Cantell School
Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting
held on Thursday 12th December 2024

Present:	**In Attendance:**
Glynis Alexander (Chair)	Ian Creswell (Deputy Headteacher)
Harry Kutty (Head)	Veronica Hein (English)
Julian Bryant	Steve Godwin (Assistant Headteacher)
Matt Bunday	Andy Paterson (Faulty Leader – IAG and Careers)
John Draper	
John Groves	**Apologies:**
Ben Hiett	Emma Bradshaw
Nicola Hunt	Peter Hilditch

25/25 **Declaration Pecuniary or Business Interests** **Action**

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

26/25 **High Prior Attaining or Potential Students Presentation**

The Chair welcomed Veronica Hein to the meeting.

Veronica presented a powerpoint and explained the HPA (High Prior Attaining) programme, how students are identified for the provision and the monitoring that is part of the process. Veronica added that it is a whole school strategy, which is central to creating subject experts, whilst having high expectations of students, creating challenge across the curriculum, with quality first teaching.

Veronica informed Governors that reading ages, Maths data and other criteria are looked at to identify the more able students, who are then identified on registers, to allow staff to see which students are excelling in particular areas of the school and particular subjects.

The Head added that HPA is a term used to avoid using the term 'gifted and talented' as they believe all students are gifted and talented. This is about students who have high prior attainment and potential and a lot of students who don't do well in their SATs, tend to blossom and students who are identified are added onto the programme.

Veronica explained how students are tracked, through Faculty Leaders and how students are monitored and supported. Students are originally identified through KS2 and are mentored by Veronica, but this group eventually broadens, including disadvantaged students who have potential and who have scored 109 or above in Reading and Maths at KS2. This group will include students who have potential pressures, some who are coasting and others with different needs, which are all identified on a spreadsheet created by Veronica to monitor the HPA group.

Staff contribute to the information gathered for Years 9 and 8 initially, with Year 7 students added by March during an academic year. These students receive 1:1 mentoring, which will include parental contact and by looking at the comments included, it is clear which students would benefit from a 1:1 mentor, who they will then meet with once a term and for Year 11, before and after their mock exams, which will also generate a meeting with their parents.

Signed by Chair: Date: 6.2.25

Veronica explained that the only students that don't receive this are those on the Oxbridge Mentoring programme, who are a small group that are doing really well and who will be mentored up until Christmas, to identify whether they need to continue being mentored after Christmas. **Action**

Veronica informed Governors that there are two mentoring groups taking place, one with herself and the other with another member of staff, where they work with students to develop skills such as thinking outside of the box. The Oxbridge mentoring is an organic process and takes place from Year 9 onwards.

Another programme of engagement is the 'Learn with Us' provision at the University of Southampton for small groups in Years 9 and 10, to inform them about the possibility of attending University and having aspirations. In Year 11 students get to meet with someone to talk about finances and they also get to visit Oxford University.

Staff receive CPD and meet to talk about the HPA students who are receiving mentoring. Staff also attending Teaching & Learning bursts to talk about these students and Champions briefings are held termly to also talk about them – it is all about knowledge and research. Staff also attend ongoing training, undertake research and attend 1:1 sessions, if they want to work on a particular area, such as a new course.

Veronica explained that the students who are being mentored, will attend Student Voice meetings – there was a Year 10 Student Voice held that morning, who are one term into their GCSE courses and students were asked whether they know what they are doing and if they know what excellent class work looks like.

Veronica added that Faculties also put together a list/plan of what HPA students look like and a pen portrait, to allow students to develop in their lessons and to develop these characteristics. Staff are also provided with a list of QA for their Learning Walks.

A Governor commented that he would be interested to hear about the content of some of the mentoring sessions as well as more about the tracking of students. Veronica responded for example, KS3 and below have Dr Barnes talk to them about atoms and other Science things for them to think about. That morning Year 9 talked about the truce in the First World War and were showed an advert by one of the big supermarkets – students talked around this and had a debate. Veronica explained that students will receive a variety of information, which is really wide and as they move up the school, students look at areas they might be asked about at Oxbridge.

The Chair asked what the feedback is like from students. Veronica responded that students really enjoy it. Surveys have taken place and it is often obvious that students don't think they are as good as they are, but staff know they are excellent and it is interesting to go back and talk to them.

A Governor asked how many students from each year group are in the programme. Veronica responded about 15. **The Governor asked whether this is kept at 15.** Veronica explained that sometimes students are added, as there are sometimes amazing students who join the school. Recently some students had come to her attention, who she is thinking about adding to the Oxbridge mentoring programme.

