Business**

a) Saliva Testing Programme

The Head reported that the saliva testing has been really useful and is now moving from Phase 2 into Phase 3. The four schools involved in Phase 2 will be making an announcement tomorrow that testing will be continuing after Christmas. The Head added that the programme is moving to the University of Southampton

The Head reported that they are also looking to get the data back to the Headteacher's directly when there is a positive case, instead of relying on parents to let them know. As of next week onwards, the information will come direct from the NHS. The Head added that from next week, they will also be looking at daily testing, so students can continue coming to school, as there is a lot of time lost being out of school and all the issues this brings.

The aspiration is for Cantell to do daily testing as opposed to students isolating, so on the first day of a student being identified as a contact and having to self-isolate for 14 days, if they get a negative result the next day, they can come into school and if it is at the weekend, they get tested on the Monday.

The Head said that he is working alongside the team for the Phase 3 role out and has been seconded for a couple of days a week, for the role out across the South.

**The Chair commented that it is very difficult because a lot of parents don't understand the rules – how do we make sure they do at Cantell.**

The Head responded that this is through our communication and the regularity with which parents are written to, along with the relationships with Year Leaders. It is difficult, but it is all about communication and the strength of relationships.

**A Governor commented that the Saliva testing newsletter is very good and easy for parents and students to read. It has a lot of interesting information and the pictures and different straplines are really good to read about.** The Head agreed, adding that it is created by the LifeLab, who have been exceptional. Last week they worked with a group of Year 11 students, with the Department of Health & Social Care around the messages for COVID for their age group. The Head said that he found a very useful advert from Austria, about the impact on families, which founded the basis of this discussion. The Head added that it feels good to be taking part in the testing, but also because the test is part of the national agenda.

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 5.30 p.m. via Zoom

The Chair thanked everybody for attending and wished them all a Happy Christmas.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

The meeting ended at 6.55 p.m.

<b>Page No</b>	<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Action Point</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1.	28/21	Safeguarding Training – Governors to complete and return if not already done so.	All	ASAP
3.	29/21	Revisit Oak Academy content for KS3 students	Hayley Sheath	Before next meeting.
3.	30/21	Appraisal Process	Claire Herridge	Next meeting
6.	32/21	Chair & Head to discuss Governors linking up with new staff to talk about their experiences so far.	Chair & Head	Next Meeting