



Charing School is an inclusive family, proud of our faith in God and our friendship with our community.

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Confidence – Determination – Faith – Friendship – Respect.

Non-Confidential Minutes of the Governing Body Monday 5th October 2020 at 5pm.

Governors Present: Mr. David Milham (DM): Chair,
Mr. Tom Bird (HoS): Head of School,
Ms. Angela Matthews (AM): Consultant Head Teacher,
Mr. Dan Freedman (DF), *joined the meeting at 17:21*
Mr. Charles Low (CL),
Mrs. Sarah Siddiqui (SS),
Mr. Simon Molony (SM).

Clerk: Mrs Lorraine Bondzie-Mensah

PROCEDURAL MATTERS			ACTIONS
1	Welcome and Prayer	The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and the HoS led the Governing Body in prayer.	
2	Apologies	Apologies were received and unanimously accepted from Mr Nick Morgan and Mrs. Chrystal Denys.	
3	Declarations of Interest	The annual review of the Register of Business & Pecuniary Interests was completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs L. Bird is volunteering in Year 6. 	
4	Code of Conduct	Governors reviewed and signed the Governors Code of Conduct.	
5	KCSIE	All Governors confirmed via GovernorHub, they have read and understood the 2020 Keeping Children Safe in Education.	
6	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	The minutes from the previous Governing Body Meeting held on 13 th July 2020 were approved as a true and accurate reflection of proceedings. <b style="color: red;">ACTION: In Item 6.2, a clearer distinction between vision and school values is required. Re-label with vision and values and post updated documents to GovernorHub.	HoS
7	Matters Arising	Update on new fencing for safeguarding reasons: 3 quotations are now in place and the Trust await confirmation from the local council to understand if a planning application is required, as the school sits in a conservation area.	
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT			ACTIONS
8	Head of School Report	Other than managing some safeguarding and other parental concerns, it has been a fantastic start to the year. The school continue to raise their expectations and the pupils are responding well to the challenge. The issues surrounding COVID are being very sensibly and all staff and pupils are keeping to their bubbles regimentally. The school will be losing their excellent FLO, who is seeking career progression in another local school. The HoS and Governors wish her well in her new role, she will be sorely missed. The vacancy will be filled internally. However, if this is not as effective then the school may have to consider returning to this format for reappointment.	



