

Cantell School
Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting
held on Wednesday 2nd November 2022, 5.30 p.m., via Teams

Present:

Glynis Alexander (Chair)
Julian Bryant
Matt Bunday
John Draper
Peter Hilditch (Meeting Chair)
Nicola Hunt
Harry Kutty (Head)
Deb Sutton (left at 7.30 p.m.)

In Attendance:

Dave Gill, Assistant Headteacher
Ian Creswell, Deputy Headteacher
Rachel Bridges, SENCO
Michelle Burt, Clerk to Governors

Apologies:

None

Absent:

Caroline Humphries

13/23 Chair of the Meeting Action

Governors NOTED that although present, the Chair is feeling unwell, so the Vice Chair agreed to Chair the meeting on her behalf.

14/23 Declaration Pecuniary or Business Interests

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

15/23 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 14th September 2022

Governors APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th September 2022 as a true record of the meeting, which were SIGNED accordingly by the Chair.

16/23 Matters Arising

02/25 Safeguarding Case

It was AGREED that the Clerk would speak to Mark Bagust to ask him to look at the safeguarding case, outlined in the last meeting and ask him to liaise with Ian Creswell. Mark will then write a short report for Governor's information.

Clerk

02/23 Safeguarding Training Catch up

Only one Governor hasn't completed their Safeguarding Training – to be followed up

02/23 Work of the Pastoral Team

A letter from the Vice Chair to the Pastoral Team has now been distributed to the team.

08/23 Annual Paperwork Return

The Clerk advised that only one Governor hadn't completed their Annual Paperwork return and it was AGREED that the Chair and Vice Chair would follow this up.

Chair & VC

The Head said that Governors will have read in the SEF about the young people they focus on who are SEND and SEMH and how they access the provision. The Head added that for the last few months he has been Line Managing SEND, which he is thoroughly enjoying, and he is working closely with Rachel Bridges the SENCo. The Head informed Governors that SEND is a priority at Cantell and Rachel Bridges is recognised as a leading light in the city.

Governors welcomed Rachel Bridges to the meeting, who presented a powerpoint outlining the vision for SEND at Cantell.

Rachel explained that 18% of students at Cantell are classed as SEND, and within this there are 53 students with SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health), identified as a primary need. Rachel added that these students are a key priority for the school, including their outcomes and attendance.

Governors NOTED that the three main groups in SEMH are:

- ADHD
- Mental health or emotional need.
- School based anxiety – attendance.

Rachel informed Governors that attendance for SEND students is lower than it should be, which is mostly due to school-based anxiety and as a result, they are supported back into school

All SEND students have a detailed support plan, with strategies to help them learn, which are used by all staff who work with students with SEND. Rachel informed Governors that these plans are updated across the year and staff share any strategies, which are added to the plan.

SEND students are supported in numerous ways, including using effective strategies, making students with SEMH a priority for check ins after whole class teaching, LSA support, Student Voice and cut aways. Rachel explained that not all students have LSA support in class, but her team support lessons and have allocated students, but also have the class list, so they can check in on SEMH students – they will also feedback to the teacher.

Rachel informed Governors, that outside of the classroom, SEND students are able to use the Hub, but students with SEMH are also able to use a small room for exams, if they are anxious, or require extra support and they are also able to use a Time Out pass if they need to. SEMH students can also use a room in the Hub for drop ins and this is a particularly good area for students who struggle to come into school and only attend one or two lessons a day to build up their timetable.

Rachel explained that they are also able to provide support from different agencies, such as the school Mental Health team, who provide one to one, or small group sessions around anxiety and No Limits come into school regularly for lunch and break time drop ins and one to one session. Rachel added that they also liaise with CAMHs, with Jo Pringle as the main contact. CAMHs also provide on to one sessions around subjects such as anger and how to regulate emotions.

Rachel informed Governors that Learning 2 Learn (formerly CAP), is for students with SEMH or communication difficulties, emotional anger and emotional dysregulation where they are able to attend one to one sessions for their particular needs. Rachel

added that if students come out of Learning 2 Learn, they go back into mainstream through the Hub.

