

Cantell School
Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting
held on Wednesday 24th February 2021, via Zoom

Present:

Glynis Alexander (Chair)
Matt Bunday
Chris Dancer
John Draper
Karen Gange
Peter Hilditch
Caroline Humphries
Nicola Hunt
Harry Kutty (Head)
Deb Sutton
Warren Thomas

In Attendance:

Claire Herridge (Item 5)
Ian Creswell (Item 6)
Dave Gill (Items 7 & 8)
Michelle Burt, Clerk to Governors

Apologies:

None

38/21 Welcome to New Governor

Action

The Chair of Governors welcomed Cllr Matt Bunday to the meeting, explaining that Governors would be asked to approve his appointment as an Associate Governor later in the meeting.

Matt introduced himself and explained why he wished to become a member of the Governing Body. Governors and staff then introduced themselves to Matt, outlining their roles.

39/21 Declaration of Pecuniary or Business Interests

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

40/21 Minutes of the Meeting dated 2nd December 2020

Governors AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd December 2020 as a true record of the meeting, which were SIGNED accordingly by the Chair.

41/21 Matters Arising

29/11 Review of Oak Academy content for KS3 students

Governors NOTED the information provided by Hayley Sheath in relation to the Oak Academy content for KS3. Governors agreed that they found the information very helpful, especially how different departments use the resources. The Chair commented that it is a shame that there aren't many resources that the Art Department can use.

Governors asked for their thanks to be passed on to Hayley for putting the information together and for matching skills with content.

32/21 New Staff/Governor discussions

The Chair reported that she spoke to the PGCE students in September and will be meeting with new staff next week, to see how they are getting on and will report back.

Chair

Claire Herridge presented a PowerPoint on the Appraisal Process for 2020-21. Claire reported that the process has developed over the last couple of years and is now more rewarding than a target driven process. Colleagues are now invited to reflect on what motivates them and on what they would do, to achieve four fundamental aims.

Claire explained that last year there were three areas of focus, to promote discussion, but unfortunately, when they were half way through the process, lockdown happened and they were unable to complete it.

On the return to school in September, Claire explained that they reflected on those members of staff who had started the process and the fact that students were in a different place when they returned. As a result, the process was narrowed down to one question – one focus point on how to support teachers in and out of the classroom.

- How do you support students in and out of the classroom so that they know more, remember more and can apply more?

This year, staff have been asked to think about two particular areas to answer this question and to focus on particular groups of students and their own CPD needs. Claire added that the Pastoral team have also been posed this question, for their areas.

Claire explained that a review of last year's progress is taking place and staff are being asked if there is anything in the areas of focus that they could use this year and if there is an opportunity to continue them this year. CPD is also being discussed and the key areas of focus.

Claire outlined the CPD opportunities available in school this year, which include: CPD bursts.

- Research group.
- Coaching.
- Wealth of experience in school.

Governors NOTED the appraisal process over the year until July, ending with staff sharing what they have been working on with the rest of the school.

The Chair asked how staff took the transition from being led to being their own leaders. Claire responded that they embraced it and the process has enabled them to do so.

The Head added that the education system has suffered from a target led appraisal process. What they have done is brought the appraisal system that is helping the corporate sector, into education. No one will work hard for a target based system and this process is about a community of people with strategies to help people that need improvement.

Governors APPROVED the Appraisal Policy.

43/21 **Attendance and Safeguarding Update**

Ian Creswell presented a PowerPoint on Attendance and Safeguarding during Lockdown 2.

Attendance

Ian reported that the reported attendance for the last half term is for online lessons based on when students log onto their lesson, which throughout lockdown, has been

the main attendance method for the school. Ian added that an analysis will be carried out after lockdown, to compare live attendance with the Show My Homework (SMHW) submissions, but as this is likely to be a lot of work, he'd rather do this at the end of lockdown.

Ian outlined the measures that are taken to track and support engagement, commenting that on average, 65 students per year group are called each week, including safeguarding calls and calls to more vulnerable students. Ian runs a weekly report to track trends to see if any student's behaviour has changed and such as good attender, who has dropped off.

Ian explained that Year Leaders get this report straight away and carry out a visual check on SMHW to track any students that have dropped off. All this information is also used to track safeguarding issues, so that Year Leaders can intervene and resolve any issues, such as laptops and access issues. Ian commented that nearly 300 laptops have been handed out to students.

Parents are able to contact individual staff, which is an extra check and there are some students that do their work through work packs, who find paperwork the best way for them to engage. These students are on a weekly 'red report', allowing teachers to see which students they don't need to contact as they will be contacted by their Year Leader.

