

**Cantell School**  
**Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting**  
**held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**Present:**

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

**In Attendance:**

Ian Creswell (Deputy Headteacher) - *Item 7*  
Dave Gill (Assistant Headteacher) – *Item 8*  
Joe Tait (Computer Science Faculty Leader) – *Item 3*  
Hayley Sheath (Assistant Headteacher) – *Item 3*  
Steve Godwin (Assistant Headteacher) – *Item 9*  
Andy Paterson (Faculty Leader for IAG and Careers) – *Item 9*  
Michelle Burt (Clerk to Governors)

**Apologies:**

Caroline Humphries

**11/24 Declaration Pecuniary or Business Interests Action**

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

**12/24 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Governors APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as a true record of the meeting, which were SIGNED accordingly by the Chair.

**13/24 Matters Arising**

All Matters Arising from the last meeting are either complete, on the agenda or ongoing.

**14/24 Associate Governor**

Governors NOTED Deb Sutton has agreed to continue as an Associate Governor and will attend WGB meetings when available.

**15/24 Artificial Intelligence Project Presentation**

Hayley Sheath drew Governor's attention to the Student Guide for using AI, which had been sent out with their papers. Hayley explained that parents were approached for those who would be interested in attending online meetings to discuss AI, how it could be used effectively and the positives and negatives.

Joe explained the two different forms of AI outlined in the guide: LLMs (Large Language Models) and Image generating, adding that after the guide had been created a further meeting had been held with the group of parents, who were able to provide their thoughts on the content. Joe added that briefings have also been held with staff and the guide was shared with them.

In the guidance produced by Joe for students he states that 'some LLMs can only be used by people who are 13 years old or older.' 'Some are also safer and more restricted than others in terms of the content they can give you. For example, some LLMs are designed to avoid returning harmful or offensive content, and others are designed to only return content that is appropriate for children'. ... 'LaMDA is designed to be safe

and informative, and it does not have any age limits'. GDPR is another issue that Joe will feedback to staff on, along with student on-line safety.

**Action**

**A Governor asked about plagiarism and whether AI could be used to check student work.** Joe responded that they could check for pre-existing text, but there isn't a system currently that is reliable to carry this out – there are however tell-tale signs they look out for.

**A Governor said as a university lecturer, they have been told they can put a piece of work back into Chat GPT, and say 'did you write this report.'** Joe explained that most coursework is completed on Google docs and staff are able to check back on a students' history to see if there are any issues.

**A Governor commented that teachers will be able to look at a piece of student work and recognise that it's not from a particular student – the Staff Governor agreed, adding that they also have text books to check back on.**

The Head commented that he has used Chat GPT to write letters, but it was only as good as the information he put into the system. The system then produces content with a broad structure, which saves time. The Head questioned whether there is anything wrong with this? Joe responded that he has been tempted to do it the other way round and feels that as long as the initial idea isn't from Chat GTP, it is ok.

The Head informed Governors that it is possible to get a free copy of Chat GTP and it would be interesting for Governors to have a go themselves.

**A Governor asked whether the Leadership team had found any uses for AI.** Hayley responded that she has used it and it is good for providing text much quicker than writing it manually, but this would be based on your ideas – she has used it for her T&L round up and it makes the content more concise. The Head added that the question is, is this copying – Governors agreed that it's not, it's just expanding on existing knowledge.

The Head commented that it is an interesting era – there is a fine line between efficiency and time and blatantly getting something else to do the work for you.

**A Governor said that his concern is about taking away the need for students to write structured essays, part of learning is about having to write something to get the full experience and using AI takes steps away from learning, meaning students may lose these skills.** Joe responded that in the report it is suggested that AI should be to improve an existing essay that students have already written.

**The Governor asked whether pre-set parameters could be used so students can't use the system to structure their writing?** Joe said that unfortunately they would be unable to control what students do at home, but they will be able to sample work. The Head agreed that they would know very quickly if a student had used the programme in this way.