The Governor asked whether Veronica has noticed if the process has made a difference. Veronica said yes, she has examples of students who have gained confidence and there are students who have blossomed through the programme. They don't just think about the top tier students, but also those they think could benefit the most from it.

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The Head added that the Year 11 students who left last year were Veronica's babies – he asked Veronica what her highlights are. Veronica responded that she is hopeful one student will become a writer, who didn't have high data for writing on entry. This student was identified by her English teacher and she really blossomed. Some students also took part in a competition where they were asked to come up with an eight-minute presentation and as a result, one student was asked to go to Oxford to receive her reward. **Action**

The Head added that another student excelled in Engineering and received the highest mark in the whole of the country.

27/25 **Destination Data**

Steve Godwin and Andy Paterson, presented the Destination Data for Governor information starting with the data from 2021, which Steve explained although not great, outlined the impact on students from Covid during Year 10 - these students missed out on everything. The figures show 91% of students in education or employment, which is 4/5% below where they normally are, which is 10/15 students who they weren't able to get in touch with. This shows that the work they do is very important.

The data for 2022, which is the last published data shows that 6 students transferred college in Year 12 and Steve added that it worth noting that when the DfE published their data, these students weren't in college. Steve explained that Andy was still working with students in Year 12 and by the end of the year, they were back up to 95% of students being in education and training in a college. The 4% difference is 10/12 students who missed out during Covid.

The data for 2023, shows that 6 students were NEETS (not in education, employment or training), 2 that had gone abroad, 3 unknown and 2 who were serving a custodial sentence. Steve added that their goal is 0 NEETs, but these figures may be down to complicated lifestyles of these students.

Steve outlined the 2023 Destinations for these students, which they track, and shows the array of destinations. Steve added that students get to visit everyone of the colleges listed during Year 10. Andy explained that the opportunities students have is fantastic and they get to visit environments to view the vocational and academic opportunities.

Barton Peveril will always be the biggest draw, but students also go to colleges across the board, if it is the right place for them. Andy added that 60% of students have gone down the academic route to do A Levels.

A Governor commented that there is a big drop in numbers between he top three colleges and Itchen – is there a reason for this? Steve responded that it is mainly about geography as it is difficult for some students to get to Itchen College, although Itchen is popular for sport.

The Head explained that the standards at Barton Peveril are exceptional and they are very slick – the facilities are amazing and the college has a university feel to it and we have learnt a lot from them.

Steve said that they have a good relationship with the other colleges, which helps find place for students on an individual basis and their Taster days are great, which is something the students in 2021 missed out on. Around 120 students visited Barton Peveril and almost 80 went to Richard Tauntons. Students get a real experience and

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take part of a lot of workshops. Andy added that students get to physically know what it is like and they get to make an informed decision about where they want to go. **Action**

The Head explained that Cantell has always taken the most students to careers events and Taster days and this shows how important these events are for us.

Steve informed Governors that they have identified 50 students this year, in each year group who are potentially NEETs and they will be the first to be targeted about which college they want to go to. Andy added that personal development also gives them the confidence to choose and have the confidence to enrol.

A Governor asked whether Taster days convert more into academic or vocational choices. Steve responded that it is up to the students, but the feedback is that Apprenticeships mainly happened Post 18.

Course choices need to be right for a students' aspirations, although the Government pushes vocational qualifications more. Companies are invited to careers events at Cantell to inform students about this route, but unfortunately apprenticeships are normally oversubscribed. Andy added that students are always asked to apply for more than one college, to keep their options open in case they don't get the grades they need.

Steve explained that following the College Application Day held at school, most Year 11 students have now made their application and are continued to be supported if they have any questions, or want to look at a different college. Steve added that they are also present on results day, to help students who don't get their grades, to help them choose what to do. There have been a lot of successes and in particular with students in L2L, who they are still in touch with.

A Governor asked what a T Level is. Steve explained that it is the new BTEC, where students attend work experience one day a week and four days at college. Students can go to Tauntons to do an T Level in Engineering, which Barton Peveral and Peter Symonds also do. The Government is pushing T Levels, and it helps students get some industry experience.

A Governor commented that she wondered whether there will be a big turn to apprenticeships due to the Government's house building programme. Steve responded that apprenticeships at 16 are still very rare, most students do them during Post 18 education.

The Chair asked what the feedback is from colleges about Cantell students. He Head said that one of the nicest things during Ofsted was that the Principal from Barton Peveril had a telephone conversation with the inspector and said the best prepared students are from Cantell. This was a good thing to hear because it is one of the biggest colleges, with around 5000 students who are drawn from everywhere – this was fantastic.