Governors NOTED that the average attendance to lessons is 65%, which is consistent across all subjects, with no subject being significantly behind, although top set only subjects, such as French and Latin, are significantly higher.

Ian explained that low ability students are receiving in class support, with TAs attending live lessons and providing weekly clubs. EAL students have been finding work hard and are contacted regularly and SEN students of all abilities receive weekly support from the SEN team.

Ian added that all in all this is a strong picture and a strong system is in place to support all Cantell students, with 91% of the school population doing at least one lesson a day.

The Head informed Governors that SEN staff have carried out a lot of training in relation to student needs and a document has been created for staff on students having equal access to learning and how to equip staff to access information. Rachel Bridges has also been meeting regularly with SEN students to see how they are getting on.

The Head added that EAL is particularly difficult and they are offered attendance in school every Thursday. IT has also been a barrier, particularly in the first lockdown, but the Head is now confident that every single child has access to IT and learning from home and he is also confident that they have done enough to make this a reality.

A Governor asked if there is a pattern to attendance throughout the day, or week. Are there students that take longer lunch breaks – are there any trends?

Ian responded that each year group is different, but morning attendance is better than afternoons. As this lockdown has been during the winter, students seem to go out earlier in the afternoon for exercise. There is also more of a leaning towards core subjects, leading to a few attendance patterns that they are aware of. Some students are also doing work offline, as this suits their family circumstances and it has been left to parents to decide if their child needs to take a screen break. Ian added that they did look into re-timetabling, but this wasn't possible, because of the Year Group arrangements.

The Head added that Cantell staff know their parents really well and have the confidence that they can decide when their child needs to take a break and are quick to notice if a student disappears for one lesson and that it is not a pattern, and as a result, take appropriate and prudent action. The Head said that the strategy they follow is to provide a routine, giving a structure, but it is parents that have to be the guide on this.

The Chair asked how they have embarked on practical subjects. Ian responded that attendance to these lessons is still really high, and they have changed the curriculum, so practical lessons are carried out when students return to school. Students are getting the prep time now. Dave Gill added that in KS4 teachers have adjusted what they are teaching to fit students and the engagement in lessons as a result is higher than subjects like Drama, where the focus has been shifted to next year and when students are back in school, they will catch up on more of the practical elements.

The Head commented that they can't under estimate the amount of planning that this has taken they have ensured that students continue to make the progress they need.

The Chair asked the two Parent Governors for their point of view on how they have found lockdown. Both Parent Governors agreed that this lockdown has been easier, with their children sticking to a routine, but they are ready to go back to school as there are elements of school that cannot be recreated at home. One Parent Governor commented that her son had struggled to some degree and had put pressure on himself to complete all the work, although he feels that he is making progress.

The Head responded that it is really important that students feel they are making progress and are looking forward to getting back to school and although there won't be any exams this year, there will be assessments.

The Chair asked the Staff Governor how she has been coping. The Staff Governor responded that she can't wait to get back to school for some normality. Year Leaders have been dealing with parents and each family is individual and she hopes that parents feel they are listened to and helped. Each phone call to a family is different and Year Leaders have been making a lot of calls each week, building on relationships and hopefully this will make it easier when we return to school. The Chair asked the Staff Governor to thank the other Year Leaders for their hard work.

Safeguarding

Ian explained, as in the first lockdown, all vulnerable students were identified before lockdown and contact with them was increased, depending on the risk. 110 vulnerable students were offered a place in school during lockdown and there was a larger uptake, which has changed and varied, with an average of 55 students in school each week, but not always the same students. Safeguarding meetings have continued throughout lockdown, on a rota system to discuss any issues, which are logged on CPOMs.

Ian explained that attendance is a key driver for safeguarding and students that haven't logged on, are chased and contacted and discussed on a weekly basis, with an action plan put in place. Home visits are a last resort. Mental Health support is arranged through Jo Pringle and CAMHs support is still available.

Ian informed Governors that he puts out a weekly bulletin to parents on how to cope in lockdown and the CPD form has remained an important part of the process. A new Cantell Safeguarding email address has also been set up and one safeguarding issue was picked up through this route and dealt with straight away.

Ian explained that Lena Beattie, the CAP lead has put a system in place for CAP students, which has been really strong and includes regular phone calls and face to face meetings. All the information Lena gathers, comes back to Michelle Stocker and Ian and any of the agencies that are working with these families.

