



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

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## Non-Confidential Minutes of the Governing Body Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 5pm.

Governors Present: Mr. Dan Freedman (DF): Chair,  
Mr. Tom Bird (HoS): Head of School,  
Ms. Angela Matthews (AM): Consultant Head Teacher,  
Mr. Charles Low (CL),  
Mrs. Sarah Siddiqui (SS),  
Mx. Ana Olea Fernandez (AOF),  
Mr. Daniel Sutch (DS).

Clerk: Mrs Lorraine Bondzie-Mensah

PROCEDURAL MATTERS			ACTIONS
1	<b>Welcome and Prayer</b>	The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and AM led the Governing Body in prayer.	
2	<b>Apologies</b>	Apologies were received and accepted from Ms. Susan Ashford-Smith, Mr. Simon Molony and Mr. David Milham.	
3	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TB: Mrs L. Bird is volunteering in Year 6.</li> <li>DM: Daughter is employed by the school (Mrs. Horsford).</li> </ul>	
4	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>	The minutes from the previous Governing Body Meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 were approved as a true and accurate reflection of proceedings.	
5	<b>Matters Arising</b>	Review of outstanding actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kent test results have not appeared in the parish magazine. <b>ACTION: HoS to follow up.</b></li> <li>2. Parental survey results to be circulated to Governors. <b>ACTION: in the process of being summarised and will be circulated soon.</b></li> <li>3. Remote learning review to be completed by CL and parent governor. This did not take place as there was no information circulated by SLT. <b>ACTION: Carry forward monitoring to term 6 and broaden the brief to include a review of how the catch up funding being spent.</b></li> <li>4. Parent governors to write reports on their experiences of remote learning. <b>ACTION: carried forward to term 6.</b></li> <li>5. <b>ACTION: Safeguarding visit in term 5 to be re-arranged for term 6.</b></li> </ol> There were no matters arising.	HoS  HoS  CL/DS  HoS AOF
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT			ACTIONS
6	<b>Head of School Report</b>	The HoS outlined the key headlines of the report: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The school continue to prepare for an OfSTED inspection. At the next meeting, SM will update the LGB on his experiences of a pilot OfSTED inspection which took place in another Aquila school and will provide Governors with practical examples of the inspectors' new focus. The HoS is feeling positive after the recent pre-inspection visit by WS. As with all key visits, there was a sense of nervousness but the school responded well and the staff feel their hard work has now been noticed and is</li> </ol>	



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		<p>paying off well in the improvement in standards. Children are in a better place now too and the reputation of the school is improving within the community with an average of 4 or 5 school tour per week for prospective new pupils. The roll appears to be rising rapidly and behaviour is good.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Main actions from report – continue to support the more inexperienced members of the teaching team and make sure the lowest 20% in KS1 are reading regularly; in particular, those children who arrive late for school must be provided with reading time at another point within the day if they have missed the opportunity to do so first thing. This action is being monitored every Friday by Ros.</li> <li>3. The biggest development point is the curriculum. Inspectors are no longer looking at data in the way they did before and are far more focused on the curriculum, how we embed it, how we develop their knowledge and retain that information over time. Staff also need to be clearly on where the children start and where they are going.</li> </ol> <p>Governors noted the importance of continued growth in the roll to keep growing and the sustained interest in the school, as an important element in safeguarding the financial security of the school in the long term. A definition of the terms GRT and EAL was provided to new Governors.</p> <p><i>Question 1 and its response related to the needs of children with EHCPs and was deemed confidential; and has been recorded separately.</i></p> <p><b>Q2: What has caused the damp in building 4?</b>        R2: Building 4 holds the classrooms for Infants and Reception. The classroom is not currently being used. The school are trying to diagnose the issue at the moment. There are no plans to use this classroom next year but if the roll continues to grow, it might be required in Sept 2022.  <b>ACTION: HoS to provide a map of the school with building numbers for new governors.</b></p> <p><b>Q3: What is the story behind the FLO reporting that she has asked parents to respect each other lifestyles?</b>        R3: This relates to a child who discussed how her grandfather liked to hunt and there was a parental disagreement about how this issue should have been handled.</p> <p><b>Q4: 26 safeguarding logs since the last report suggests there was around 1 per day? Is this higher than expected?</b>        R4: The log also includes incidents relating to behavioural concerns. In the first 3 or 4 weeks after returning from lockdown, there were some settling in challenges so it is to be expected that there were more than usual during this period.</p>	
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		<p>Furthermore, the school now have an additional 20 children on roll and so there is simply more children to write about. There have been no social services referrals. Walking around the school, you would not be aware of any behaviour issues. Some children who have joined with needs which are linked to their home life and these too would also be included in these logs.</p> <p>Governors will continue to monitor the safeguarding log. There is an expectation that the number of logs will now level off or reduce in future HoS reports.</p> <p><b>Q5: Reflecting on the positive report from WS, how can the Governing Body show their appreciation to staff?</b></p> <p>R5: HoS agreed the last year has been incredibly challenging. Consistently, the team have gone above and beyond. It was recommended that the staff should be given a 12.30pm finish to thank them for their hard work and dedication during this time. Cover would be provided to ensure the school stayed open and half days would be co-ordinated to ensure it didn't put pressure on other staff who then had to cover. Having an afternoon off creates less workload. It is important that the children continue to learn but the logistics have to be carefully planned to ensure it doesn't over burden remaining staff.</p> <p><b>Vote: APPROVED.</b> HoS, SS, AM recognise their conflict of interest as members of staff and abstained from voting. The remaining 4 governors and the pre-meeting email from the Chair voting in favour of the motion makes this approval a quorate decision.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Diary Date: 14<sup>th</sup> July - Junior sports day. All Governors invited to join the whole school picnic on the field after sports day.</b></p> <p><b>Q6: Governors noted the report from the Fire Service regarding the recent fire incident. Are there any future implications in terms of school security or will this be resolved with the new fencing?</b></p> <p>R6: The HoS has recently completed the planning permission documentation for Ashford Borough Council. The incident took place during the day but there seems to have been no witnesses. There are no records of arson incidents at the school previous so this appears to be a one-off occurrence. Children never play close to the perimeter fence so they will be safe if it was to happen again. If someone was trying to damage the school building there are far more effective / accessible places to ignite. If it happens again the mitigating action would be to improve the current scope of the CCTV.</p> <p>The School Improvement Plan was updated and recirculated to the Governing Body in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Q7: Why does the RAG stop in December?</b></p>	
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ALL



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6.1	<b>School Improvement Plan</b>	<p>R7: The school was closed for term 3 and returned half way into term 4. The remaining term 4 has been RAG rated.</p> <p><b>Q8: What brought about the new focus on team building lessons and sports coaching and after school clubs?</b></p> <p>R8: Covid restrictions meant after school clubs stopped and opportunities for enrichment and sport have decreased as a result. The school plan for them to restart in term 6, or term 1 at the latest. The team also need to find more time for team building in the timetable.</p>	
7	<b>Pre-OfSTED Visit Review</b>	<p>In the previous visit by WS in 2019, all areas of the school were categorised as Good, with Early Years graded Outstanding. During this visit, the 'Quality of Education' and 'Leadership' were graded Good" and 'Behaviour and Attitudes', 'Personal Development' and 'Early Years' were graded as Outstanding. The next steps for Leadership is to look at the quality of education and ensure the children have quality exposure to all subjects. The school needs to work on the knowledge base of the children and developing skills to retain this information. SLT are working with subject leaders between now and the summer term to address this. It is good to see all the hard work from the team is taking the school in the right direction. Governors reflected on a positive report from WS. SLT felt the curriculum development points were no surprise and work had already begun on many of the points raised.</p> <p>As a Section 8 inspection is not a full inspection, the aim is to be in a position to trigger another inspection for Outstanding. Governors are reassured that even an inspection in September will see the school graded as Good. Staff found it very useful to reassure them about their current practice and felt it was also an opportunity to show someone what they have achieved recently. The HoS thanked Governors for their support during the pre-Ofsted inspection visit.</p> <p>Governors recommended advertising for volunteers to hear the child read to help with the KS1 children who need to regularly read out loud.</p> <p><b>ACTION: HoS add to the next parish magazine and an advert in the Post Office window.</b></p> <p>Volunteers will have safeguarding training with the DSL and then training will be provided to help ensure they are asking the children the right questions.</p> <p>In summary, the main development areas were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Curriculum intent</u> This will be a key focus in the weeks ahead and will be reviewed by LP at her next visit.</li> </ul>	HoS



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		<p><b>ACTION: HoS to circulate the updated information to governors who will need to include this in their quality of education monitoring. This will also be an agenda item in July, with further updates in September.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Subject leaders understanding the development journey</u> Subject leaders need to better understand the development journey of the pupils as they go from year R to year 6. This is a significant point of development for the team. SLT plan to change the format of staff meetings to provide development time for subject leaders. The impact will then be tested by LP on her next visit.</li> </ul> <p>Governors noted the report talks of rapid improvement in the last 2 years and congratulated the staff for this accelerated progress for the school. It is clearly a happy school, where children are safe to thrive and the pupils are happy. The children were a real credit and spoke of the school in glowing terms.</p> <p><b>Q9: Governors noted the requirement for updates to the safeguarding policy in relation to Operation Encompass, intersectionality and references to changing cultures around the world. When will these changes be actioned?</b> R9: Some of those points will need to be incorporated into the school improvement plan next year. The safeguarding policy is generated by the Trust and will be reviewed in September. For clarity, a description of Operation Encompass was given.</p>	HoS
<b>8</b>	<b>Data</b>	<p>Progress data was circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting and provides a conservative view of progressions. The HoS is hopeful the data will be much better by term 6. Data is no longer a key focus for inspectors but the school still need to make sure they are using it to measure whether the children are reaching their best potential. Governors should be mindful that it is difficult to say whether the true child is being seen at the moment as they are still trying to settle after a very turbulent 12 months of lockdowns and class / bubble isolations. The staff will be a stronger position to give a more accurate picture next term. Consistent teaching over the next year or so will bring the children back to where they should be.</p> <p>Governors noted the attainment projections for Years 2,3 and 4 are looking weak. Year 2 have always been a low attaining group which only has 7 children. Year 4 children have been quite cuspy even before lockdown but by the time they are in year 6 they should be at 70%. This is also a small group of 11 children. The most disappointing progress is for year 1. They have had a high level of mobility and this is reflected in the mobility statistics.</p> <p><b>ACTION: HoS to present data as fractions at the next meeting so Governors can more easily see where non-attainment relates to only 1 or 2 children.</b></p> <p><b>Q10: Why is there a drop from April to July 21?</b></p>	HoS



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		<p>R10: The first data sheet shows children moving from one point to another. But some children are at lower started points and therefore will not attain at age expected levels. However, they are still making excellent progress. The school is expecting SATs will go ahead next year and the children need to be ready for this. There are targets in place to ensure they can get there.</p> <p>The key drivers of underperformance are the gaps created from remote learning and the intake of new pupils who change the mix of the school, statistically.</p>	
9	<b>Governance Matters</b>		
9.1	<b>Governor Monitoring Reports</b>	<p>A meeting to review the SEF took place independently of the FGB and was recorded in the monitoring report circulated to all governors. Most governors attend and no further question arose.</p>	
9.2	<b>Monitoring Visits</b>	<p>The monitoring visits plan for term 6 is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. KS1 reading and writing visit.</li> </ol> <p style="color: red;"><b>ACTION: DF to contact SM to schedule the visit and recommend AOF and DS also attend the monitoring visit to receive coaching on conducting monitoring visits from SM.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Review of Remote Learning and how the gaps it created are being effectively filled.</li> <li>3. Safeguarding.</li> </ol>	DF / AOF / DS
9.2	<b>School Improvement Partner Notes of Visit (NoV)</b>	<p><b>Wendy Simmons NoV</b> <u>Virtual learning review</u></p> <p>The visit focused on how the school are closing the gaps and how catch up funding is being used. Governors noted the need for the LGB to monitor the effective use of this funding.</p> <p><u>Writing and handwriting</u></p> <p>This was not raised in the pre-OfSTED visit which shows the impact of the work carried out recently. The children had had a long period of not writing and a lot of work has been put in to make sure there are 5 practice opportunities a week. Handwriting is improving and children have to re-do it if it is not up to the required standard.</p> <p><u>Mental maths agility</u></p> <p>Place value is a key concept to be embedded before the children can move on. Correct and effective use of manipulatives is a whole school focus. The subject lead has been leading staff training sessions, as well as providing lots of 1-2-1 support with teachers to iron out any needs in the class or individual pupils. The introduction of white rose has gone well and has teased out the understanding from children. They are encouraged to explain how they got to the answer and</p>	



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		<p>what other strategies they can use rather than focusing on the actual answer itself. Children are then able to problem solve and retention of knowledge is better. Teachers have given positive feedback on the scheme.</p> <p><u>Focus on gap closing</u> Teachers assessed children the first week back in March. Catch up teaching takes place every week in class and in small groups of 8. Classes are also having an hour a week to do individualised catch up. Books are showing progress and gaps are closing. Hopefully this will be evidenced in the next data analysis. Teachers are prioritising the key concepts the children need to have in order to move into the next year group. SLT are looking at curriculum coverage - what areas have been missed and which can they be slotted in anywhere / dropped in order to prioritising another more important topic. The school can't cover every area missed.</p> <p><b>Lorna Priddle NoV</b></p> <p><b>Q11: During her book scrutiny, she suggests not introducing play scripts in year 3?</b> R11: They do need to master this skill but it can hinder their development. Play scripts are a useful tool in developing quality writing and they will be touched on but alternative practices need to be used.</p> <p>This visit was the last the school had before the pre-OfSTED inspection review. LP gave positive feedback on the maths work and the school's use of technology post lockdown. The team are being more inventive in their ideas to engage children with Maths.</p> <p>Marking and feedback policy: some support was required for the NQT who was working exhaustively to give comprehensive feedback and was encouraged to focus on condensing the feedback whilst retaining impact for the child. A common issue for newly qualified teachers.</p> <p><b>Q12: Governors noted there may be less staggering of drop off times and more mixing of the children now that there is an easing of covid measures nationally?</b> R12: This was mentioned in the school newsletter but there is still a possibility that we may still need to close bubbles so restrictions will not be eased yet. The HoS is more relaxed with timings if children arrive early if it makes drops off easier for parents but there will be no whole school worship and the school are not the 21<sup>st</sup> June restrictions to be lifted with current concerns about new variants.</p>	
10	Finance	<p><b><u>Current In-Year Position: April Month End Financial Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Q13: Why is there a significant change in the end of year forecast position since last month?</b></p>	



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R13: This month has seen significant movement in pension costs for support staff. An error recording HR information in SIMS has been rectified and the updated costs are now included. It is close to the original Master Budget estimates that we had provided for.

The current in-year position is that we are hopeful of a cumulative surplus of £22k. This would normally be the starting point of our Master Budget for next year and our 5-year plan. However, there are 4 months of the financial year still to run and the buildings maintenance costs continue to place a strain on the budget. It has been assumed a rollover of £15k would be a more cautious starting point instead.

The cash flow forecast was reviewed and there are no concerns to report.

### **Master Budget 2021/22 and 5-Year Plan APPROVED**

The HoS, the Chair, the Finance Governor and the school’s finance officer met on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May to interrogate the budget plan in detail and recommend it to the Governing Body for approval.

Governors reviewed the pupil numbers used to predict the GAG funding in future years. The census information in October 2020 which informs the funding for September 2021 were as follows:

4+	4+ Reception	Early Years	13
5+	Year 1	KS1	11
6+	Year 2	KS1	10
7+	Year 3	KS2	18
8+	Year 4	KS2	11
9+	Year 5	KS2	10
10+	Year 6	KS2	18
<b>Total</b>			<b>91</b>

However, the school now has an additional 20 children on roll at 111 and could have as many as 116 by year end. Due to the lagged funding methodology, the school will not see this increase in funding until 2022. In the past, the school has had a high level of mobility so a cautious approach has been adopted and we are planning for 107 to be on roll at the census in October 2021, then 109, 118, 117 in future years. Retaining the pupils is vital to the financial health of the school in the long term. If growth continues at the same rate, the Governing Body may





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		<p>need to decide when to move to 6 classes which is a significantly better position than this time last year when there was some concern as to whether the school could afford to continue running 5 classes. 5 classes are now secure for the next 5 years.</p> <p>Key challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running the school with 115 on roll but only funded for 91 in 2021/22.</li> <li>• Unresolved building issues such as damp in classrooms.</li> <li>• The updated teachers' pay and conditions document has seen all Aquila teachers move away from more affordable pay ranges, to pay scale points. This is a significant cost to all schools in the Trust and in our school those costs really begin to bite into the budget in year's 4 and 5 of the 5-year plan.</li> </ul>	
11	<b>Risk Management</b>	<p>The Governing Body reviewed the updated Risk Register and noted a reduction in two areas from red to amber:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to buildings: this is reflective in the reduction of issues relating to covid.</li> <li>2. Staffing risks have also reduced now that all staff are back to work. However, it remains amber as some members of staff are still vulnerable so potentially this risk could go back to red.</li> </ol> <p>Concerns relating to "inadequate funds" relates to the previous discussion in terms of the pressures of managing the site and larger roll with only 91 funded places.</p>	
12	<b>Safeguarding</b>	All safeguarding matters were included in the HoS report and there was no further discussion.	
13	<b>Buildings + Health &amp; Safety</b>	The Ellis Whittam annual inspection is expected at the end of term 6. The planned support from other Aquila schools for the Site Manager has not been forthcoming due to covid restrictions and the school risk being non-compliant with the paperwork side of health and safety management if the portal is not brought up to date on a more regular basis. Consequently, the Site Manager has taken an increase in his contract by 3 hours a week until August 2022 to allow to provide enough time to get the system up to date.	
<b>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b>			<b>ACTIONS</b>
14	<b>Any Other Business</b>	A new clerk will be joining the Governing Body in September and she is currently reviewing the proposed dates with her current clerking schedule for any clashes. Confirmation of the 2021/22 meeting schedule with therefore be delayed until the next meeting in July.	
15	<b>Confidentiality</b>	The discussion surrounding Q1 in Item 6 was deemed confidential and recorded separately.	



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<b>16</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	Next FGB Meeting – Monday, 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 5pm	
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There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:02.

Signed: .....  
 Vice Chairman of the Governing Body

Dated: .....