**A Governor commented that there is a skill to taking sentences and paragraphs and turning them into your own – he thinks there are certain skills that AI could help with and experienced teachers will know if a piece of work is not a student's own.** Hayley added that coursework is completed in school and it would be clear if AI is not being used in the correct way.

**A Governor asked whether there is a realistic possibility of this reducing teachers' workloads?** Joe said yes, and he would be happy to use it – this will form part of the training for staff.

**A Governor agreed it will be important for staff to learn about AI before passing information onto students on where it can be useful. Another Governor commented that perhaps teacher need to use it before promoting it to students.** Joe responded that the guide includes a section on how to use it productively and after Christmas they will be doing more work to introduce AI to students.

**A Governor commented that this is quite exciting, it is like using higher level skills and getting students to see why they have used a particular text and then evaluating what they have done.** Joe agreed that it will be a lot more inciteful for students.

Hayley informed Governors that once AI has been introduced to and used by students, a student voice will take place, to see how it has gone and whether it is being used well, which will form part of the next steps for the process from January into the new year.

**The Chair said that anything that helps students to move on is good and if AI helps them to realise that some of their ideas can be put on paper, this is good.**

The Head thanked Joe and Hayley for their interesting presentation, adding that they are ahead of the game.

**A Governor asked what the next steps are from the school's point of view.** Joe explained that after Christmas the guide will be passed onto students and parents and a staff briefing will take place. The Head commented that Governor's comments on expectations are fair and a document is needed on what is expected from students and that we will know if they are using AI in the wrong way.

## 16/24 Destination Information, Careers and Educational Guidance

Andy Paterson, Faculty Lead for IAG and Careers outlined the aim for Careers and Education Information, Advice and Guidance for all students:

- To develop a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities available to them Post 16 and to be able to make well informed decisions at every stage of their education and career path journeys, choosing pathways that are right for them.
- For all students to value lifelong learning and recognise the important of continuing with education in the workplace, developing knowledge, skills and qualifications relevant to employment.
- To ensure that every student has the confidence, knowledge and skills to achieve their career aspirations and lead happy, successful, fulfilling lives.

Andy outlined the provision for KS3 and KS4, which includes the Cantell Careers Week, supported by NatWest, the Cantell Careers Fair and College Application and Mock Interview days.

Andy listed the additional support in place for those students who are at risk of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), and who may have issues such as anxiety or poor school attendance, which might cause them difficulties with moving on. Andy explained that they support students with things such as the Careers Fair and Advice meetings – students at risk get an additional careers advice meeting.

Governors noted some context provided in relation to the 2021 leavers, who were severely impacted by COVID, with many of the Careers and Education events being

cancelled or held virtually when possible, such as the NatWest Online Super event. Andy explained that students at this time also received in school interviews with support/coaching from the Careers Team, although masks had to be worn for these meetings.

Andy presented the DfE Destination data for 2020 with the number of Cantell students continuing in Education or Employment at 89%, compared to the LA average of 92% and National at 94%. The tracked figure for Cantell students is however at 94%.

The Head explained that the DfE publish their data over two terms and this figure can be widely out. Andy tracks them even if they have left us and we know more than the DfE about where these young people are, hence Cantell's tracked figure of 94%, with 3% NEET and 3% unknown.

Andy explained that the unknown, are students they can't get in touch with anymore. **The Head asked whether these students have gone abroad.** Andy said not necessarily and they will continue to try and contact them. **The Head said that some students do leave the country – he asked where they would fit in these figures.** Steve Godwin explained that they would be included in unknown.

The Head commented that the national figure of 94% is the same as Cantell, but doesn't include any context as to what we do as a school to track students. What we do is exceptional and other schools don't do a quarter of what we do at Cantell.

**A Governor asked if there is a cut-off point when Cantell isn't involved.** The Head said no, Steve and Andy track students for three years, but it gets more difficult the further out we get. There is a fine line between doing enough and doing too much for the students that end of NEED.

