

Cantell School
Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting
held on Wednesday 20th September 2023

Present:

Harry Kutty (Head)
Glynis Alexander (Chair)
Emma Bradshaw
Matt Bunday (arrived 6.05 p.m.)
Julian Bryant
John Draper
John Groves
Peter Hilditch
Nicola Hunt

In Attendance:

Ian Creswell (Deputy Headteacher)
Dave Gill (Assistant Headteacher)
Michelle Stocker (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
Michelle Burt (Clerk to Governors)

Apologies:

Caroline Humphries

Safeguarding Training

Governors completed their annual safeguarding training at the start of the meeting.

01/24 Declaration Pecuniary or Business Interests

Action

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

02/24 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7th July 2023

Governors APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on the 7th July 2023 as a true record of the meeting, which were SIGNED accordingly by the Chair.

03/24 Governor Resignation

Governors NOTED that due to work load in her own school, the Chair had sadly accepted Deb Sutton's resignation as a Governor.

04/24 Matters Arising

82/23 Anonymised Safeguarding study

Agenda item for the WGB meeting on the 8th November.

**Agenda
Item
8/11/23**

83/23 Relationship Education and RSE Policy

Governors APPROVED the amended Relationship Education and RSE Policy.

88/23 Chair – Letter of thanks to staff

The Chair confirmed that she has sent a thank you note to staff from the WGB.

91/23 Virtual Attendance at Meetings

Governors NOTED the information provided on virtual attendance at meetings, which they discussed.

A Governor suggested that more guidance on the environment when attending a meeting virtually is needed and perhaps more of a statement about when Governors shouldn't attend a meeting virtually, such as if children are present.

Action

It was agreed that Emma Bradshaw would review the information and produce a policy for Governors to approve at the next meeting.

Agenda
Item
8/11/23

A Governor commented that it is important, when dates have been advised in advance, for Governors to organise their lives around meetings and that it should also be pointed out that face to face attendance is preferred and Governors should only attend virtually for an important reason.

The Chair of the Finance Committee commented that virtual meetings have worked really well for Finance and Staffing, but this was down to Keith Pinney's good planning – they might however decide for the first few meetings to attend in person. The Head suggested that Sarah Bradshaw, the new School Business Manager be asked to have a brief meeting with the Chairs of the Finance and Staffing Committees to plan how this is going to work.

PH &
MB

A member of the Finance Committee commented that they will need an extra Governor to join Finance & Staffing with the resignation of Deb Sutton. The Head said that he will look for a Finance Governor.

Head

05/24 Results 2023

Dave Gill presented the GCSE results for 2023, commenting that at the current time the results are still provisional and he will be able to provide more detail at the next meeting.

Remarks are still taking place and marking has been better and more accurate this year. Dave added that there are two types of remark, the first for students who are close to a grade and others where they feel there has been an error – although there has been very few due to error this year.

As a result of the remarks, 17 have gone up and although they are still looking to see if there are any more, as the success rate goes down, they will start reigning it in quickly.

A Governor commented that remarks are down on last year. Dave agreed, adding that they have however had more success this year – they do one remark at a time and if it is successful, they might submit another paper for the student.

The Head explained to Governors that the school shoulders the cost for the remarks because it is all about the future success of these students and because it is the right thing to do. If the chances of success are further away and the parents want to do it, they are asked for the money, after a conversation.

Dave informed Governors that they had the first set of straight 9s this year, with a student getting 10 of them. Another student, who is Ukrainian also got really good grades and an SEN students individual Progress 8 may be around +4.

Headlines

Dave explained that 2019 was the last real set of results, with the previous two years being inflated by half a grade. 2023 is up on 2019 and also 2022.

Dave commented that the HPA students were still a priority and 4+ and 5+ were also up for a year group that were below average on entry. The Head added that according to LA data, Cantell is placed third or fourth last for attainment in the city.

A Governor asked whether 5+ English and Maths are difficult to predict, or were you very cautious. Dave responded that it's not difficult to predict in these subjects, but English did better than expected. This is a small number of marks, but these students performed better at 5+ than predicted.

Results Overview for 2023

- 7+ En and Ma – 13.1% (12%)
- 5+ En and MA – 41.0% (34%)
- 4+ En and Ma – 63.8% (63%)

Governors NOTED that Average Attainment 8 for 2023 is predicted at 4.50, which is down on the previous year. Progress 8 is likely to be around +0.10 to +0.15, which is also a little down on last year. Dave advised Governors that further detail will be available at the next meeting.

Dave commented that Science is down a little, but still very strong and the Foundation subjects are also down a little due to changes in the coursework/exam ratios.

Dave explained about the EBacc (English Baccalaureate), which is all about languages and the emphasis at Cantell on allowing students to choose the subjects they want to do not necessarily those included in the EBacc. One particular student did really well and got a good set of qualifications, only 7 of which will count towards Progress 8. The Head commented that they have given freedom of choice to the young people at Cantell, with guidance to allow them to make the right choices. The Head added that they will not manipulate the school's options process because it is all about the students and what they want, to do to help them get on with their careers.

Dave informed Governors that it is worth remembering that this year's cohort were Year 8 in lockdown, which wasn't a great experience for them – there has now been an upturn in students taking languages because they are enjoying it more.

Priorities for 2023/24

1. 95% bums on seats. Dave said that it doesn't matter what else they do, attendance is the most important. The national picture is below pre-Covid and the aim is to drive attendance up. Dave added that students seem to be buying into the examples of what they can achieve with over 95% attendance.

WGB
Agenda

The Head explained that staff adjust and go above and beyond in reviewing and thinking out of the box to help students attend and Brian Lightman will be visiting to looking at this area – he will then present to Governors on the affects of positive attendance on young people.

2. Excelling Experts. Dave explained that this is about the higher performing students who had good KS2 results – these are not the highest on intake, but good and we want them to be very good. This group of students sit just below the top group and we want to support them to make the next step in a great journey. Dave added that this is a long-term focus and a whole school initiative.

3. Use the Laser Gun – this is to make sure that the right interventions are targeted on the right students at the right time and is all about knowing what the issues are and putting the support in place and then testing to make sure the students have got it and what can be done next if they haven't.

A Governor said that Dave highlighted the difference between attendance and outcome and asked whether this mainly applies to disadvantaged students – does this mean that disadvantaged students are not attending as well as others. Dave agreed that disadvantaged students do attend less and it is down to the school and parents to get them in as much as they can, but it is a challenge.

The Head explained that there is a challenge from parents who say their child worked well from home in the pandemic and can't see why they can't work from home now. These students however need their teacher in front of them – it is more difficult for them to work from home and students in school make more progress than those not in school.

The Head informed Governors that they are now relooking at the home learning provision and Kat Cox, who leads on Pupil Premium is going to review home learning.

A Governor commented that if they re struggling to get the difference into all kids, and there is a kick back from home – this is the evidence. Dave agreed, adding that they are sharpening up on attendance and how they use it. The Head said they are now at national, but can see how important the extra few % of students coming in will make and will continue to have these conversations.

A Governor asked whether there are any case studies available from other city schools? The Head responded that he wasn't aware of any post pandemic, but pre-pandemic, when he joined Cantell, attendance was at around 87%. The Head said he would try and something post-pandemic.

A Governor commented that the attendance issue is not contained to education – in his workplace it is difficult to get people back into work and this might be why there are difficulties with parents.

The Head informed Governors that there was a lot of sickness in January, February and March and there seems to be a lack of resilience in some students. **The same Governor agreed that there seems to be a difference now when people are ill, as they don't seem to battle on through any more – there is a different culture now in terms of attendance.** Dave Gill added that the real difference is that if a student has one day off, it is like having two, as they have to catch up whilst the others in their class are making progress.

A Governor asked whether most students, who have just taken their GCSEs, have got a place in college or in training. Dave responded that he doesn't have any figures at the current time, but they work really hard in the run up to the summer holidays to help students get a place in college. Andy Paterson and his team, track students into college and are able to identify NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) students to ensure they are getting on ok. They will also ask students whose college place is not working out, to come into school so they can be supported to find a new course.

It was AGREED that information on student Destinations and NEETS be an agenda item for the next meeting in November.

Governors APPROVED the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and the Governor Code of Conduct.

