

**Approved Minutes for the meeting of the Clarendon School Local Governing Body held on 27 November 2024 at 5.00pm at Clarendon Secondary School (RTS Conference Room) and virtually via Teams.**

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

Link to Papers [CLA-24-2 271124](#)

**Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance:** Jenny Bissett (from Item 2), Niall Brady (Chair), Niall Dumigan (Headteacher), Kelly Faulkner, Chris Reynolds, James Rimmer, Hanna Shepard, and Aminta Townshend.

**Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance virtually:** Natalyia Bennett and Bharat Gopalan.

**Also in attendance:** Angela Mason (Head of Primary), Claire O'Neill (Secondary Teacher) and Michael Sinanan (Head of Secondary) and Andy Whiteside (Trustee).

**Also in attendance virtually:** Jayne Gray (Gateway),

**Clerk in attendance:** Julie Adams

## 1. Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest and items from the Clerk.

- 1.A The Governing Body **noted** all members of the LGB were present.
- 1.B The Chair of the LGB **reminded** that all members that they must abide by the Auriga Academy Trust Declarations of Interest Policy and should **declare** if they have an interest in any matter that comes before them. There were no declarations made.

## 2. Presentations

The Governing Body **received** a presentation from Claire O'Neill on Life Skills within the secondary curriculum. Ms O'Neill explained the development of this curriculum from a 2016 working document and following feedback from the Ofsted inspection in 2019. The idea has been that the skills taught would filter through to all subject areas with clear expectations at the end of year 6 and Year 11 being identified. This was refined in 2020 identifying four outcome areas—employability, communication, emotional intelligence and social interaction. This was shared with all staff and incorporated into all curriculum subject plans, to support pupils' progress towards independence.

Further review identified that staff were having difficulty evaluating the outcomes for students this was not effectively being tracked. Changing the delivery of life skills classes to a set lesson on timetables in Secondary would have a better impact on students. The school had a "Fun Friday" lesson, and it was agreed to reallocate this time to alternate between Life Skills and RSE lessons. Ms O'Neill developed individual units for both primary and secondary such as eating together, transport and the community. Primary life skills are integrated through the normal school day and topics throughout the year and referred to as 'Skills for Living'.

A further redesign of the curriculum in 2023 refined the outcome areas to Employability, Social Interaction and Communication and now reaches beyond the classroom to college visits, work experience, Enterprise Day, Challenge Week, Trips, Residentials and many others.

Several governors advised that they had attended the Enterprise Day and had been impressed with some of the ideas and products offered by the pupils.

A software tool called 'Skills Builder' is being used to ensure monitor progression in Life Skills. Detailed progression maps and learner descriptors support staff to track pupils across their subject areas which also aids their planning and delivery of subject lessons.

Ms O'Neill advised that she is continuing to work across Primary and Secondary to promote collaboration, expanding the Skills for Working to a wider network of subject leads (currently core subjects only) and is also working with Occupational Therapists to implement some of the Skills for Living modules for suitable students at Secondary site. There are also some overlaps within the progression maps which she is reviewing.

The Governing Body **asked** how the student's voice influences the Life Skills curriculum. Ms O'Neill advised that there is an evaluation tool within 'Skills Builder', but this can sometimes be too complex for a lower aged / ability students to access. The Head of Primary advised that they use cue cards to check enjoyment of the session. There is a teacher assessment tool which also can be used across a whole class.

The Governing Body **noted** the Occupational Therapy involvement with the Life Skills curriculum and **asked** if this was a response to the changing profile of students at Clarendon. The Headteacher **explained** that OT involvement should always be happening and that where OT provision is integrated with normal classroom activity there is the additional benefit for staff of being upskilled in their own practice. The Headteacher **advised** that as the Occupational Therapy team is provided in-house a new dedicated OT, will be joining the Clarendon SLT and be involved in leadership discussions.

The Governing Body **queried** the 'Independence Awards'. The Headteacher **explained** that this had been set up by the previous Headteacher and had been difficult to maintain momentum for both students and staff. The Governing Body **asked** if the students are aware of the skills they are working towards with 'Skills Builder'. The language and terminology give an opportunity for parents to be involved and can be re-enforced at home.

The Governing Body **asked** about assessment across the curriculum in Primary. The Head of Primary **advised** that this is integrated and reviewed with parents and set outcomes are expected at the end of Year 6. The Governing Body **thanked** Ms O'Neill for her presentation.