**A Governor asked whether the Head thinks students end up as NEET because the school does too much for them.** The Head said he doesn't think so, as some of the issues may be societal.

Governors NOTED that the 2021 DfE Destinations data is at 86%, but they have tracked students again for this year and the Cantell figure is 92% in Education or Employment, with 7% NEET and 2% unknown. Andy added that considering everything that happened with this particular cohort with them disproportionately affected by COVID, everything was done to support them.

The Head said that this was one of the more challenging cohorts, which is another indicator. The figures are just below National, which was 94%, but the aspiration is to be 100%. **The Head asked Andy what they will be doing for young people in future years.**

Andy responded that they want to ensure that students have the knowledge, skills and confidence to help them move on and the data for 2022, we are looking at 95% in Education and Employment, with 4% NEET and 1% unknown.

The Head said, from a Governors perspective, this time next year, they need to look at how close we are to this prediction.

**A Governor commented if you take away the NEETs we know about in the 2021 figure, is there a reason why it is 3% every year, is there a pattern?** Andy responded yes, there is, but there is more than one profile for Cantell students. There are students that leave the country, but not straight away – students fit into two different profiles and moving forward, if a student has low attendance, they will struggle moving into college.

**The Governor said that there are always going to be unknowns – is the aspiration to work on attendance?** The Head confirmed this is true – they are always working on attendance. **Action**

Andy outlined a particular case of a young person who went on work experience, which didn't work out because of her lack of confidence. Another placement was arranged for her, which did work out and she now has an apprenticeship with the same employers. The Head added that she was totally disengaged and had really poor attendance – we started working with her in Year 10 and kept going to try and find her spark.

Andy added that another issue is parental support as some students don't get any and are really on their own.

Governors NOTED the number of students in each year group. Andy explained that number had dropped off in Year 10 due to the events to move them on to the next steps.

**The Head asked whether it is usual to have 28 students at risk of NEET in Year 11.** Andy responded no and that this figure will fluctuate. A lot of work is taking place with these students and the more people involved means the less risk of them slipping through the net.

Andy outlined the next steps and strategies going forward for students at risk of NEET, commenting that they want to try and keep a link with these students, so something can be done to help if they are struggling in college to keep them there. The ambition is 100% sustainable destinations, with students being in the right places to keep them there.

**The Chair asked whether students are ever brought back, who were at risk of being NEET, to talk to current students who are at risk.** Andy said that they do bring back successful ex-students, but this is a great idea. **The Staff Governor asked whether Andy has the opportunity to stay in contact with ex-students, because this could be really powerful.** The Head said that they do have an alumni programme, and ex-students have been in, but this is the missing piece as they haven't every had a NEET student who is now successful.

The Head summarised that the work that takes place is exceptional – congratulations to Andy and Steve, although the ownership of this issue is everybody's.

**A Governor asked whether they ever do joint interviews, as this is something the university uses.** Andy said they tend to do 1:1 informal interviews, but they do talk about the different types of interviews. As students are inexperienced, they like to build them up first as to what they might have to do. **MB**

**The same Governor asked whether Andy had heard of Young Enterprise, who work with students who aren't quite so academic and agreed to forward some information.**

**The Chair thanked Andy and passed on her congratulations for the work carried out, which is fantastic.**

The Head suggested that the 28 NEETs predicted currently in Year 11 be revisited in the summer term to see if anything has changed. **Agenda – July 2023**

Dave presented the revised results overview, following the remarks and the receipt of the Provisional P8 figures. Dave explained that there have been a significant number of marks that have gone up, but as this is a big cohort, this has had only a small effect on the overall figures and as a result, the Headline figures for English & Maths for 4+, 5+ and 7+, are the same as in September. Dave added that there have also been no changes for the Attainment figures.