Action

Rachel informed Governors about the work they have been doing with Vermont School, which involved her going over to Vermont to have a look at their primary based programme, which looks at communication difficulties, emotional resilience and other topics. This programme for Year 5 & 6 can be adapted for Years 7 & 8 and maybe Year 9 to help with their school development following the pandemic.

The Vice Chair asked who makes the decision to classify students as SEMH and SEND – who makes this decision? Rachel responded that this is decided around the four different categories within SEND and staff have guidance around who fits into these categories – Rachel will meet with the Learning 2 Learn Lead and the Emotional Wellbeing Lead to decide what a student's needs are and what category they are. Governors NOTED that if a student has a ADHD diagnosis they will go straight on the SEMH list.

The Vice Chair said that Rachel mentioned 'step in and step back' and 'cut away's' – is this used across the school for all students, or just specifically for SEMH. Rachel responded that she knows that a lot of teaching areas use these techniques for students and it is used across the school for students' teachers know will struggle with certain subjects. The main priority is for SEND students.

A Governor said that Rachel had mentioned that 18% of students are SEND and there are 53 SEMH student, and asked if this picture is very different to pre-Covid – and if so, is there a funding and resources implications to this. Rachel responded that they have seen an increase and a lot of students have come up from primary with these needs. In relation to funding, this does have an impact because they need to support as many students as possible, but the work outside the classroom, such as with MHT is from a pilot they were part of. Rachel added that this is why she is now looking at alternatives, such as Vermont.

The Head commented that funding is a real challenge, but they are committed to make sure there is funding in the pot for students with SEMH. The Head explained about students with emotional dysregulation, which is a condition staff were not aware of, as a result an excellent Educational Psychologist came into school on the last Inset day and spoke to staff about these students

The Head asked Rachel about a Student Voice she carried out about checking in and what the student's response was. Rachel explained that one of the students said that he notices that teachers come to him regularly to check that he understands. Students seemed to be happy with this process.

A Governor said that his concern as a Governor is that there is a lot of extra work going on and how sustainable is this. The Head responded that it all depends on what your budgets and funding are. The Head agreed that there are challenging times ahead.

Rachel Bridges informed Governors that Support Plans can be very positive and they are updated regularly and she regularly attending the Pastoral briefing to update staff on the plans and what will make a key difference for these young people.

The Head commented that they have seen a real push and a buzz around SEND students and he is grateful to Rachel and her team. A briefing for SEND champions was held today with staff from each Faculty area and they will go back to champion the SEND students from their faculties. The Head added that these members of staff, who

don't have additional responsibilities and are less experienced are going out on Learning Walks and feel they are taking a leading role, which is really heartening.

A Governor said she was going to ask about staffing – she came in a couple of weeks ago for her English link visit and met Clark Gillam the Deputy SENCo. She asked Rachel if she had noticed a difference in support for students. Rachel responded that the Champions are sharing good practice, which is definitely making a difference and staff are taking on board the check in and checking back. **Action**

Rachel informed Governors that there are other students who haven't received a SEND diagnosis, but there is a referral process and information online with different strategies for staff to use. Rachel added that since September there have been around 215 referrals, which shows that staff are looking at particular students who may need additional support.

The Vice Chair said that this is fantastic and that he is due in school on Friday for his link visit in the SEND department and it will be interesting to see all of this in action. The Vice Chair added that it has been great to hear all of this and he thanked Rachel for her time.

18/23 Exclusion, Attendance and Bullying Update

Attendance

Ian informed Governors that the key message for students this year is that they need to come in to school, even if they feel unwell, which has been a shock because the message during Covid was to stay at home.

Ian provided comparison attendance figures for Governors, from 2017, through Covid and to date, which are above the national average. Ian explained that just before Covid, there had been a Norovirus outbreak, which had a big impact around the city affecting attendance figures. Attendance then took a big hit during the Covid Lockdowns, but the good news is that attendance is now considerably above other schools, who are struggling to get students back in class.