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<p>The Consultant HT confirmed the return to school has started very well. Staff are enthusiastic and the children are all working hard. She confirmed the set up for the FLO role is appropriate as the school is in a different position than before.</p> <p><i>Dan Freedman joined the meeting at 17:21.</i></p> <p>Book scrutiny has taken place with the School Improvement Advisor and SLT. The quality of work, this early on in the year, is better than expected.</p> <p>Attendance is currently 95%. However, there is very low attendance for pupil premium children but this relates to 1 pupil only. An issue from the summer meant that the child returned to school 4 days later than the other children and then had a week's holiday; for which they were fined. In total, the 7 / 8 days' absence has had a large impact at such an early point of the year. This is an isolated matter and last year's poor attenders have yet to have a day off.</p> <p>Q1: What is the curricular cost of catch ups where children are missing in class teaching? R1: Managing catch up and delivering a full curriculum to the children is a difficult balance. SLT will need to review the timetable regularly to ensure that the children are not missing the same point every day.</p> <p>Q2: What funding is being provided for catch up sessions? R2: £80 a child</p> <p>Q3: How will it be spent? R3: The SENCO will be delivering catch up work 2 days a week.</p> <p>Q4: Considering the children have had 6 months off school it is encouraging to hear of the quality of work in the books. Is this because they were so well supported for home schooling? R4: A significant number of children wanted to be back in school and their enthusiasm to be back, along with the high expectations from teachers, means the children have risen to those challenges. Children have matched the speed and expectation of delivery by the staff and a positive mindset has played a critical role. Quality of learning has never looked so positive in the 1st term. The Staff Governor briefed the LGB on Maths catch up and reiterated the importance of the enthusiasm in both staff and pupils to return to school as key factor in their progress.</p> <p>Q5: There continues to be no after school clubs? R5: This is likely to restart after Christmas. The numbers of children on roll is not increasing despite the significant leaps forward in quality of teaching and learning in the school. A breakfast and after school club provision might be useful in attracting more working families locally but still needs to be costed to ensure it breaks even.</p>
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		<p>Q6: Is this enthusiasm unique to our school or can it be seen across the Trust? R6: SM has been working with 4 Aquila schools and without exception the enthusiasm for schooling is there for all. The novelty of the extended break soon wore off and pupils were delighted to be back at school. Consequently, most schools will be following a year group appropriate curriculum from January. With consistently good and enthusiastic teaching you can move mountains. The children at our school could well be on an age appropriate curriculum by the end of next term. Staff will be assessing children in 2 weeks' time to see where they are compared to this time last year.</p> <p>Finance – the cost of photocopying is significantly high and the team are encouraged to use black and white copies where possible as they are a 3rd of the cost of coloured copies.</p> <p>Pupils on roll has decreased. The school is losing a family 4 to a school closer to their home and this will reduce the roll to 87 pupils. Next year's Year R parents will be invited to look around the school in term 2. It is important to try and have face to face contact, which will take place outside of the normal school day</p> <p>ACTION: Virtual governor visit is required to review interventions. Governors will ensure the catch up fund is being well spent.</p>	SM + CL
9	<p>School Improvement Plan</p>	<p>ACTION: The SIP Mission statement needs to be updated. The Governing Body reviewed the SIP for 2020/21 in advance of the meeting. It is a re-draft from last year and continues to focus on the same priorities but adjust to the current environment.</p> <p>Q7: It is surprising there wasn't more reference to COVID in the SIP? R7: The HoS will not allow COVID to be used as an excuse for the school not moving forward. There has been a number of excuses in the past and the HoS is keen for COVID to be a factor in managing delivery, not a reason for lack of progress.</p> <p>Q8: Will the focus on catch up, what will be the impact of a lack of after school clubs? R8: It is hard to know how long COVID will affect us. Catch up must be the priority and whilst after school clubs are needed, they must be managed safely and the current resources are focused on curricular activities.</p> <p>Q9: Governors recognise the motivation for limiting the discussion surrounding COVID in the SIP but it is a challenge which needs to be addressed, for example the restrictions mean that there are no volunteers for readers? R9: The school's ambitions for the children remain in place despite COVID. SLT recognise that the delivery of those ambitions may have to change as the year</p>	HoS



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9.1	Monitoring Responsibilities	<p>and wider issues develop but the school continues to focus on the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.</p> <p>With limited membership, the monitoring of the SIP will be shared across the LGB and will be agreed on a termly basis. This term will focus on the catch up interventions and next term, a safeguarding virtual visit will take place. DF and DM will continue to monitor the school's finances.</p> <p>Q10: Will some visits require governors to be in school? R10: Advice from the local authority and the Aquila Trust is that Governors should not make visits into schools. The LGB recognise that this limits what can be done but they will work with SLT to ensure effective monitoring can still take place.</p> <p>For schools expecting an OfSTED inspection, school improvement partners continue to make on site visits. However, they wear appropriate PPE to do so and are limited in the time they spend in areas of the site outside of the HoS's office.</p>	
10	Governance Matters	The Governing Body discussed the following governance activities:	
10.1	Notes of Visit	School improvement partner notes of visit from July and September were circulated to and reviewed by the LGB in advance of the meeting.	
10.2	Pay Committee	<p>The Governing Body approved the use of Option B of the Aquila Trust Pay Policy to ratify the performance related pay decisions of all staff. The HoS's performance management review is set for Tuesday, 13th October. Membership of the Committee was agreed as SM and CL.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to convene a meeting of the Pay Committee before 31st October 2020.</p>	CLERK
10.3	Membership	<p>A parent governor election process will begin this week but membership issues remain as the church has yet to appoint a priest for Charing. In accordance with the school's foundation, the school must appoint church attendees as part of their Governing Body.</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair to email the PCC to discuss membership. • Skills Audit to be circulated in order to inform key skills gaps in the current membership. • HoS to place an advert in the parish magazine. 	CHAIR CLERK HoS
11	Finance	The Governing Body reviewed the August financial monitoring report which identifies a much better year end position than expected. This will provide the school with a cumulative rollover surplus of around £20k. This improved position	