Governors NOTED that the first provisional figure for Progress 8 is +0.08, which is what they were expecting. Dave explained that compared to other Southampton schools, Cantell is ranked as third in the city for P8, and Dave explained that although they would like to be higher, this takes EBacc into account.

Governors NOTED the results for 2023 broken down by subject, in comparison with the two previous years. Dave highlighted that:

- Maths has done well, although it is down slightly on the previous two years:
- Science is very strong.
- English is still a work in progress.
- EBacc is lower this year at just +0.05, but will increase over time as students start taking languages.

Dave explained that the current Year 11 are starkly different to the previous cohort, with absences down to 8% this year, compared to 9% the previous year, meaning a significant increase in those students attending above 93% compared to last year and students whose attendance is below 93% reduced by 20%, which will have a big effect.

Dave outlined the next steps for Year 11, which includes the aspiration of 95% attendance.

The Head informed Governors that Dave is leaving at Christmas – he has been at Cantell for a long time and has contributed immensely and in particular with his clarity around the provision. **The Chair agreed, adding that Governors wish Dave all the best and wish him well for the future.**

## 18/24 **Anonymised Safeguarding Case Study**

Ian Creswell provided Governors with some anonymised information in relation to a CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) safeguarding case.

The Head explained that this is a very rare situation and unless Governors say otherwise, the school has done everything possible to support this young person - it is the system which has let him down. The Head added that it would have been easy to show Governors a case study with a happy ending, but it doesn't always work out that way.

The Head said when a Permanent Exclusion happens, Governors will be able to see that the needs of the majority override the needs of one individual.

Ian commented that what Governors have heard is the cutting edge of what they do in relation to safeguarding and there are other cases that aren't quite as complicated.

**A Governor commented that in an Ofsted report, which was published yesterday, it says that schools do the best work, but are isolated. The Governor asked how Ian feels they are supported as a school.** Ian said that it is pretty consistent and, in

some instances, they are very well supported by social services – some social workers are brilliant, but there are others who we don't get this drive from and then we as professionals have to escalate the issues above their head. Ian added that this is one of the key issue Ofsted will ask about in relation to safeguarding and how issues are escalated. The Head commented that this was a really good question as across the city in all Southampton schools, there is a feeling that a lot is being dumped on schools - it is a challenging problem.

Ian reported that there are a lot of students across the city who have been permanently excluded and as a result, places at Compass are very limited. Ian added that every single one of these students has a right to go back into a mainstream school and the IYFA (In Year Fair Access) Panel that Ian is part of, look at these students and place them in schools across the city. Cantell has been very successful with students that are sent to Cantell and Ian feels that if they came to Cantell, they wouldn't have left. The Head added that Governors can be assured that the school is doing everything it can for these students.

**A Governor asked about the safety of staff in some situations, are they as comfortable as they can be.** Ian said that the majority of Cantell students and families know that we have their best interests at heart. The Head added that every one of these young people involved in these cases know this and would never do anything in school.

The Head referred to the point about staff safety, commenting that they have never had, or anticipate any situations, but there are some challenging parents who expect the world from us and it gets to the point where it becomes vexatious, but these parents are in the minority.

**A Governor commented that in the majority of PEX (permanent exclusion), he has sat on, his main concern has been where students are going to get their education. The vast majority of parents support the schools' decision to exclude their child and accept and recognise the work the school has put in, which is the proof that the school cannot do anymore. The issue would be if a parent says their child has grounds to stay in school.**

## 19/24 Exclusions and Attendance Update

### Attendance

Ian Creswell reported that this time last year attendance was at 90.7%. The term leading up to Christmas was adversely affected by the winter flu virus, which carried on into the next term, meaning by Christmas, attendance was at 80%, with PA (persistent absence) at 2.5%, which is better than national.

Ian informed Governors that he doesn't expect the same situation to happen again this year and by Christmas attendance should be significantly above last year. FSM and Non-FSM attendance was also above national last year.

The Head commented that the caveat with these figures is that there is nothing to celebrate because across the board, secondary attendance is not good. Absence is significant and figures remain under those of 2018 – this is a societal thing – there isn't anything to celebrate, but within this, we are doing well.

Ian reported that SEN attendance is up to 85.2% this year and it is worth noting that these are the students who were worst affected by COVID. Ian added that the students who don't attend are a bigger group than previously.

Permanent Exclusions

PEX (Permanent Exclusions) – Ian reported that there were three PEX at Cantell last year, this is at 0.24%, per number on roll, compared to 0.25% Nationally. There have been two so far this year.

The Head commented that PEX across the city is a real issue. We do everything we can at Cantell to keep students, but can only do so much.

**The Chair commented that Governors understand this and as Governors they are not worried and know that if we can't keep a student in school, it is because the school can't do anymore.**

External Suspensions

Ian reported that External suspensions are down to 3.4% this year compared to 11.9% the previous year, which is significantly below the national figure of 14%.

Internal Suspensions

Internal suspensions also saw a significant drop to -8% in 2022/23, although there was an increase in physical altercations amongst students, some of which is down to play fighting and pushing. Some of this increase was also down to 20 particularly difficult students who have now left, either on a managed move, PEX, in-year transfer or a move to L2L or SEN.

The Head explained that Cantell is not a zero-tolerance school and students are allowed to make mistakes. However, there is a non-touching policy because this can escalate – students are internally suspended so they can continue to be educated whilst suspended.

**A Governor agreed that this is important because there is no tolerance in the outside world and if you do anything like this you are out the door.**

Ian explained about the reintegration forms that are completed during a meeting when a student returns from a suspension. They sit down with the student and parent and talk about how to get that student back into school.

**A Governor asked if it is mainly boys involved in this type of behaviour.** The Head confirmed it is mainly boys.

Bullying

Ian reported that Bullying incidents were slightly up from last year, although this isn't a trend. Verbal incidents were up and physical down and there have been very low rates of homophobic incidents and racist bullying.

The Head added that there has however been an increase in casual language, which again is a societal issue. We have zero % tolerance for this type of language and students are educated on what it means. A lot of the time they don't understand what they are saying and hear it out in the community.

The Head commented that a big focus for everyone has been about being kind to each other. There has been a particular issue in relation to Chinese people, which is a result of COVID and what was said at the time. The Head added that a group of Chinese students will be visiting in January and there will be a lot of work with students beforehand to ensure they are fully informed and fully educated before they get here.

**A Governor commented that there has been a significant increase in Chinese students in Southampton in the last 5 years, which you can see in the local area.**



**A Governor asked whether it is mainly white British students involved in racist bullying.** The Head said no, it is across the board and can also be from Asian students as well. Ian commented that this also isn't racist bullying, it is racist language. Ian added that last year 55% of Cantell students were from an ethnic background and the white British students seem to be more careful about what they say than non-white British students – there was a spike around Brexit and COVID. The key focus continues to be around kindness.

The Head informed Governors that fundraising has taken place for Libya, Morocco and Nepal last half term, which students wanted to do. They are also doing the homeless bags again this year and at some point, they will raise money for the innocent people affected by what is happening in Israel and the Palestine. Although they know that there is a great number in Palestine, they are not picking sides.

**A Governor said that it was mentioned that terminology is important, are they confident that there won't be a massive blow back from parents, if someone has used the wrong language.** The Head responded that he has sent a statement to all staff to read out to students to educate them about kindness and he has asked for any tricky students to be referred to him. Students are testing us as young people and what our values area – we stand in the kindness and innocent camp.

**A Governor said that with the whole issue with Palestine and Israel and any fund raising that might happen, you have to be careful that it isn't going to be misinterpreted because of the make up of the school – it is important to ensure it is not seen as something else.** The Head responded that it will be made clear that any fundraising is for the innocent people involved. The Head read out the statement that he sent out to staff, for Governor information.