The Head added that the level of exposure our young people have to colleges is quite impressive and staff help them with their application forms and students are already making decisions about where they want to go. It is up to students about where they want to go, but we make sure their decision is fully informed and that they make the right application to go to the right college, and we are very proud of this work and we are industry leaders in this.

The Head informed Governors that Oli de Botton from the Careers and Enterprise Company, who influence policy, is visiting Cantell in January.

Signed by Chair: Date: 6.2.25

The Staff Governor asked how much the school looks at the Post 18 stage and what they are saying to students. Steve responded that they are looking at apprenticeships tomorrow with Year 11, to set the scene, with people coming in, organised by the DfE to let them know about the opportunities and benefits for them Post 18. **The Staff Governor responded that they probably have the most over prepared work force, so it is important for young people to have these aspirations and chances.** Steve agreed, adding that apprenticeships have been seen as a second-class route. The Head added that both routes are equally valuable, and it is all about aspirations and making sure students know about everything that is out there for them.

Action

A Governor commented that the trend now is that people don't pick one job for 60 years and often change careers. The Head commented that this is the massive disconnect with what is happening in schools, as we are now in a generation of multi careers. At Cantell they are trying to connect with education and business for the next steps to set students up for later on.

Andy explained about the Nat West Careers week which is coming up, where staff from different companies come in to talk about what they are doing, this includes employees from companies such as Fat Face. At Cantell students tend to follow their hearts and do what they want to do, and don't worry about anything else, which isn't the case in other schools.

The Chair agreed that there is always something going on in relation to careers. The Head added that the tracking of data is amazing, and is now an area of strength.

28/25 **Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7th November 2024**

Governors AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on the 7th November 2024 as a true record of the meeting, which were signed accordingly by the Chair.

29/25 **Matters Arising**

20/25 Policies

The Clerk is current updating the policies as requested and will email them out to Governors for approval once ready.

04/24 Replacement for the Finance & Staffing Committee/Proposed New Governor

The Head informed Governors that he had met with Bhupinder Siran from the University of Southampton, who is an ex-Cantell student and sits on the University Council and is really knowledgeable.

The Head said that he would like to proposed Bhupinder as a member of the Cantell Governing Body and a member of the Finance and Staffing Committees.

The Head proposed the appointment of Bhupinder which was seconded by the Chair and Governors therefore APPROVED Bhupinder Siran's appointment from for a four-year term of office from the 2.12.24 until the 11.12.28.

The Clerk agreed to invite Bhupinder to the next WGB meeting in February. **Clerk**

Signed by Chair: Date: 6.2.25

05/24 Governor Link Visits **Action**

The Chair reported that she had recently visited the PE Department and had met with Russ Grant, the Head of PE and a new member of staff, who is very good. The Chair added that they visited some Year 7 classes, including a Dance class. The Chair also attended the PE Department meeting.
The Chair informed Governors that Russ was also carrying out BTEC Moderation, with each student doing something different.

The Chair will also be carrying out her Safeguarding visit next week.

The Chair reminded Governors to arrange to come into school for their Link visit. **Head**

A Governor asked whether Link visits are too much of a burden for staff. The Head said no, staff enjoy Governors visiting, so please come in.

The Head said the only thing he is not sure about is the level of feedback staff in the departments get. Faculty Leaders receive Governor reports, but he will look into how much this information is passed down because it is a positive system and Governor reports are always positive.

30/25 **School Trips and Visits**

Governors NOTED the list of trips and visits that have taken place so far this year. The Head explained that the process is overseen by Jonathan Clark, the Head of Student Experience and the SLT. They look at different factors when arranging trips, such as Pupil Premium students and compared to other school, the Head explained Cantell provides a huge variety of trips, over difficult Faculty areas.

The Chair asked whether there is a wide range of students going on trips. The Head said that they have looked at this closely, as there is a range of diversity at the school – they have also looked at the cost and ensuring that it is not always the same students attending a trip. A hardship fund is also available for those students who cannot afford a trip. The Head added that there is still a lot of work to do, as there are still barriers for some students, which they have to work around.

A Governor said that he had seen some Cantell students at a scout's event, raising money for the Thailand trip. The Head added that the hype around the NASA trip is huge and young people are excited about the range and breadth of visits.

The Chair asked how these trips affect the staff not going. The Head responded that they know by supporting colleagues, what goes around comes around. We have cover and supply teachers, so the pressure isn't passed on to staff. If this does happen, an email is sent to all staff to apologise Trips are an ongoing part of the expectations of students at Cantell school and they have to mitigate the negative impact in school, to make sure trips can happen.