*Claire O'Neill left the meeting.*

The Governing Body **received** a presentation from Michael Sinanan to introduce the revised Teaching and Learning Policy. Mr Sinanan **explained** that the Draft Policy had been circulated with the papers and this had minor tweaks to following the consultation period which had ended just before the LGB meeting. He **explained** that the Teaching and Learning Policies had previously

been separated into Primary and Secondary. This revision creates one policy for the whole school to ensure “a place of learning for everyone”.

The policy had been created with input from all staff and focuses on key principles of Quality First Teaching, Rosenshine’s Principles of Instruction and Evidence Based Practice, with various approaches to support learning, including collaboration, multidisciplinary working with OT and SaLT, Positive Practice etc.

The policy will be supported by two other key documents a ‘Clarendon Essentials’ which will be a single sheet, visual demonstration of what things is expected within a Clarendon classroom and much more detailed specific primary and secondary ‘Handbooks’. These handbooks will be developed by each campus. Work on these two supporting documents will start in the spring and it is hoped to bring back to a future LGB meeting. The Governing Board **requested** a realistic timeframe for completion of these documents. The Headteacher **expected** completion of the Essentials in the Spring term and the Handbook by the end of the academic year. He added that the Handbook would be continued to be updated with the expectation that it would be referred to as needed.

The Governing Body **asked** how progress and implementation of the policy would be assessed. The Headteacher **advised** that there would be assorted opportunities including routine learning walks and talking to staff to ensure they can articulate the policy once it becomes embedded.

The Governing Body **suggested** the policy could be enhanced by the addition of roles and responsibilities to reflect accountability of different parties. The Headteacher **explained** that this Teaching and Learning Policy aligns with the Teacher’s performance management and appraisal document which provides the clarity suggested by the LGB.

The Governing Body **noted** that the policy did not mention homework and home learning. The Headteacher explained that due to the needs of the pupils, homework is not routinely set as it would be unfair to expect parents to have the specialist skills to support children with learning. The Headteacher added that he would review the ‘Essentials’ and ‘Handbooks’ and include reference to home learning (**ACTION**).

The Governing Body **asked** how the school intended to include digital learning to support teaching and learning. The Headteacher **explained** that pupils have a good grasp of using devices (tablets/phones etc.) but that further support needs to be given to developing the use of AI in the classroom, with one of the areas being prompt development.

The Governing Body **asked** if they need to consider any additional costs needed to deliver the new Policy. The Headteacher **explained** that due to the use of Chromebooks and other assistive technology in the school there is unlikely to be a need for new hardware, and any costs would be included in the schools normal budgeting process. The Governing Body **approved** the Teaching and Learning Policy, future additions to it and noted its ambition.

The Governing Body **agreed** to receive the Headteacher’s report as the next item.

Supporting papers: [Headteacher report, CLA-24-2-06A Teaching and Learning Policy - Whole School DRAFT 3.pdf](#)

#### **4. Headteachers Report** *HT - 75 mins*

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Headteacher [CLA-24-2-04 Clarendon School Headteacher Report.pdf.pdf](#).

##### 4.A General Update and key risks

The Headteacher **explained** that the deficit remains the key risk for the school, but that he expects a more positive picture when the P2 management accounts are released. The deficit had been reduced to £180k. The Governing Body **asked** what factors had impacted the reduction. The Headteacher **explained** that some class sizes had been increased and banding had been formally reviewed for the current cohort.

The Finance Link governor **added** that the Finance Director and Headteacher have greater contact, and routine meetings are in place to discuss the budget position. The Headteacher **added** that he had been involved in the setting and development of the budget this year as he had inherited the 2023-24 budget from the former Headteacher. Whilst making efficiencies he would not jeopardise the safety of pupil or staff. The Finance Link Governor added that the knowledge and sharing of information had improved. The Governing Body **asked** if budget holders can now see their budget areas. The Headteacher **advised** that this had not yet been resolved, however, due to the comparably small size of the curriculum budget to the overall income this was not a significant area of risk.

The Headteacher **acknowledged** that the 3-year budget position is still concerning, however, there is general uncertainty about future funding. Decisions may need to be made about staffing reductions, but this may be averted due to ongoing conversations with AfC who are committed to meeting the rising need in the area. Exploratory visits had been made to a local school to explore the feasibility of opening a satellite primary class. The physical location of the proposed class may be difficult for transitions especially, but other options could be explored such as re-purposing the former caretaker's house.