Ian informed Governors that prior to lockdown an assessment was carried out on online safety and during lockdown there was an issue with some students being contacted by an unknown person through their Gmail accounts. As a result of this, they have locked down Gmail and there haven't been further issues. It was reported to the police, but they haven't been able to take any further action. Students were also given advice.

Another big change has been the move from zoom to google meet, which allows more control and was in response to safeguarding concerns with zoom, which have now been resolved and google meet is much stronger and has increased security.

44/21 Overview of DC3

Dave Gill shared a presentation and explained that the usual CTLs will not be reported this half term and a decision was made to carry on with business as usual. The CTLs were reviewed and the descriptors were adjusted to what is appropriate during lockdown. The data has been collated, but will not be looked at again, although he is mindful that CTLs give a picture. Reports will be going home to parents this week, with the grade descriptors outlined, on the back for parent information.

Dave informed governors that a 2.5 CTL score is the model and where they would expect students to be. The CTLs reflect the work submitted and engagement recorded.

Dave went through the average CTL grades, subject by subject and outlined Computing compared to Drama, to highlight the engagement in subjects that suit an online experience to those that don't. Dave also highlighted the core subjects, which are as good, if not better than a student's average. Dave commented that all subjects are important, but parents may be making a decision about subjects that are not core.

Dave pointed out Year 10 English, which needs further investigation with the English team, as it is slightly low, which is a concern due to the intention to enter students for English Literature this year. Dave added that they will have to make a swift decision as to whether it is still the best option for students and whether it would be better to delay until next year.

A Governor commented that schools have risen to the challenge with home learning and asked whether there are any elements to how they have had to work that they would like to keep, or will they just be pleased to be back. Dave responded that they will be relieved to be back, but there are many things that they have experienced online that they will move on. Dave explained that there will be two sets of mocks in November and February and usually they would have all subjects at these times. A decision has been made however, to hold English and Maths in November and the rest in January.

Dave explained that there is also a real opportunity in some of the higher end subjects, where there are subject experts, who can be used to lead teaching across the classes, with the teacher being a facilitator.

Dave informed Governors that they cannot dismiss the level of literacy and organisation that students now have, but there is a lot of things that will be great to see the back of. The Head added that they have a strategic idea of what they want to keep, such as keeping everything on SMHW for teachers to access, but it is most

important to canvass teacher views and Steve Godwin has been asked to do this and this could be a cross phase and cross Trust activity.

Action

A Governor asked whether student and parent voice have been used to develop work and how has their feedback been used to adjust and adapt going forward.

Dave responded that lots of this has been carried out, with English being a good example of a subject where some tasks have not been emphasised as much as quizzes and some of the heavy subjects have adapted and changed how they engage with students. Dave added that at KS3 they have lots of great responses to feedback, but it is more difficult at KS4 because of the content and model.

The Head added that offspring learning came from parent voice and they have created youth clubs and catch ups, which have been run by the Year Leaders. The Head commented that without student and parent feedback, they would not be where they are now. They have adapted and improved the online provision, which can from the first lockdown and it would have been negligent for them not to use this evidence.

45/21 **2021 GCSE Exam Assessment arrangements – Exam Board Arrangements and Processes**

Dave Gill said that he was hoping to be able to share how assessments will happen this year, but they are still without this information at the current time. There were 100,000 responses to the consultation process, but they haven't heard yet what the outcome of the consultation will be and believe that this will just be a general direction of travel.

Dave presented a table on what they know, what they are assuming and what they don't know in relation to the 2021 GCSE assessments and commented that they do know that they will be producing grades and because there is no 'mark' against Cantell, they will be trusted to submit in June, but they don't know how this will happen and whether they will be allowed to share predicted grades with students. Dave said although he wants to be open and honest with students, he doesn't want to raise their hopes. Dave added that they believe there will be many assessments by exam boards, which they will probably use and that they will be provided with good guidance on how to use them.

GCSE results will be issued early August and they think that appeals will come to the school and then via the exam board if the result isn't agreed with. What they don't know is what measures will be in place against national grade inflation, but they hope to get clear guidance from the exam boards, so there is breadth and depth across the curriculum. Dave added that he hopes they will get this guidance shortly.

Dave informed Governors that there is a separate consultation for BTEC and vocational subjects.

Dave commented that in all of this uncertainty, Governors need to be reassured that they have been putting plans in place so they are best foot forward for the assessments and as a result have put in place a cycle of assessments to help students get the best grades. Dave pointed out the table outlining two week cycles, which he explained is a window of opportunity to put students in the best place to produce the best work up to Easter. Dave added that they are now working on identifying the key assessment pieces of work, tasks and key elements and other subjects to provide this key evidence base.