The Staff Governor outlined some of the trips that have been arranged in RE, such as a trip to Winchester Cathedral and some of the mosques in Southampton, which is also a good way of connecting to the community.

The Chair agreed that there are always lots of educations trips and taking students out of their comfort zones is really important. The Head added that there are always innovative trips, such as the Fine Dining experience and the days in the New Forest.

Signed by Chair: Date: 6.2.25

31/25 **Head's Update** **Action**

The Head informed Governors that the performance tables have just been released nationally by the DfE, which focus on P8. The Head explained that Cantell came out as above average, but the caveat is that they don't take in the context of what a school is operating in. Post Covid, Cantell has bucked the trend, primarily because of the hard work with attendance, which at 94%, is 27% above national. The attendance target is 97% and they continue to monitor attendance every day and have built a real strength around attendance.

The Head explained that they don't target P8, which can be carried by a curriculum focussed on P8, but this isn't what they are doing at Cantell, as they want the best for their young people. There are also a number of other tables showing where schools in Hampshire sit, with Cantell at 15, but if you look at the context, Cantell are third in the tables – it is all about how people perceive things.

Governors NOTED that there is no P8 for the next two years, because there were not SATs during Covid, but Cantell will carry on as it has done in previous years.

The Head outlined a fantastic Peer-to-Peer Review that has just started across the Trust, devised by John Draper. For each review, three colleagues from across the Trust go into a school and this week, it was Cantell's turn, looking at Phonics teaching, English and upgrades. Although issues were picked up, the reviewers were blown away by what is happening here and Dan from Bevois said that phonics at Cantell are better than some he has seen in primary schools.

The Head added that there are young people who come to Cantell that do not have the basics in literature, reading or writing and as a result they have employed a primary trained teacher and two LSAs to work in the new Reading Hub, which is amazing.

A Governor commented that she has visited the reading hub and saw some 1:1 work - it is a lovely space. She asked if this is something that the school is sharing with the rest of the Trust. The Head said yes, they are doing this across the Trust, as they do with a lot of Trust learning and work closely with the feeder schools and they are where they are today because of it and have learnt a lot of strategies from primary colleagues, particularly John.

John Draper agreed that it has definitely been reciprocal. The last review was yesterday and he hasn't heard anything negative and the people involved have said how much they get out of the reviews.

The Head summarised that attendance is a challenge, due to lots of illness, but they continue to push on this, but are sensitive when students are ill and need time off. Behaviour is slightly up, with 3.6% students on average getting a behaviour point, which went up to 5% for three days. The Head said he wasn't happy with this and they met with all these students as a result and the number is going back down because they were so agile with what had to be dealt with. With the aim of being transparent, an email was also sent out to staff, to let them know what was happening.

The Head explained that there is a small minority of young people they are now seeing, who they are increasing difficult to work with and they are also finding it increasingly difficult to work with their parents, which contribute to the levels of challenge. This has put a lot of pressure on the Year Leaders and as a result, they were treated to a nice Christmas dinner last week, to say thank you to them.

Signed by Chair: Date: 6.2.25

The SLT are also going around school tomorrow, with hot chocolate for staff and meetings are being suspended next week. The SLT are constantly thinking about what they can do for staff to keep them going. Morale is still high, but people are tired. **Action**

The Staff Governor commented that he would like to think that people would come and talk to him, but he hasn't picked up on any issues – staff are committed to the school.

The Head thanked those Governors that had attended the Christmas Concert, which was amazing and there were so many young people taking part in different aspects of music and drama. Even their friends were willing them on and wanted the best for them. These types of events create families within families.

32/25 **Chair's Update**

The Chair thanked Governors for being here and for their support, adding that it's good to have a Governing Body that are so reflective about what is going on and who get out there and have a look – you all have her respect, because you are committed and who can ask for more than this, well done.

The Chair wished everyone a lovely Christmas and a wonderful new year – may 2025 be the best for the school and ourselves.

33/25 **Any Other Business**

There was no Other Business.

34/25 **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 6th February 2025, in the CTC

That concluded the business of the meeting. The meeting closed at 7.10 p.m.

Page No	Minute Number	Item	By Whom	By When
5.	20/25	Clerk to amend policies as requested and email to Governors for approval.	Clerk	Complete
5.	29/25 (04/24)	Clerk to invite Bhupinder Siran to next WGB meeting.	Clerk	Complete
6.	29/25 (05/24)	The Head to investigate how much of the information from Governor Link reports is passed down through the faculty	Head	Next meeting – Feb 2025

Signed by Chair: Date: 6.2.25