The Headteacher **explained** that the second round of recruitment of the Family Support Worker had been unsuccessful, however, both applicants had been offered roles as Teaching Assistants. The Governing Body **asked** if the salary proposed matched the skills required for the role. The Headteacher **explained** that the role is like an Early Help role in an LA and with the facility for remote working and other benefits may make that more attractive. Working in a school also can be attractive due to term-time working etc. The Headteacher **explained** that he is inviting existing staff who may be interested in the role to come forward. The Governing Body **asked** if this would continue to be a shared role with Capella House School. The Headteacher **explained** that it was a 5-day role and one of the days would be allocated to Capella and associated costs shared. The Governing Body **advised** that they support the Headteacher in requesting a revision of the role / salary to attract better candidates and noted the importance of the role as a key contributor to safeguarding in the school.

#### 4.B Pupil Numbers for 2024-25 and Attendance

The Governing Body **noted** the stability of pupil numbers. The Headteacher **advised** that attendance has fallen slightly since the report was produced to 89.5% due to the number of seasonal illnesses. He **acknowledged** the extensive work of the previous Family Support Worker to the intensive work with thirteen families who had been persistently absent. The Headteacher **explained** that there are one or two new admissions who were refusing to attend, and he was working to resolve this with home visits etc.

The Governing Body **asked** if fines had been issued for unauthorised family holiday. The Headteacher **confirmed** that he is operating a 'three strike' rule and is recording information on a tracker. No fines have been issued yet and he is not sure how effective this will be.

#### 4.C Safeguarding and behaviour

- i The Governing Body **received** the [CLA-24-2-04Ci Safeguarding Report to LGB 27 November 24.pdf](#) and the Safeguarding Link Governor report.[CLA-24-2-04C Safeguarding Link Governor Report DATE]

The Safeguarding Link Governor **highlighted** concerns raised on her report. She **advised** that she had arranged an offline discussion with the Headteacher in relation to incident logging and case closure on CPOMS.

The Headteacher was reminded that the previous School Improvement Partner, John Johnson, had recommended that reports of behaviour incidents include the number of incidents as well as the number of unique children involved. The Safeguarding Link Governor would raise this at the Link Governor Network **(ACTION)**.

The Headteacher **advised** that there had been some issues for staff being able to log onto CPOMS after half term. Whilst most issues have been resolved some staff members are still unable to access.

The Governing Body **noted** the concerns regarding premises safety checks and the Headteacher would provide an update on this at the next meeting.

The Governing Body **asked** if there had been any progress on discussions about low level concerns. The Headteacher **explained** that an audit is planned with DSL's pairing with those from other schools.

The Governing Body **noted** that the Headteacher is also a Deputy DSL and suggested that this may provide a conflict should any matter need to be referred to him. The Headteacher **advised** that whilst this is not an ideal situation, due to the lack of family support worker, and the multisite nature of the school it is important that there is a member of staff without teaching responsibility to address any issue which may arise.

The Governing Body **noted** that training and CPD is up to date and recorded including for agency staff.

#### 4.D Pupil progress and achievements

- i The Governing Body **received** the [CLA-24-2-04Di Clarendon Pupil Premium Report.pdf](#) and Strategy for publication on the schools' website. The Governing Body **approved** the report and noted that there had been a reduction in the percentage of pupils eligible. The Headteacher **explained** that in monetary terms this equated to £7k less than previous years. This would be one of the key activities for the Family Support Worker, however as Primary aged children receive universal free school meals, those parents often feel they do not have a need to apply.
- ii The Governing Body **received** a presentation on [CLA-24-2-04Dii Gateway SDP Targets 2024-2025.pdf](#) and [external assessments 2023-2024](#) from Jayne Gray, Head of Gateway Centre.

The Governing Body **noted** that there is a complexity to their oversight of the Gateway Centre as teaching and learning and several other areas are delivered by colleagues at Twickenham School. They **noted** that the Headteacher meets regularly with the Headteacher at Twickenham School to discuss any issues as part of the agreement between the schools.

Ms Gray **explained** that predictions for students can be difficult for the students she works with. She explained that for some GCSE's there are multiple 2-hour papers to be taken, and this is a huge barrier. Much of pupil's achievement can depend on how tired they are on the day. Modular courses or more vocational courses such as hospitality and catering are more suited to their pupils needs. Predictions had been made from their primary achievement and using similar cohort information to see what they could achieve. She gave the example of a pupil this year who had completed lost resilience during the English paper and wrote "I'm too tired" on the second story-writing element of it.