07/24 **Head Update**

The Head reported a good positive start to the new academic year and informed Governors of the following:

- Staff celebrated with last year's Year 11 cohort in August when they collected their results.
- The two days of INSET at the start of term were productive and time spent in the hall was kept to a limit, so staff could have as much time in their faculty areas as possible.
- Key message to staff is that there are no big changes – we are going in the right direction and only need to fine tune.
- Everyone is very much focussed on Active Listening and everything is explained thoroughly to students - there has been a lot of buy in, particular in KS3.
- Work continues on Oracy, which is very important post pandemic, with the focus on discussion, dialogue and challenging each other.
- Fine tuning is important without compromising key areas of learning such as Attack words and checking.
- Segmented learning and checking that young people know what they are learning and what their learning journey is and explaining to students that this is called metacognition and being clear and articulate about their learning and how it connects.
- Attendance is looking in line with National and is well above the start of last year and the strategies in place are already working.
- To support attendance, we have a Wellbeing room run by our Wellbeing Leads, primarily for young people with issues, allowing them to have time out and to support their mental health and wellbeing and encourage positive attendance. To date there have been some students with only 50% attendance who have come in to work in the Wellbeing Hub as a way back into lessons.
- Behaviour is very strong at Cantell and is monitored daily. There has been areas where behaviour is slightly higher, but some children have had six weeks of very little supervision and in some cases, the Head said that we have had to re-instil our values, which takes a little time.
- Outcomes – the Head said that we don't chase P8, but we are above 0 and want to make sure that students are happy with their results and able to progress and in most cases, this happens – results day was really lovely.

Next Steps

The Head said they want to give staff time to settle into the new academic year and start teaching, but also have an eye on what their exam results were and we will support them to make sure our young people get the best results they can.

The Chair asked whether the new Year 7 students have settled in. The Head said that they have settled in really well, with some minor teething problems. There have been some behaviour points, but only around 3 or 4 on a daily basis from around 250 students, which is positive. The Head added that there are more students in Year 7 with an EHCP than in the whole school, which is a challenge and although we know have more LSAs, it is still a challenge.

The Head added that Rachel Bridges (SENCo), is doing a great job with her team and has sent out a letter of introduction to all her parents to her team and she will be holding an SEN Information evening for parents in the next couple of weeks. The Head commented that these young people have needs and it is up to us to meet them.

The Head commented that there were meant to be demonstrations at the Civic Centre today, which he doesn't think went ahead. **The LA Governor said that he is aware that the LA is receiving emails about SEN, which they are responding to.**

The LA Governor attended a meeting at which the Leader of the Council commented on the work of Cantell School art students in the City Art Gallery show 'Creative Connections' (May to Sept 2023), where they collaborated with a local Hampshire based artist to explore portraits of people associated with the city.

08/24 Chair Update

The Chair reported that she visited school on the first day back and completed Safeguarding training with the staff, and then again with new staff, who it was good to meet and welcome.

The Chair said that she has been in again today and spent a period of time walking around and talking to staff – everybody seemed really positive and happy to talk to her about their subjects and their concerns about things. There was a really good feeling from staff on the first day and today, which was lovely.

The Chair said that she will be in again next week to meet with Brian Lightman and she will also catch up with the Safeguarding team and her other link areas. The Head reminded Governors to come in and meet with their link areas,

All

09/24 Any Other Business

Nicola Hunt reported that Emma Bradshaw, herself and a group of other parents, had met up with Joe Tait and Hayley Sheath to look at artificial intelligence – this work is now complete, but Nicola said she isn't sure if this has been rolled out yet.

It was AGREED to put this on the agenda for the November WGB meeting to share this information with Governors

Agenda Item – Nov WGB

10/24 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 8th November 2023, 5.30 p.m.

That concluded the business of the Meeting. The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Page No	Minute Number	Item	By Whom	By When
4.	82/23	Governors to receive an anonymised safeguarding case study.	Head/Ian Creswell	November WGB meeting
2	04/24	Sarah Bradshaw, new SBM to meet with Committee Chairs before the first meetings in November.	SBM	November Finance/Staffing Mtgs
2	04/24	Head to look for a replacement for Finance/Staffing Committee	Head	Asap
3	05/24	Brian Lightman to report to Governors on the positive impact of attendance on young people	Brian Lightman	Following visit



4.	05/24	Destinations and NEETs information to be provided.	D. Gill	November WGB meeting
6.	08/24	Governors to arrange visits with the Link Faculties	All	When available
6.	09/24	Update on Artificial Intelligence Project with Joe Tait and Hayley Sheath	J. Tait/ H. Sheath	November WGB Meeting