**A Governor commented that he thought that the Government were going to send out guidelines.** The Head responded that they have, but it is very generic.

**A Governor said that they agree that this is the right approach, although it is worrying that something might happen.** The Head responded that something might, but any issues are dealt with sensitively, however, if mistakes keep happening, it would mean that something about the school is out of place.

#### Sexual Harassment

Ian directed Governors to the figures for sexual harassment over the previous five, which shows very little change year on year. Ian added that they continue to drive this with the students and for them to report any issues. Verbal sexual harassment is mainly insults and physical isn't necessarily what it sounds like in terms of sexual behaviour and it is all about education. Ian pointed out the new column for Outside school disclosures, which he will populate once he has had a chance to go back through CPOMs.

#### Homophobic Abuse

Ian reported that Jo Pringle, the Wellbeing Lead at Cantell, recently attended a network meeting with CAMHs on Mental Health in schools and the chair of the panel noted in the meeting that if you want to see school a school getting LGBTQ+ right, to go to Cantell. Ian added that he will get the exact quote and send it to Jonathan Clark.

**The Chair commented that she saw Jonathan's Horizons pamphlet, which was particularly good and interesting.**

Governors NOTED the report of Brian Lightman's visit on the 27<sup>th</sup> September. The Head said that everything was fine and Brian's focus had been on attendance with a focus on quality assurance – Brian's feedback was that everybody goes above and beyond.

21/24 **Safeguarding Link Visit Report**

The Chair reported that she has been into school for her Safeguarding visit and had reviewed the SCR and had a lengthy discussion with Michelle Stocker and Ian Creswell the Safeguarding leads, who both work extremely hard.

Michelle's biggest concern is that she doesn't have a lot of control and wouldn't get anywhere unless she keeps pushing people. Michelle and Ian however, will keep moving on.

The Chair summarised that she can confirm that everything in terms of Safeguarding is ok.

22/24 **Policies for Approval**

Governors APPROVED the following policies:

- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Behaviour Policy
- LAC and PLAC Policy
- WGB Meeting Virtual Attendance Policy

23/24 **Headteacher Update**

The Head reported that they had recently had a visit from the Local Authority SIO and thanked Matt Bunday and the Chair from coming in to talk to John Seal, the SIO.

The Head read out the first bullet point from John's report, commenting that it is a very positive report and they are very pleased with in terms of the different areas he looked at. The Inspector understood where they are in terms of EBACC – the Head read out a quote from the report and informed Governors that he would send the report to them by the end of the week.

**Head**

**A Governor asked who John Seal is from.** The Head explained that he is from the LA and is a former HMI.

The Head added that the SIO and Brian Lightman's reports are very valuable for when Ofsted come back.

24/24 **Chair Update**

The Chair reported that she has been into school to carry out her link visits with Andy Paterson and PE, as well as Safeguarding. There is a Trustees meeting coming up in November and she continues to keep in touch with the school every day and keeps an eye on who is absent and what visits are going out. The Chair added that the number of after school clubs and sports activities that take place every day is absolutely unbelievable and she always thanks staff on behalf of the Whole Governing Body when they do things, which is important.

2/24 **Any Other Business**

**Action**

There was no Other Business.

26/24 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December, 5.3 p.m.

That concluded the business of the Meeting. The meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

Page No	Minute Number	Item	By Whom	By When
4.	16/24	Matt Bunday to forward information on Young Enterprise.	Matt Bunday	Complete
5.	16/24	NEET figures as of November 2023 to be revisited in the summer term.	Andy Paterson	May/July 2023
10.	22/24	Head to forward LA SIO Report to Governors	End of the week	Complete

**Ongoing Matters Arising**

2	04/24	Head to look for a replacement for Finance/Staffing Committee	Head	Asap
6.	08/24	Governors to arrange visits with the Link Faculties	All	When available

