Cantell School
Minutes of the Whole Governing Body Meeting
held on Thursday 6th November 2025, at 5.30 p.m.

Present:
Glynis Alexander (Chair)
Harry Kutty (Head)
Emma Bradshaw
Julian Bryant
Ben Hiett
Peter Hilditch
Nicola Hunt

In Attendance:
Steve Godwin (Assistant Headteacher)
Ian Creswell (Deputy Headteacher)
Rhys Fehners (Assistant Headteacher)
Rachel Bridges (SENCo)
Michelle Burt (Clerk to Governors)

Apologies:
Matt Bunday
John Draper
John Groves
Bhupinder Siran

12/26 **Declaration Pecuniary or Business Interests** **Action**

There were no declarations of Pecuniary or Business Interests.

13/26 **Suspension and Attendance Update**

Attendance Comparison
Ian highlighted the following attendance headlines for the previous year 2024/25:

- Total attendance of 92.4% compared to 91.4% national.
- PA (persistent absence) of 18.46% - which is every child whose attendance is below 90%, and continues to be a focus.
- Authorised absence of 24.3% which is just below the national figure – Ian reported that they are very rigorous in asking parents for evidence of appointment and reasons for absence.
- All the key groups as listed, including FSM at 88.9% (86.3% national), are compared to national figures.
- EHCP attendance at 92% is significantly above the national figure of 82.3%.
- SEN at 86.5% is in line with last year and just above the national figure of 86.2%. Ian commented that this group will be a main focus during the current year.
- SEND Monitoring at 86.4% has no national comparison and only comprised of 5 students, who have now left.

The Chair asked if there was a overall reason for authorised absence – is it down to sickness? Ian responded that it can be illness, or maybe a holiday. Persistent absence is investigated if there is no medical evidence, but each absence is looked at on a case-by-case basis. Ian added that they were in a strong place with attendance at the end of the previous year.

The Head commented that whilst attendance was above national, it is not good enough, for students to thrive and achieve they need to be in school 95% of the time. Students with 93% or above attendance will do well at Cantell, so they continue to drive attendance and monitor it on a daily basis, which includes the Year Leaders looking at attendance every morning and phoning home about any absences. The Head said the attendance process is great and Brian Lightman has quality assured the system.

The Head informed Governors that Cantell has been invited to be a Behaviour and Attendance Hub to share good practice and to work with schools whose attendance is

not great. The Head added that they have to be careful however, about what they do so it doesn't impact on what they do at Cantell, but the school remains outward facing, and wants to help, but not at the detriment of our school or students. **Action**

A Governor commented that there appears to be a trend that as children get older, their attendance gets worse. Ian responded that this is a national trend

A Governor asked whether there is a reason for this. Ian responded that for older year groups, it's because parents can leave them at home on their own and there is an element of them choosing to take an extra day off. The national trend since Covid is that people, including students and their parents, feel they can continue working from home, but they need to be in school to achieve. The Head commented that some parents like the company if they are working from home and let their children stay off.

Ian informed Governors that primary school attendance is much higher because they can't be left on their own if their parents have to work, but as they get older, they can be left – this is a national trend and we are in line with national.

The Head commented that the trend this academic year is that attendance is broadly 1% higher than national.

The Chair asked what the uptake has been like for the flu jab. Ian responded that flu seems to have arrived 5 weeks earlier this year – he isn't sure of the uptake by students this year, but can check and report back at the next meeting. **Dec WGB Mtg**

Governors NOTED the attendance year to date figures up to 31st October 2025, compared to the previous year. The current attendance to date is 93.5% compared to 94.4% the previous year.

Ian explained that he has been looking at the coding for absences and there is more illness and more students absent for holidays, although it is made clear to them that holidays should be taken in non-term time. Ian added that they will issue penalty notices, if it is appropriate, but a lot of Cantell students visit their families overseas, so a degree of sensitivity needs to be used, as it can be very expensive to travel overseas during holiday periods leading to a real cost implication for families. Ian added that they are however very clear, that a young person needs to be in school.

A Governor asked, if someone is away, do you make sure they catch up on their work when they return? The Head responded that work is never provided for when they are away, because this could set a precedence, but staff try to catch them up when they are back, although this is a burden on staff and hard to do – those that get really behind go into the intervention programme. The Head added that it is not the children's fault, it is a parental decision.

Ian explained that as part of his looking at absence codes, he is asking parents for booking confirmation for family emergency absences and in most cases, they will go anyway, but it's the families who go a second or third time that they need to be aware of for penalty notices, although families still say it is cheaper to go anyway.

The Head informed Governors that realistically and based on previous years, both at the school and nationally, they know that the current attendance figure of 93.5% will go down and that it will not go up, but their job is to make sure it stays as close to 93.5% as possible as students need to be in school to thrive.

- FSM and non-FSM attendance figures of 88.9% and 95.1%, commenting that Cantell has significantly more FSM students than other local similar schools.

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- SEN – Ian reported that he will be looking at this group, which is quite variable and can be affected by one student who can have a bigger impact in this group than in the whole school.

Action

Behaviour Points and Mediation

- Behaviour points at 93.5% are lower than at the same time last year, 94.4% for a larger number of students.
- Behaviour points are at 1533 is just under last year (1587), but PE have brought in a new BP for not having a PE kit.
- Mediation at 229 call is in line with last year (232)
- Internal Suspension – there have been 22 less than the same period last year.
- External Suspensions are in line with last year, but one caveat is that national figures are running two years behind, so Ian is unable to say how we compare to last year's national figure.
- There have been no permanent exclusions so far this year.
- Late to school and late to lessons is broadly in line with last year, although there is an issue with some Year 8 students, who want to finish their game of football at lunchtime rather than returning to lesson. This is a very small minority which has led to a slight increase of 0.03%.

The Head commented that last year, Governors saw a pattern of increasing external suspensions – this year figures are broadly in line with last year. There is a new system in place which is helping and the Head explained what this system is – which includes asking parents to come in for a meeting and if the parent promises to bring their child back in line, they will avoid an external suspension. This has happened on a number of occasions, which wasn't happening last year and the Head confirmed that the school would not shy away from the use of external suspensions if they were absolutely required.

Ian explained that the majority of the 24 suspensions this year were for L2L students, which proves they are in the right place. Ian added that they are reviewing how they work with these students, but what is good that these students are not affecting mainstream because L2L is being used to support them.

L2L has been changed in terms of need and there is now a girl's group, a boys KS3 group. KS4 are also together. These are all challenging students, but it means that the number of suspensions for mainstream students has gone down. The Head added that they will not, not suspend students if they need to and if it is the right thing for the school.

14/26 **Destination Data**

Steve outlined the vision for Cantell students in terms of Careers and Education information, Advice and Guidance, commenting that the provision at Cantell is really good. Year 10 students have been invited to attend a presentation on Taster days at the local colleges and receive at least two visits to a college. On the back of this they will also receive a talk about work experience. Steve added that over the last two years over 200 Year 10 students have had the opportunity to take part in work experience. The provision has been audited by Brian Lightman, who said it is one of the best he has seen.

Steve outlined the destination data for 2022, which shows that 94% of students had stayed in education or employment, compared to the LA average of 91% and a national average of 93%.

Governors NOTED the DfE published destination data for 2023, which Steve explained is always two years behind and which shows that 87% of students were in education

or employment, which we have challenged, as it doesn't include 8 students who are not on the DfE list. **Action**

Steve informed Governors that Ofsted have released a statement about who the DfE data is for and although Cantell has its own figures, they were not allowed to go back and change it.

Steve explained that Cantell's destination data for 2023 shows that 93% of students stayed in education or employment, compared to the LA average of 90% and the national average of 91%.