Ian informed Governors that attendance is now at 93%, just under 90% for SEN students and just under this for FSM students. Ian added that the national average is 92% and Cantell has increased attendance where others have dropped.

Ian explained that authorised absence is a bit below the average and unauthorised matches the national picture. SEN students are a bit lower than national, but is focused on every day and there is a programme in place to support these students.

A Governor asked what strategies had been changed after lockdown, and how are they managing attendance difference than before. Ian responded that before lockdown they were very bullish about attendance, which had to change during Covid. They have now gone back to pre-Covid strategies, but it is taking a lot more work to get students out of the habit of working from home.

From the 1st December a new Attendance Officer will be in place, who will be working with Ian and Michelle Stocker with the students who have difficulty coming into school – the will be a challenge, but other schools are also saying they are having issues with people taking three days off instead of one.

The Head said that the analysis of attendance at Cantell is more than forensic and they look at whole school SEN, SEMH, boys and girls. SLT are then able to be really clear on trends and what happens on a daily basis. The Head added that the SLT and

Pastoral team have their own year groups to manage and are able to pin point issues and explain in a strategic way, what has been put in place to deal with any issues.

The Vice Chair asked whether the attendance strategy is now different about being in school – if some couldn't come in, but was attending online is this ok. Are there any grey areas for attendance, or do students need to be in school? Ian responded that the only online attendance that counts would be when a member of staff is present, teaching the class. The only other online attendance that would also count would be someone attending the hospital school – it has to be a proper educational provision – it cannot be a student choosing to work from home.

Behaviour

Ian explained that a permanent exclusion is always a last resort for a student and they do everything they can to keep students at Cantell, but sometimes there is no option. The Head added that any permanent exclusions have had a definite link to the health & safety and learning of other students.

Ian commented that most Governors have now sat on a panel and will have seen the rigorous process for themselves. Ian outlined the permanent exclusion figures, commenting that the highest number of permanent exclusions was 3 in the Covid year, and so far during 2023/24, there has only been one, with another being processed.

External Suspension

Ian explained that external suspensions at Cantell are below national figures. Other schools have seen a spike in behaviour since Covid, but this has not happened at Cantell, where there has only been a 1% increase in this time. Ian informed Governors that behaviour they have seen includes issues around social media and sexual misconduct, both of which they are working on.

Internal Suspension

Ian explained that internal suspensions are now used differently and previous to 2018, students would have just received behaviour points – there is now a formal process in place, with letters sent to parents and reintegration meetings held.

Ian explained that total numbers so far for the current year are higher than the previous year, which is a result of Covid. There are 55 repeat offenders, but Ian commented that they come down hard on these students and much of them are due to a vaping explosion, which took place prior to Easter.

Ian pointed out the PP code, which is physical assault and RA, racial abuse. Ian explained that they have spent three years getting students to realise that this type of behaviour is not on.

A Governor asked if there were any issues with reintegration when students were back to large numbers in school. Ian responded that there were some students who wanted to be at home, this was mainly 16 students on the SEN register who had struggled the most, and it has taken nearly a year to get them back into school. **The same Governor asked if this is now working its way out of the system and whether Ian is confident that those students mainly working at home will be ok.** Ian responded that they will be ok.

Bullying

Ian reported that Year Leaders deal with any bullying issues, which aren't a regular issue and if it continues, will then be dealt with by the SLT link for the Year group. If it then isn't resolved, it will go to the Head or himself.

Ian explained that there are different types of bullying, with a number of perpetrators in different year group. Last year there were 12 incidents caused by 13 perpetrators. This year students have been put on a monitoring list and these students are getting additional support from their Year Leader and SLT. The vast majority of cases lead to internal suspensions.

Ian informed Governors that they make sure that students know what bullying is and they hold anti-bullying week in school.

19/23 **GCSE Outcomes 2022 and Action Plan fit for the Future**

GCSE Results 2022

Dave explained that they use a system called SYSRA, that half the schools in the country use to provide predicated grades, which are usually accurate. The figures that are uploaded to the system are based on the results from results day and don't include any remarks. Dave added that if remarks were included, the figure wouldn't change much, although we have had some successful remarks.