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11.1	Capital Projects 2020/21	<p>has been achieved through strict financial controls and additional focus on finances from SLT during the lockdown period. However, the falling roll continues to be a financial risk to the school and it will be difficult to maintain 5 classes in 2021 unless more children join the school.</p> <p>A list of current capital expenditure and future requirements was circulated to the LGB, who confirmed the key priorities were boiler replacement and the refurbishment of the toilets. The LGB discussed the 3-year plan including the server which is out of warranty in 2021 and laptop and iPad replacements needed for pupils and staff. There is a DfE fund which will enable the school to procure additional electronic devices if a child tests positive for COVID and a bubble has to be sent home. This is to ensure all children have remote access to home learning resources. The school are able to retain the devices after COVID. There have been 7 children who have had to self-isolate but all tested negative for COVID. There has been no need to send a bubble home yet.</p> <p>Q11: Broadband costs are a little high? R11: There is a Trust wide approach currently in process to reviewing the procurement of broadband.</p> <p>The LGB agreed the capital project priorities and full details, including supplier information, will be submitted to Governors in advance of any project going ahead.</p>	
11.2	PP and SEN	<p>ACTION: Defer the review of the spending strategies for PP and SEN to the next meeting.</p>	CLERK / HoS
11.3	Gift register	<p>In accordance with the Aquila Trust Admin and Financial Control Policy, the HoS confirmed there was no requirement to create or maintain a Gift register for 2019/20.</p>	
12	Risk Register	<p>The LGB reviewed the school's risk register. The highest level threats continue to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R747 – the academy premises are unavailable for occupation for a significant period of time • R749 – there are insufficient staff or resources to deliver services to the appropriate level • R751 – there are insufficient funds to deliver services to the appropriate level. <p>Whilst there has been significant distance travelled on the improvement of the school's cash flow, its ability to be a going concern and improving the internal financial controls – the decreasing roll threads to de-rail these efforts and leave the school with insufficient funds. As result, the budget will not be able to sustain running 5 classes in the future.</p>	



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		<p>The threat of COVID on the quality of education if the local area is required to return to lockdown is also a concern.</p> <p>Q11: Is there a challenge with recruiting and retaining staff? R11: No the threat regarding insufficient staff / resources is purely a financial one.</p> <p>R755 – the behaviour and / or safety of pupils, staff or visitors falls below acceptable standards is still a high risk but for different reasons now – it is a safety issue created by the risks of COVID only. The behaviour of pupils continues to be very good.</p> <p>The LGB acknowledge the concerns reported in the media that government funding cuts may take place in out to recoup the coronavirus deficit. Conversely, the school is accessing high amounts of HNF but KCC have not yet finalised their action plan following their CQC inspection and this may be subject to change.</p> <p>The impact of a falling roll is critical. It is hoped that the introduction of a breakfast club and afterschool club in term 2 will encourage more working families to join the school.</p> <p>Attendance is viewed with caution – whilst the initial enthusiasm is helping at the moment, attendance is only 1% higher than the year before. The school continue to work closely with those who are poor attenders but SLT are mindful that the winter season brings increased ill health which will lead to further absences.</p> <p>The Governing Body will continue to review the full risk register at every LGB meeting.</p>	
13	Safeguarding	2 families require CP and there is an on-going social services case. Further details have been provided to the CofG.	
14	Buildings + Health & Safety	The school will be appointing a site caretaker next week.	
15	Policies	<p>The following policies were approved by the Governing Body:</p> <p>Child Protection Policy (Aquila)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Policy (Aquila) • Staff Expenses Policy (Aquila) • Coronavirus Policy – August Update (Aquila) • Data Retention Policy (Aquila) • Staff Handbook – updates in yellow (Aquila) • School Food Policy (School) 	



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Policy • School food policy 	
ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS			ACTIONS
16	Any Other Business	There was no minuted discussion.	
17	Confidentiality	Elements of the Head of School's Report are deemed confidential.	
18	Date of Next Meeting	23 rd November 2020	
19	Closing Reflections	The Governing Body expressed their sincere thanks to the HoS and all the team for an excellent start to the academic year.	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 18:55.

Signed:
 Chairman of the Governing Body

Dated: