



# The Castle School

A SPECIALIST COLLEGE FOR COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION

Love Lane, Newbury, RG14 2JG

Tel: 01635 42976, Fax: 01635 515725

## **MINUTES of a meeting of the Full Governing Board held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022, from 5.10pm, Held at Castle School, Jane Evan's Room**

**Present:** Wendy Batchelor (LEA governor), Helen Cabell (co-opted governor), Roses Parfitt (staff governor), Charlie Kowalski (co-opted governor), Philip Jackson (Co-opted governor), Jon Hewitt (Headteacher) and Jane Gray (clerk), Luke Adams (parent governor)

**Apologies:** Nicola Markham (co-opted governor), Giles Francis (co-opted Governor)

**In attendance:** Atul Attra (School Business Manager), Caroline Whitlock (Deputy Headteacher), James Whybra (Deputy Head Post-16)

**Absent:**

### **1. Apologies Received (JG)**

Apologies received from Giles Francis and Nicola Markham.

### **2. Any other business (AOB) items for the agenda (Chair)**

Special School Reserves  
Standing Orders for the Working of the Governing Body  
Castle @Theale

### **3. Declarations of interest for this meeting (Chair)**

None declared.

### **4. Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising (Chair)**

The minutes from the last meeting, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022, were agreed. WB proposed for their ratification, JH 2<sup>nd</sup> that motion.

### **Outstanding actions from 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

*Recruitment and Staffing.* This is ongoing. Also further discussions are still continuing for the SEND Allowance.

*Health and Safety Walkabout.* WB, CK and HC had a walkabout the Love Lane site prior to the starts of today's meeting. HC said that the school is looking fresh and well maintained. Yes there are a few bits that need to rectify and this is currently in hand.

*Free School Meal Vouchers.* AA has confirmed that the Free School Meals vouchers will continue during the summer holidays this year.

## 5. Committee reports (please only cover the main points from the meetings)

- a. *Curriculum (RP)*. Due to the departure of Marie Varney, Nicola Markham was voted as the new Chair of this committee and Staffing, with Roses continuing as Vice-Chair. RP confirmed that the PSHE topic lists have now been sent to all governors. The rewording of the exclusion letter has been put on hold for now due to big changes coming nationally. **Training for Governors on EHCPs will take place Sept/Oct so it can include any new Governors. JH and WB to meet and discuss how best to do this. Policies were approved for ratification at this meeting.**
- b. *Staffing (RP)* JH, along with AA, are continuing to look into the SEND Allowance over the coming months with some of the Governors. Recruitment is still on going, especially for the @Theale site. Policies were approved for ratification at this meeting.
- c. *Finance (CK)* As HC was unable to attend, as Vice-Chair CK chaired this committee as well as Premises. AA confirmed that the school has managed to carry forward £749k for 2022/2023. Also he reminded the committee of the importance their involvement with the schools finances throughout the year. We have also received additional funding from Downe House School, £711, and £15k from The Wooden Spoon, due to the Friends of Castle for the hydro pool lighting. AA has also applied for a debit card for the Private Fund Account.
- d. *Premises (CK)* At the time AA had nothing further to report aside for the ongoing or upcoming projects. There were no policies to be reviewed by this committee at this time. Now that Covid restrictions have been lifted, at this time, Governors are allowed to visit the school, within reason.

## 6. Headteacher's report (JH)

WB asked what the absent levels are like at the moment. JH said that it is continuing being monitored and issues are dealt with early and relevant measures are put in place so the child can access the school and education. PJ asked if there was a particular age group of absence. JH said that it is primarily it's across the board but there are currently a few KS2 children they are working with.

JW updated the Board on the World of Work Scheme. Two students will be going on to apprentices, while the others have found employment. Due to Covid they haven't been able to fully operate the scheme, but as of September it will be operating normally.

Moderation with BAS has not been happening but hopefully it can continue next year. WB did say that comparing SEND with mainstream is difficult but a fresh set of eyes might provide a different insight on things.

At present it's not been possible to provide the BOOST scheme. However two new ELSA's are being recruited so it can fully start again in September 2022.

**JH needs to speak with WB regarding scoring on the SDP for 2021/22.** However it's going to be difficult due to coming out of the pandemic this year and moving on to living with Covid.

## 7. Policies for ratification

The following policies were agreed and ratified.

Policy Document	Proposed	Second
Pupil Premium Grant Fund	HC	CK
PSHE at The Castle School	WB	JH
Complaints	RP	PJ
Persistent Complaints	WB	JH
Leave of Absence	RP	HC
Grievance Procedure	PJ	CK
Engaging Volunteers	RP	LA
Disciplinary	WB	PJ
Standing Orders for the Procedural Workings of the Governing Body	WB	CK

## 8. Safeguarding update and signing of central register (CW / WB)

CW has reported that Tom Jones has installed Smoothwall. This software will monitor all internet searches made by pupils. The system works by grading these searches from 1-5, 1 being no concern to 5 being very concerning. If it has been flagged as a concern the school will receive a call with details of the search request, so it can be investigated by staff. All pupils have been informed of this and will run for a year, when it will be reviewed. This will also be installed @Theale.

3 pupils have been referred to CAS. Currently there is 1 child with a Care Plan and 22 with Care Arrangements.

There will be a review in September of Keeping Children Safe and instead of Pier on Pier it will be reworded to Child on Child.

CW also informed the Board that My Concern has been purchased. It is a confidential system so staff can log any concerns that they have. Only JH and CW, along with the individual who made the report, will know what has been reported, and conduct any investigation that is required.

## 9. AOB items

### *Castle @Theale Update*

The new site is progressing well and following a site meeting for Phase 2, CW said they should be able to access the site by the end of July.

A Primary Mental Health Worker, funded by EHA, has now been employed and will work 5 days a week on site. Other roles are continuing to be filled such as the Family Support Worker. Still need to recruit Admin and further TA's.

Even though costs are increasing due to the economic climate, the LEA are fully committed to this project.

### *Covid*

It is still around and not going away anytime soon. As with the country the school is now moving forward and "Living with Covid". JH will keep governors informed if there are going to be any significant future changes.

### *New Governors and Training*

Following 10 years as the staff governor, RP will be retiring at the end of the summer term. Therefore we need to fill the vacancy for Staff Governor. **JH to send an email to all school staff to submit their nominations if they would like to take on this role.**

**JG to send out a letter to all parents informing them that there are a number of parent vacancies should they wish to submit a nomination.**

With the potential of 5 new governors starting in September 2022, full governor training will be taking place via GovernorHub. WB asked if there was any outstanding or additional training needs required for Governor's and if so to email JG. **HM and CK to receive extra Health and Safety Training when the next course come up.**

**To help to see if there are any skills gaps that need to be filled WB/JH to email JG a Skills Audit for governors to complete, possibly via Survey Monkey.**

### *School Development Plan*

Following the presentation a few weeks ago of the SDP for 22/23, all governors approved the plan for the next academic year.

### *@Theale cleaning contract*

AA confirmed that Service Master will have their contract extended to include the cleaning for @Theale from September. This change was agreed by all governors.

### *SEND Allowance*

**AA confirmed that, following the Budget sign-off meeting, the SEND Allowance is still being discussed and he is hoping to present it to the Finance Committee in the autumn.**

### *Date of the next meeting*

The next Full Governing Board meeting will be on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 5pm, at Castle School, Love Lane.

**Meeting closed 6.20pm**

**NOTE: Items in bold are current or new action points and will be followed up at future meetings.**