Dave informed Governors of the following:

- The LA average score for state funded schools is -0.18. Cantell's LA average is -0.45.
- Cantell has the 2nd lowest KS2 scores in the city
- Cantell has the 3rd highest P8 score in Southampton (out of 12 mainstream)
- Cantell's P8 is in the 16th percentile nationally.

Dave commented that the P8 for English has improved to -0.16 and is the best it has been, Maths is great and the highest in the whole of Hampshire. Dave added that there is still work to do in English, although the quality of teaching is really good. Dave also explained that the figures for Science, Humanities and Languages are shown as Value Added, which is the same as P8.

Governors noted that the VA for Languages is high because of the great provision, but this also includes grades that are for home languages, which skew the figures slightly, but this is still a good result for Languages.

Students staying in Education, Employment or Training

Dave explained that the Post 16 Destination data lags by two years, and the latest figures available are for the cohort that left in 2020. 80% of students in this cohort stayed at college after the first two terms.

Dave informed Governors that the LA's figures for 2020 are 95%, as of the end of November with 1% in employment or training. Dave said they now need to do some more unpicking to see what happened to the remaining percentage of students – they could have gone back to their home countries, or moved to a different college.

EBACC

Dave informed Governors that the DfE has a real aspiration to push the EBACC. Cantell has a different approach that Governors need to be aware of. Dave explained that 97% of students nationally study an EBACC qualification.

Dave read through the EBACC outline for Governor information and explained why the Government think EBACC is important and what its impact is. Dave added that Universities now disagree with this and there is no university that insists on students having to have a completed EBACC to enter.

Dave said that at Cantell they need to manage the quality and guidance for their students and parents on EBACC, but still allowing choice. They think they have got

the right balance with EBACC, with the process starting in Year 9 when they discuss the merits of the qualification and support students in choosing the right path, which isn't necessarily EBACC.

Dave added that this isn't particularly the case for EAL students, who already have a lot of language skills and who wouldn't gain any benefit from taking another language, as they get this experience through learning English. Dave outlined some examples of students who didn't take the EBACC because they were wanted to study alternatives and who still got excellent results and were able to follow what they wanted to Post 16.

Dave said to summarise, a lot of the DofE's motivation with EBACC is to open the door to FE and he agrees with this, but they do not feel that students studying EBACC and achieving a Grade 3 will open doors, but a good 4 or 5 pass will.

The Vice Chair commented that his children did a combination of subjects, but there was no discussion about EBACC – this is what their choices were and he saw it as a combination of subjects. The Head responded that there is an EBACC pathway and there are other choices they can give young people in regards to the next steps. They are not saying that every student needs to do the EBACC, as it is not right for all young people.

The Staff Governor commented that he is fully onboard with the way the school approaches EBACC, his question is whether the Government are onboard with it. The Head responded that there are a number of things to make them more optimistic, such as the Prime Minister being in-line with schools and the new appointment of the School's Minister, Gillian Keegan.

A Governor asked if a student wanted to study EBACC and they could potentially get a Grade 1, would you support this. Dave responded that they would absolutely support this as they don't want to close any doors to anybody. They teach students who want to study subjects because they enjoy them and the only thing they might do, is to talk to the student to say that they may be able to bank course work in some subjects, but in others the emphasis will be on exams.

The Vice Chair said that from a parent's point of view he totally agrees with this approach and the process.

A Governor said that you should be rightly proud of the breadth of subjects offered at Cantell. He appreciates that teacher recruitment is more challenging than in the past – are there any subjects you have had to stop, because you can't recruit teachers. The Head responded that they are no subjects that they have had to stop. They have had trouble recruiting to Computer Studies, but they have got some member of Maths, who they are training to do this subject and they are enjoying it.

The Head added that in the past they had a Cover Supervisor with a Technology background and Brian Lightman made a point about this in the SEF as he felt that they weren't celebrating enough that they are fully staffed in the majority of areas.