A Governor commented that this is a good plan and gives a good structure. One question for current Year 11 students is, is there any announcement due about the retake of exams in the summer, like last year, as 60% of those who took resits, got a higher grade and there may be some appetite for this. Year

10 have also gone through a hard time and are now part way through their GCSE year – will there be any changes to their GCSE exams next year and what will they be. Dave responded that he doesn't know anything yet about the November exams, but it wouldn't surprise him if there is one and it wouldn't surprise him if there is an improvement in grades, although this doesn't mean that teachers have predicted the grades incorrectly, it shows that students were only revising for a couple of subjects to re-sit. Dave added that he doesn't see why they wouldn't offer this opportunity. In relation to Year 10, Dave said that he can only say that there may be a taper off in 2/3 years, in terms of concession, because they might say that they have covered a two year course, but for some five year courses, there will be some catch up, but he can see this being dissipated over time.

Another Governor asked whether Dave is sure about the data at the moment and how does this sit in with transition into 6th Form. Could this turn into more stress for teachers. Dave responded that this is a huge challenge and it was also a huge challenge for 6th Form last year. It was highly disruptive last year, and will be difficult again this year, but they have significant support for Year 11 and are preparing students as much as they can for college.

A Governor asked whether the mock exams planned for March are going to be in all subjects. Dave responded that they will be called assessment activities and it is not about trying to examine the breadth of a course, they want the opportunity to bank the evidence in an environment where they can show what can be done with an evidence base that can be recorded. Dave said that he doesn't want students getting anxious about mock exams, so they will be doing a number of pieces of work, towards an assessment. Whilst students will get anxious, they step up when they go into an exam hall, so they may need to think about doing some of these assessment in exam conditions.

The Head added that it is very important that this is the message given to students to reassure them that they will be set off in the right direction – it is about being more nuanced in our communication. Dave added that he was hoping to give students this information, but until it is factually correct from the DfE, he won't.

46/21 **Governor Appointment/Reappointment**

- a) Reappointment
Governors APPROVED the reappointment of Deb Sutton for a further four year term of office, back dated to the 7th December 2020. Governors also AGREED a change of Category from LA to Co-opted Governor.
- b) Appointment
Governors APPROVED the appointment of Matt Bunday as an Associate Governor for a four year term of office, commencing on the 4th March 2021.

47/21 **Policies**

Governors APPROVED the following policies:

- Admissions Policy for the academic year 2022/23.
- Careers Guidance Policy.

48/21 **Head Update**

The Head reported that the first thing Governors need to know is that he is really pleased to have unconditional support from staff for coming back to school, because they are essentially educators and agree that children only have one chance at education. Equally important is the balance between work, home life and staff morale, because the last thing he wants is exhausted, stressed and demotivated staff coming

back into school to teach and he hopes to welcome students back to a warm, welcoming school.

The Head informed Governors that not all year groups will return at once, as there will be a safety first approach and rather than all students returning at the same time, there will be a slightly staggered return to school from the 8th March, with Year 11 returning on the Monday, Year 10 on the Tuesday etc., until all students are back in on Thursday 11th March. The Head added that this will give them an opportunity to test students and in terms of formal measures, he has been really pleased up to this point and has had a walk around school with the H&S manager and site team arranged for next week, to test arrangements against the Risk Assessment and to see if there is anything that needs changing. The Head commented that this might seem draconian, but there are a lot of things that are working to their benefit.

The Head explained that he spoke to Debbie Chase from SCC this afternoon and she confirmed that cases in Southampton are coming down, but they are not resting on their laurels, as they still don't understand how the new variants will respond and how much of it is in the community and as such, strict control measures will still be maintained. The Head added that the key change for controls measures that are being introduced, is the introduction all students must wear face coverings at all times in school, but he is really confident that this move will not be a significant issue or a challenge for students, but understands that wearing masks is a challenge for long periods of time. Students will therefore be allowed two separate periods of time to take their masks off during a lesson, when no one will speak and also during social times, when students are 2m away from each other, or eating.

A Parent Governor asked about break times outside. The Head confirmed that students will be outside for break, in their zones and if they are eating and drinking, they can take their masks off.