Steve explained that the DfE data for 2023 show that there were 16 students not captured and 14 not sustained, but Cantell's data shows that only 3 students that couldn't be found in March 2024 and they have the paperwork to prove this and it is in line with previous years.

The DfE also only have this cohort's attendance as being at 88%, but Cantell's figures have it at 98% of students going on somewhere.

Apprenticeships are low because they are mainly for post 18 and they are hard to find at post 16.

Steve added that the DfE published figures for 2023 destination data will therefore show that 87% of Cantell students went on the employment or education, but we have the evidence to show that it is 93%, which has previously been proved to Ofsted.

The Head asked Steve how he can give Governor's confidence in these figures and what are the measures taken by the school after these young people leave, to be sure that it is 93%?

Steve explained that students are tracked when they leave Cantell, which is why he is confident with 93%. Steve added that they keep in touch with them even if they move college courses and staff are present on results day to help them find alternative courses.

Steve said that they continue to work with students when they leave Cantell, but have to let them go by the time they get to Year 13. They know who the NEETs are likely to be and they are targeted first with careers advice and guidance and these students will get 2 or 3 college visits.

Steve explained that they have records of every student for a number of years, as to where they went to and what they are doing and if a college tells us they have dropped out, we contact them to find out why and to ask how we can help to get them back in to further education. **Dec WGB Mtg**

The Head said that he knows that all this happens, but it would be useful for Governors to have a couple of cases provided by Steve, of students who the DfE say didn't go where they are, but who we know where they are, for a deep dive. **Governors agreed that this information would be useful and it will be good to see how these students are tracked.**

Steve commented that they know the names of these 8 students and were able to check that they were still attending their chosen college. There was also one student who the DfE didn't pick up, but who we know where they are and there are others that the DfE didn't track and we did. Seve added that the 5 NEET students are the most difficult to track and there are reasons why they are NEET.

Signed by Chair: Date: 11th December 2025

Steve drew Governor's attention to the list of colleges that students went to in 2023, with Barton Peveril being the biggest college of choice, who along with Peter Symons do a lot to help Cantell. **Action**
Steve outlined the Cantell Destination data for 2024, which he explained has no DfE published data as yet for a comparison, but they know that 94% of Cantell students stayed in education or employment.

The Chair asked whether the colleges track these students as well? Steve responded that yes they do and they share this information with us, but he doesn't know how much support they provide.

Steve informed Governors that the 2024 college destinations is similar to the previous year, which Barton Peveril remaining the first choice, but there was an increase in the number going to Richard Taunton.

Governors NOTED that the data for the 2025 leavers is currently being tracked.

The Chair asked when Governors will receive this information. Steve responded that they are gathering it now, but by the time they leave Cantell, we know that the overwhelming majority have applied for a college and they know that there were only 6/7 who didn't go anywhere.

The Head said that the next question is how do we know if it is the right college choice and this is why we need to have a couple of examples.

A Governor asked is it correct that NEETs are recorded up to the age of 18, or Year 12 or 13, when they are classed as adults? Steve confirmed that this is correct, they are tracked right through school and college and then what university they go to - 87% of Cantell students who go on the Barton Peveril went to university. The Head added that when he met the Principal of Barton Peveril, he said that Cantell has the highest number of students who go on to a university.

The Chair asked if there is anything they can do for the students in the lower years who be on the vulnerable list? The Head explained that from Year 7 onwards, they already have a NEETs list and they identify who might be at risk. Steve added that there are indicators, such as attendance which will identify these students, who are the ones who attend things like the Careers Fair in Year 9 - SEN students are also prioritised for the careers fair. Steve added that the Year 10 students who are identified as NEETs will also be targeted first for work experience, to help them find a place as a lot of these students suffer from a lack of parental engagement.

The Head said that we are industry leading in terms of careers guidance and work experience and Governors will see examples of us doing everything we can, but they cannot be everything to everyone.

The Chair asked how many of these students will be special needs? The Head explained that there will be an overlap with disadvantaged and SEND students.

The Chair asked if there is any work being done with the group who don't have EHCPs? The Head said Rachel Bridges targets them for the Year 10 Careers event and the issue has been discussed at the SENCo network meeting and they agreed they want to know what the colleges provide, and as a result colleges have been invited to the next meeting.

Steve explained that their NEET list indicators would be attendance, behaviour and SEND and they are the ones who will be targeted first for support. The Head agreed, adding that all students receive this, including attending the Get Inspired Event, which

is an event for all schools, but only Cantell takes all their Year 9 students so ensure they start very early to receive careers advice and guidance. **Action**

Steve informed Governors that he is confident that the provision at Cantell is really good and he is hopeful that the NEET list will be reduced, but they will continue to keep trying and will continue to track students through to Year 13.

15/26 **SEND**

Rachel explained that she is now working with the SLT and in particular with Ian Creswell as there has been a year-on-year increase in students with SEND at Cantell.

EHCP numbers have also increased year on year along with the SEND K. Rachel explained the Covid has a lot to do with this and more students have been diagnosed or are on a waiting list for their Neuro Diversity need. Rachel added that at Cantell, they don't wait until a diagnosis to start supporting students, they speak to parents and put appropriate support in place. However, the needs of children are changing, particularly around emotional and dysregulation.

Rachel informed the Governors that the number of EHCP students in in line with national figures, but SEND K is above national at around 22.49%, which is about where Rachel would expect it to be.

Thrive is current for Year 7 & 8 students, who are doing really well for attendance and Rachel said that they are really proud of the provision. There are currently 9 students in Year 7 and 11 in Year 8, who all have an EHCP. Rachel added that one of the Year 8 students has done brilliantly and is now going into mainstream.

The Head said that these are young people who would have been in special provision, but because they have come to Cantell, they have received support from the SEN team and are able to access mainstream. Rachel added that there is another student in Year 8, who goes to some mainstream lessons and there are two girls who are attending Art and Drama lessons and who are desperate to go to Maths, which she will probably be able to do.

These students also attend break and lunch in mainstream and are very much part of the Cantell family – these students will stay at Cantell through to Year 11.

A Governor asked whether the students accessing mainstream only attending a certain number of lessons? Rachel responded that the young man now fully accessing mainstream started with Maths, which was his preference and he was put with students who have an EHCP for Lesson A support and they then built it up to other lessons. Some might just choose to go to Maths all the way through, but it is based on their needs and preference.

The Head said that the Local Authority didn't necessarily have the aim for these students to attend mainstream, but because we are a school within a school, we have ambition for them. A lot of the parents didn't want them to be at Cantell, but have now changed their minds.

Rachel explained that all these students also attend after school clubs and they have had lots of parents wanting to come in to look at the provision.

Rachel outlined the different types of needs Thrive students have, which includes SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) needs, with some of the students attending CAMHs for their mental health needs and this is one of the groups who are the most challenging. Rachel informed Governors that one of the main things this term

is around emotional regulation and how we can support students with SEMH and autism, who are struggling. **Action**

Rachel added that Brian Lightman came in recently to look at SEN and behaviour and Governors have a copy of his report in their papers. Rachel outlined some of the areas Brian looked at during his visit, which included a learning walk with SEND focus, meetings with the SEND leadership team and a student voice.

Rachel explained that she now has two Deputy SENCos working with her and another member of staff who runs the Thrive Hub. They meet every two weeks to look at focussed issues with the Year Leaders, on different subjects. And Rachel has also looked at and devised a poster to go outside classrooms, which have four colour coded emotions and how they feel. The Head commented that students look at this to self-assess how they are and this is also on the back of their regulation passes and time out passes.

A Governor asked how students use these passes. Rachel responded that they can use them themselves if they are anxious and they can show them to their teacher and they can take 2 minutes out to regulate themselves. Others may choose to go to their Year Leader or the Support Hub because they may not want to talk to anyone.

The Chair asked whether they have a choice. Rachel responded that they usually start outside the classroom, but may choose to go upstairs.

The Head said that this is an area that Governors will want to continue looking at as it has been in the news a lot recently and he has spoken a lot about it and because SEN is an area they have invested a lot in. Students with SEND are different because their needs are not always known, but sometimes it is just about them being children and we have to tread carefully and not go to fast and hope they can regulate themselves, because we won't always be there for them.

Rachel informed Governors that during the last two Inset days, staff have spent time looking at adjustments for students who are dysregulated and what we can do to support them, and what they can do to support themselves. The Head added that unfortunately, there has been an increase of a minority of parents who have unreasonable expectations, but we are very clear about what we can do and this takes up a lot of his and Rachel's time.

Rachel explained that this year for the first time they are trying to engage parents and students with their Support Plans, which have been sent out on Edulink and a google form has been created, to allow parents to feedback and make tweaks to their Plans and conversations are regularly held about behaviour points and adjustments that can be made.

Rachel said that they also hold information evenings in September for parents along with Coffee mornings and next term they will be look at college places. Parental engagement is sometimes good and other times not, it depends on the child, but they get quite a lot of people who come along to these events and they like to talk to other parents. The Head commented that it is the parents that don't come that are the issue and are the ones that really do need to come in.

Brian Lightman's report is really good and validates everything they have been saying – Rachel added that her next step will be to video good practice to use for staff training, including role play – it is the case of retraining for some and additional training for others.

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The Head said that he asked Brian to come in also to look at the Behaviour policy in relation to new staff. What we take for granted is that we don't go straight into the behaviour policy, but new teachers wouldn't know this, and is not what they were doing. **Action**

The Staff Governor asked about SEMH and whether this is specially about ADHD. The Head responded, not particularly, it is about the whole group. Rachel added that it includes ADHD, but also those who have become withdrawn and need some help to get back into lessons, to prevent them getting lots of behaviour points. The Head commented that we have lots of ADHD students who thrive because of the support we give them at Cantell.

The Chair asked Rachel how much support she is getting from outside agencies. Rachel responded that they have the SEMH team who come in a lot to do workshops with students. The SEND team at the LA also provide a lot of support and Rachel is able to go to them. She also works closely with the Trust SENCOs and they share advice and good practice. They don't receive a lot of support from CAMHs, who are very overstretched, but they do have contacts to seek advice from.

The Chair asked Rachel if she has a wish list. Rachel said not really, she just needs to do the best for the students that she can and she has had a lot of support from the Head and others, and having her team in place around her is working really well.

The Head informed Governors about the Thrive Hub expansion, and said when more information is available, he will bring the plans to a Governor meeting. The expansion will enhance the school for all students, including SEND students – what they do for SEND they do for everybody.

A Governor commented about the year-on-year increase in SEND students and asked whether the Head thinks this will continue for a few more years, and whether there will be a time when it plateaus? The Head responded that it will probably stay about the same and next years EHCP looks similar to this year – needs change all the time, although the numbers stay the same. The Head added that underneath SEND however, there is a lot of students without a diagnosis that do have something, but they will not wait for an official diagnosis, they will provide support because they can't wait for a diagnosis. Equally there are students whose parents think they have needs that don't have, and it is hard to deal with.

A Governor commented that it is a way for parents to rationalise how their child is behaving. The Head agreed. Rachel added that there is an element of students since Covid, who are ok in school, but show their needs at home and this is called masking and is a significant issue.

The Head said that Rachel is doing an amazing job and we are lucky to have her – she is a powerhouse. She has a really difficult job – there has been some anger and tears, but she is very passionate about the area and the job. **The Chair added that she has Governor's support.**

06/26 **Minutes of the Meeting held on the 18th September 2025**

Governors APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2025 as a true record of the meeting, which were signed accordingly by the Chair.

16/26 **Matters Arising**

05/26 Assessment Data

Rhys will provide across the board assessment data as part of his next Year 11 update in December. **Dec WGB**

Signed by Chair: Date: 11th December 2025

05/26 Outcomes by Attendance and Prior Attainment Groups **Action**

Rhys provided Governors with a table outlining outcomes by attendance and prior attainment groups and outcomes by attendance, prior attainment and pupil premium.

Governors NOTED the difference in performance for those groups of students achieving 93+ attendance in comparison with those attending less than 93%, in the High, Mid and Low Prior attainment groups. Rhys commented that regardless of attainment or prior learning, attendance has an impact on performance.

The Head added that the question is, does HPPA have to have a strategy and the answer is yes, getting them into school. It is the ones with the odd day of that we have to work with and to catch them up on the work they have missed.

The Head said that they are starting to realise that they need to do something about HPPA so they leave still at the top of their game – if they attend 93% of the time, they still do really well. Rhys added that the Year 10 to 11 cohort has already started their interventions.

05/26 Writing Stamina

Rhys commented that the question from Governors was whether the writing stamina interventions have had the expected impact. Rhys distributed some data, which included predicted and current grades.

The Head commented that the information provided is quite impressive and shows that all but one of the students who undertook the intervention sessions achieved their grade or better.

Rhys agreed, adding that the stamina sessions had a massive impact and the English sessions, which were for two or more hours, which were a challenge for students has prepared them to write for long periods of time.

The Head commented that English is a challenging subject and credit should be given to Sarah and Pru, the Faculty Leaders. The Head asked Rhys whether he knew the intervention sessions had been successful before being asked the question? Rhys responded that he thought it had been, but didn't know it had been this successful. PE will also be running a session and the Head has asked him to QA the sessions.

The Chair asked about the students who didn't attend these sessions. Rhys responded that this is only one intervention, there were other sessions running alongside them for different issues.

The Chair asked whether the sessions will be held from Year 7 upwards to increase their ability to write? The Head said in some ways, but nothing to do with testing, but they do not to have stamina and the ability to writ.

The Head added that in Year 6, they do a lot of writing, but the standards they achieve can drop in Year 7 and they sometimes repeat things when they start at Cantell. They come in with stamina and our ai is the practice this when they come to Cantell. A conversation took place about writing skills in Year 6 of primary school.

A Governor said that they will probably see benefits across different subjects following these interventions. Rhys agreed that this will help areas such as History and RE.

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The Governor said that when he came in to visit, they were focusing on writing and the extra effort was significant, it would be interesting to know how this correlates across other subjects. The Head said that this is a good point – they have looked at the correlation with History before, but not across the board.

Action MA next mtg

The Staff Governor commented that they also have to teach students the skill of concise writing to stop them spending too much time – when you are in business this is an important skill that needs to be taught.

17/26 **Policies**

The Head drew Governor's attention to the Behaviour Policy and pointed out the changes to the policy highlighted in yellow, commenting that the adaptations were as part of our regular review, but also a root and branch look at the behaviour policy and how it is implemented from the perspective of SEND students. The Head reported he had met with a few parents who had concerns about "reflection" but this remains in the policy as an escalated consequence and a highly effective one for the vast majority of students.The Head explained that they wanted to explicitly include reasonable adjustments and more of a SEND focus in the policy, without compromising the high standards expected from all our young people. Staff had training during the last three Inset days on how to identify behaviour that is not just a child pushing boundaries, and this is reflected in the policy.

The Head added that the overall ethos is one of high standards, but restorative practices, where students can make mistakes and if there is a reasonable need for adjustments, these will be made. Students are also able to challenge a behaviour point, which will then be reviewed on Tuesday.

The Chair asked how children who are not special needs, react to someone doing the same thing as them, not getting a sanction. The Head responded that it is about the strength of relationships and teachers explained the process at the start of a lesson and making the right decisions for our young people – it is all about the relationships we build as this process would not work without these relationships and the trust that staff have built with students.

A Governor said that the Head mentioned about students being able to challenge a behaviour point - do you see them doing this as it is a frightening thing for them to do. The Head said that it is up to the child to approach their teacher to talk it through, or they can see their Year Leader, which is where most of them go.

A Governor asked about searches and whether they happen if a student hasn't given consent. The Head responded that they have a wand and if a student refuses, their parents are asked to come in. We will search their bag, but it is then a legal requirement to inform their parent on the same day they have bee searched, which always happens with two people present.

The Governor asked whether only the students that are suspected of having something are searched? The Head said that this is correct and this is only a small minority.

Governors APPROVED the following policies, subject to some minor amendments to be made by the Clerk:

- Behaviour Policy (vapes to be added to list of prohibited items on page 8).
- Anti-Bullying Policy (name of Anti Bullying Lead to be added to policy – confirmed as Ian Creswell).
- Attendance Policy.
- SEN Policy & Information Report.

18/26 **Head's Update** **Action**

The Head reported that it has been a positive first term, with the students working really hard and lots of learning is taking place which is positive, and hopefully reflected in Governor's Learning Walks.
Wellbeing is also going really well and the Zen room is working well and staff have been receiving 'well done' cards on a monthly basis. Lot of different things have been happening in school, including:

- After Open Evening, staff had a short day and a coffee van was provided to say thank you at the end of half term.
- Lots of work has taken place on SEN, which was challenging, but Rachel and her team are great.
- Open Evening and the Open weeks were really successful.
- Nearly 700 on time applications received for Year 7 places for next year and the majority were first choice for 250 places, so there will be a significant waiting list. The comments from parents were really good and it was amazing to read and a testament to the work of our staff and students.
- The Head was invited to talk to the DfE at their Raising Attainment conference and he asked John Draper to join him to present. It was really important to talk to about building on KS2 into KS3 and the Regional Schools Commissioner has now invited himself in to see Cantell.
- We have been asked to be a DfE Behaviour Hub, but have asked for more information on the levels of commitment before agreeing.

<u>Ofsted Update</u>
The Head reported that Mark Bagust and himself have recently attended two days of Ofsted training for the new framework, which is very interesting with a variety of different gradings and a signification focus on inclusion. The Head added that Mark and himself will start doing inspections after Christmas.

<u>SEF</u>
The Head said he has put a summary together of where we are as a school, which Ofsted will want us to grade against – the Head read through the headings of the SEF for Governor information:

- Inclusion – we all get on really well, but it's not so good outside of school and our challenge is that the issues outside are not brought into school. Areas for development are Emotional Dysregulation.
- Curriculum & Teaching – as we will no longer have the Ebacc, students have a much broader choice, and can do what they want to, and not be forced into taking subjects they don't like. The actions for Curriculum and Teaching continues to be the development of staff and creating subject experts.

A Governor asked about when students do their options – will you continue to recommend a certain pot of subjects? The Head replied yes, we will signpost courses we think they should be taking and students will receive robust information and guidance.

The Staff Governor asked about Progress 8 and whether there has been any clarity about it. The Head responded that they still have the core subjects and the other buckets, but these buckets are now far more open and some subjects are included, others aren't, such as Business and there is a lot of work that needs to happen to unpick all of this. Unfortunately, Business is one of the most popular subjects, but this will not stop students taking it because it is not in a bucket.

- Achievement – a major development is to narrow the HPPA gaps, which is down to attendance.