20/23 **Overview of Developments in History and CPSD**

The Head reported that unfortunately Claire Herridge was unable to attend due to sickness, but the item would be carried forward to the next meeting.

**Agenda
7.12.22**

The Head said in terms of CPSD, there are areas that they have been asked to work on in the context of an excellent school and they want to focus a bit more on the clarity of the content and vision of History and how it is sequenced as they are not quite doing what they say they will. History remains a popular subject, but in terms of other

subjects and where they are going and how they are getting there, it needs to be looked at. The Head added that they now have a new Head of History, who is really passionate and who has already started.

The Head added that they are meeting the regulations, but there is so many more opportunities for debate, which will help move this on.

21/23 **Brian Lightman Visit – September 2022**

Governors NOTED the report of Brian Lightman's visit on the 29th September. The Head drew Governors to the final paragraph on the last page of the report.

The Vice Chair said on behalf of Governors, it is very encouraging to see another positive report from Brian and it has been remarkable how consistent he has been throughout his time at the school.

Action

A Governor asked the Head whether he had any numbers for next year's Year 7.

The Head responded that they had received 550 online applications and this should rise to 600. They don't know the choices yet, but interestingly, last year was a boom year and the last in primary. The Head then read out the percentages of children who had applied to Cantell from individual Aspire Trust Schools.

The same Governor commented that it this is really positive where you see the growth in areas that wouldn't necessarily opt for Cantell in the past. The Head responded that this is good news, but he is slightly anxious that students from Trust Schools further out will not be able to get in now.

22/23 **Policies for Approval**

Governors APPROVED the following policies:

- SEND Policy & Information Report
- Behaviour Policy
- Medical Needs Policy
- Admissions Policy

The Chair pointed out that in the Behaviour policy, Prefects are mentioned. It was AGREED that this be changed to 'Community Champions'.

23/23 **Headteacher Update**

The Head reported that he has recently carried out two inspections after taking the decision during the pandemic not to do any – he has enjoyed getting back into schools.

The Head has also carried out some Student Voice meetings and has sent a report to staff with the results. The Head said that he carried out two Student Voice meetings, one for boys, the other girls and the students were happy to talk to him and said they feel safe going to lessons and enjoy being at Cantell. The Head read out his report that he sent to staff.

The Head said overall the students rating of their school experience was:

Girls: 7.3/10

Boys: 7.5/10

The students chosen were totally random and overall, the Head said that he is really pleased with the student voice and has some potential actions to follow up with colleagues. The Head added that based on this student voice, who aren't top set students, there is not much more they need to do. There were some really interesting

characters and it was a good mix of students and very representative of where they are as a school.

The Head informed Governors that he is really pleased with the number of on-time applications for next year. Open Evening was really strong, and they have had two weeks of parent being able to drop in to look round the school – he believes that parents really value the openness and transparency. There has been a significant culture change for Cantell, with students wanting to be here.

The Head said that he met with Julian Bryant, who is also the school's union representative and they spoke about a number of different things and about the positiveness and openness around school. The Head added that they are in a good place and staff work a little bit harder because they like it at Cantell. Staff in turn are rewarded and looked after by the best SLT that they can have. The Head said that he is pleased that Governors can be reassured that whilst we will keep pushing them, this is for the young people in our care.

Action

The Vice Chair if the Head asked all the questions in the Student Voice. The Head confirmed he did and that he asked them to be really honest with him and to test him.

The Vice Chair said that the openness and the offer for parents to drop in and see how the school is running is something that needs to continue, as it is at the heart of the application process. The Head said that they will never stop doing what got them where they are and going out to the Primary schools to talk about what we do at Cantell is something he really values and enjoys. The journey they have been on is very important and they now just need to deliver on everything.

24/23 **Chair Update**

The Chair explained that she had met with Russ Grant, the Head of PE and Andy Paterson for IAG and Careers.