Asymptomatic Testing

The Head informed Governors that students and staff will do a saliva test before returning to school and a schedule will be set up for this allowing a two day gap to give time for the results to be returned before return. To make this easier, three different collection points have been organised across the city. The Head added that they would like to use the saliva testing as the asymptomatic testing option for Cantell School, although the Government have said schools must use the LFD testing, twice weekly at home. The Head has contacted the DfE about this, as he feels it will impact on the participation rates of the saliva tests and students saying they have done it at home, when they haven't.

The Head explained that yesterday he discussed with Keith Godfrey and Debbie Chase the potential of our students being part of a single saliva test pilot and not relying on the LFD tests. The Head then went to the Deputy Chief Director of the DfE, who responded positively some of the Wave 1A schools will be included, in a pilot, so it can be rolled out across Southampton, Hampshire and the IOW. This will result in more control of testing and more confidence in the participation rates, The Head will update Governors on how this goes.

Head

Curriculum

The Head commented that he has been incredibly proud of how staff and students have adapted to online learning. This has not just happened at Cantell, but by working closely with other schools in the city and across the Trust.

Laptops

The Head explained that they have explored every possible avenue to get laptops and colleagues at Cantell have done a great job, chasing grants and receiving donated laptops. Governors NOTED that Deloitte, who the school has worked with

in the past, donated £8,000 for laptops and they have worked with organisation to make sure every student can work online. The Head added that after lockdown, the question will be how we can use what we've learn to develop homework and work in school, as we have seen some students who are quiet in school, come alive in a more reactive way with their teachers online and the challenge will be how to replicate this when we are back in.

Progress Weeks

The Head informed Governors that the virtual Progress Weeks have been very successful on the platform they have been using, focusing on what parents want to hear. Robust work will be carried out to see if this is something we want to continue with.

Next week is the launch of the National Careers Weeks with NatWest, with organisations talking about how they work pre, during and post pandemic. This is to inspire students and to inspire them to know that this is open for them and to advise what skills they need to develop.

Year 11 and Pastoral Care

The Head said that Governors have heard from the leads of these areas today and can see that we are not standing back waiting, we are questioning what might be coming out that we can use when we are ready.

The Year Leaders have been incredible and the Head said that he is happy with the conversations with students and families and the checks that have taken place.

Rewards

There has been a big change to how to keep the school community alive and rewards have been a big part of this. 60,000 House Points have been rewarded, which have all had to be put on by staff, which takes time, but staff wanted to do this. One of the rewards with 'Family Film Night and the Head said it was good to see pictures of families enjoying this.

Extra-Curricular –

The Head said that it was great to see everyone participating in the Extra-Curricular activities, with 56 different Extra-Curricular challenges taking place for students to participate in. 56 prizes were awarded for winning entries and 17 virtual clubs are now available to students, with more having started after half term. The first Cantell virtual disco, organised by House Leaders on the last day of term, was also very successful.

49/21 **Chair Update**

The Chair commented that the school has been doing a fantastic job and the work staff do is phenomenal. The Chair has continued to meet with the Head on a regular basis and she keeps an eye on what is going on.

The Chair will also be meeting with new staff this week and will let Governors know how she gets on.

50/21 **Any Other Business**

a) Finance

The Vice Chair and Chair of the Finance Committee reported that he has been meeting monthly with the School Business Manager, to keep an eye on the finances, as they are very different at the current time. The School Business Manager is doing his usual good work and they had discussed laptops and

credit to the School Business Manager and his team, they are continuing to get the numbers of laptops required. Thank you to the School Business Manager for all he is doing in keeping things ticking over. The laptops will have a knock on affect and will be of benefit to the school.

Action

The Vice Chair said in terms of testing, he has been volunteering at another school and agrees that LFD tests should be avoided if we can, especially students doing them at home and Cantell should continue with saliva tests.

The Vice Chair requested that the Head's letters to parents be forwarded to those Governors that don't receive them because they aren't parents, because the amount of information provided is very useful and valuable for Governors to see.

Clerk

Another Governor added that she follows the school on social media and wants to praise the school for keeping the communication going and for the work of the team at this difficult time – it is high quality communication work.

51/21 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 28th April 2021, 5.30 p.m. via zoom. .

That concluded the business of the meeting.
The meeting ended at 7.50 p.m.

Action

Page No	Minute No	Action Point	Responsibility	Deadline
1.	41/21	Chair to update Governors on how meetings with new staff went.	Chair	Next meeting
9.	48/21	Head to update Governors on how the testing process has gone.	Head	Next meeting
10.	50/21	The Clerk to send the Head's latest letter to Governors for information.	Clerk	Complete