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- Attendance & Behaviour – areas for development are: FSM/SEND attendance, with an aspirational target, making sure students are sensible when they are in school and supporting our non-teachers.
- Personal Development and Wellbeing – the Head is really pleased with where CPSD is, but sad that Tina left last year. The area of development is to create a student leadership programme – we have a great set of students leaders this year and need the right member of staff to move this forward.
- Leadership and Governance – Erin Lennox has just taken over as the History Subject Leader and the Head will ask Lucy Webb to talk to Ben Hiett, the Governor Link for Humanities, about the issues they have experienced.
- Safeguarding – safeguarding is really strong at Cantell.

Action

19/26 **Governor Link Visit Reports**

Humanities

Ben Hiett reported that he had visited Humanities a few weeks ago and had met with Paul Butler in Geography, which was the last remaining subject to look at. Some of the areas looked at included:

- The importance of writing and how to bring it up to a GCSE grade and the higher point questions where writing is letting them down. **Ben commented that he had seen a focus on oracy and writing skills during a previous visit to RE and he wondered whether oracy and writing are a whole school focus or just in the department, as there shouldn't be a focus on just one or the other.**

The Head responded that his personal view is that the secure learning in their long-term memory, it is not just about writing, but also talking and discussing, so there needs to be time embedded for this, but to also build stamina in writing. These are decisions that are made at a local level as to what's best for the subject, in terms of what's being taught at the time, but there should be a balance of both. The Head added that they have increased the levels of oracy and discussion in lessons and the quality of writing has also improved.

Ben commented that he was really struck by the amount of debate and oracy skills being used during his visit to the RE class. The Head added that GCSEs are a two-way thing – it is about the skills we develop and the learning for later in life.

Ben said he has mentioned his deep dive into the three different subjects in Humanities and the Head has mentioned about Business being a popular subject – is it worth him doing a deep dive into this and Travel & Tourism. The Head responded, yes – they lost the Head of Year, but have now recruited Jonah, who is great and currently undertaking his ECT.

Maths

Emma Bradhshaw reported that she had visited the Maths Department on the 14th October and her report is available with this evening's meeting papers. During her visit Emma had asked Catherine Merrell-Jones if there was anything she wanted mentioned to Governors, and Catherine had said that HPPA is currently a focus, but that she doesn't really need to do anything additional for this, as the departments structures are good. The Head agreed that Maths is a really strong area.

20/26 **Chair Update**

The Chair reported that she had been into school several times and herself, Peter and Brain, who form the Pay Committee, completed the Head's Performance Management, which has now been signed off.

The Chair said that she had also attended a safeguarding meeting with Jo Taft and had looked at SCR and had passed on one or two things to the Head. The Chair said

that she had mentioned her concerns again for Jo Taft, the Safeguarding Officer, due to the type of work she does and the Head will be meeting with her tomorrow. The Chair added that she had a very good conversation with Jo, who has since emailed the Chair to say thank you for being so open with her. **Action**

The Chair will be coming in to meet with the Head of PE next month for her Governor Link visit.
The Chair thanked Governors for being supportive of the school and staff and reminded them to come in now and then to see what's going on. The Head agreed that colleagues really value these visits.

21/26 **Finance & Staffing Committee Minutes – 16th July 2025**

Governors NOTED the minutes for the Finance & Staffing Committee meetings held on the 16th July.

22/26 **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

23/26 **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 11th December 2025, 5.30 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
2.	13/26	Provide student uptake figures for the flu jab.	Ian Creswell	December WGB meeting.
4.	14/26	Steve Godwin to provide a couple of cases who the DfE were unable to track, that we have Destination data for.	Steve Godwin	December WGB meeting
8.	16/26 / 05/26	Assessment Data – Rhys to provide across the board assessment data as part of his Year 11 update in December.	Rhys Fehners	Agenda Item – December WGB meeting
9.	16/26 / 05/26	Writing Stamina – how does this correlate across other subjects.	Rhys Fehners	December WGB meeting

Signed by Chair: Date: 11th December 2025