Russ updated the Chair on their plans in for PE, following their meeting last year, which they are continuing to work on in PE as a team, which is fantastic. They are also learning the new BTEC syllabus on the job and they meet every week to talk and support each other. The Chair added that it was a really positive meeting with Russ and he told her that he wants to stay at Cantell because he has never been in a place where he can do what he wants to do whilst still being monitored.

They also had a conversation about the younger children not being able to swim because of Covid and because swimming lessons are really expensive. The University is allowing them to use their swimming pool, which is in walking distance. The Chair commented that this is a particular problem for EAL students, and Russ is keen to make sure that all students at Cantell are able to save themselves in water. The Chair added that the range of thing they do in PE is fantastic and they now have girls playing football, rugby and cricket – it is really important that girls get a chance to do these sports.

The Chair informed Governors that she got a really positive feel from Russ about where the Department is going and what they are now offering is fantastic.

The Chair said she also met with Andy Paterson about IAG and Careers and he told her that he had sent an email to staff, thanking them for their support so far this year. The Chair asked him questions on Destinations from last year, which he said he would send he also said he would send information on Work Experience.

The Head said for the minutes, was the Chair saying that the lead for IAG and Careers, wasn't able to show the clarity she expected. The Chair responded that she doesn't feel much has changed from last year. He has done a good job with careers, but she doesn't think he had a handle on the information she wanted to know.

Head

It was AGREED that the Head would provide an update for Governors on IAG and Careers at the next meeting in December.

25/23 Any Other Business

a) Governor Visit Reports

Nicola Hunt provided a report on her recent Subject Link visit to the English Department, which included:

- A fruitful meeting with the Joint Faculty Leaders, Sarah Iles and Pru Scott
- Meeting with the rest of the English team.
- Being hosted around the department by Sarah & Pru to see a lot of Year 11 classes for a Learning Walk and Lesson Observation.
- Going through texts and seeing that many teachers were going over revision teaching and how to plan.
- Visited some classes with Hayley Sheath and seeing post it notes and discussions around the post it notes.
- Speaking to some ECT and in particular Esther about the Reading Buddies, which was very impressive.
- Seeing how the ECT are flourishing from last year and observing Esther and Rob teaching.
- Discussion in the Library about the space.
- Meeting the new Ukrainian Library Assistant.
- Talking about having a book amnesty to get some books back.
- Discussed new text such as Noughts and Crosses.

Nicola said that the key things for the Governing Body to be aware of are:

- The need to engage with parents more.
- Encouraging students to read.
- Improving reading levels.
- The Launch of the Reading Ambassadors.

Nicola added that she would love to return to see how the Buddy system is working and to talk to Vicki Foster about the Literacy programme.

The Head thanked Nicola for giving up so much of her time and asked in general terms, things a person would see, what was the behaviour like and were students off task.

Nicola responded that she hadn't seen any off-task behaviour and students were very engaged. Students didn't feel particular uncomfortable being asked questions and some teachers had a lovely way of encouraging girls.

Nicola added that she also saw a deaf student using sign language with her LSA, and they were working well together. Students just got on with their work and she didn't see any off-task behaviour in any of the lessons. They didn't seem to be bothered that she was there and she liked the way staff worked together and supported each other.

The Vice Chair said that it was really good that Nicola got to see students in a more school setting and got a chance to interact with staff in their own environment. It is really important and a good way to gauge staff morale and how they interact with each other out of the classroom.

The Vice Chair added that this also reinforces the Chair's encouragement to participate in our own subject link Learning Walks.

The Head said that it is really lovely for Governors to see what they hear about in Governor meetings and the strategies that are in place for young people. Governors play an important role in the school and he urged them to come in as much as possible.

b) Parent Governor

Governors NOTED that one of the Parent Governors had been removed from the Governing Body.

26/23 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 7th December 2023, 5.30 p.m.

That concluded the business of the meeting. The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

Page No	Minute Number	Item	By Whom	By When
7.	20/23	Overview of Developments in History and CPSD – agenda item for next meeting.	C. Herridge	7/12/22
9.	24/23	The Head to provide an update on IAG and Careers	Head	7/12/22