The Governing Body **asked** if the school uses their own baseline testing to gauge the predictions. Ms Gray **confirmed** that Twickenham School does this type of testing in Year 7 for the whole cohort intake, but because not all the students join in Y7 this could not be used for every child.

Ms Gray **explained** that inference required to take exams significantly affects pupils with SEND and Autism which can still lead to subtle differences being unrecognised even in multiple choice questions. She **noted** that scribes and readers are provided to pupils, but they do not assist in pupil's understanding of the question.

#### 4.H Staffing

- i The Governing Body **noted** the Headteachers Performance Management had taken place and recommendations had been made to the Pay Committee.
- ii The Governing Body **discussed** their response to the consultation on the changes to Autumn Term Half term holidays to be given to the Board [CLA-24-2-04Hii INSET Consultation Responses for LGB.pdf](#)

The Governing Body noted the limited response from the parents (8.6% -14 responses). Governors who were parents **suggested** that the initial letter from the CEO did not set

out a compelling case for the proposal and the lack of response from other schools in the Trust should also be a concern for the Board. It was also **felt** that that consultation period was not long enough. The Governing Body **noted** that parent survey response rates are significantly higher. Andrew Whiteside **acknowledged** the data may not be as dependable as hoped and there could be a number of reasons for this.

The Headteacher **explained** that he needed to have two concurrent days to enable the bi-annual accreditation of 'Team Teach' to ensure that children continue to be kept safe in school. He concurred with the rationale to complete this in the October half-term as set out in the consultation letter. The Headteacher **re-iterated** that he needed to publish these dates as soon as possible for parents to have sufficient time to plan. The Governing Body **discussed** various options regarding the timing of the INSET days including immediately before the Christmas break or at the end of the academic year in July and the relative benefits and consequences relating to each.

Governors who worked in other schools advised that there are significant benefits to having this in the October as it is a long term, and many other local schools have reverted to this even advising that they are just giving it as holiday (not training).

The Governing Body **noted** that the consultation letter had focussed on staff and did not consider the impact on pupils who may take longer to get back to learning after a longer break which may cause them to fall behind.

The Governing Body **noted** that this would affect primary provision, and many local primary schools only have a one week half term in October. The impact on parents with siblings in other schools may mean that following the six-week summer break followed by three weeks where they must balance multiple school's half term.

The Governing Body **discussed** the impact on attendance when a return to school occurred on a day other than a Monday. The Headteacher **advised** anecdotally that this does give a drop in attendance as parents may see this as an opportunity to book holiday outside term-time. He also **advised** that the second part of the Autumn term can be affected by seasonal viruses which also affects attendance.

The Governing Body **discussed** the impact on parents and expressed concern that there would be no additional access for them to respite care through the local authority.

The Governing Body **noted** that the requirement to have INSET days at the same time across the Trust may not be unhelpful to the school and agreed that schools should have flexibility to organise them as it is needed.

The Governing Body **agreed** that their feedback to the Board would be that there was a need for the training days but felt that they could not make the decision on behalf of the Clarendon School community unless the consultation was re-run with a more substantial response. **(ACTION)**

The Governing Body **asked** if action had been taken to address concerns which had been raised due to HR issuing an 'accidental' offer (and acceptance) of permanent employment to an agency staff member. The Headteacher **advised** that this matter had now been resolved quickly and satisfactorily for all parties. The Governing Body **discussed** the option for academies to implement probationary periods deviating from the 'Burgundy Book' (School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document). They also **noted** the effective processes in place to support staff and move through to Capability should it be necessary.

The Governing Body **noted** that 'other' had a higher rate in the sickness absence reporting than other described categories such as coughs and colds and **asked** if the Headteacher had a better understanding of this. The Headteacher **explained** that staff did not have to detail the reason for their absence, and that this may account for some of the numbers in this category. He would investigate this further and report back. **(ACTION)**

Supporting papers [4Hii Parents Consultation Letter.pdf](#), [4H Clarendon Term Dates.pdf](#)

#### 4.E School Development Plan and School Self Review

The Governing Body **received** the [CLA-24-2-04Ei Clarendon School SDP 2024-2025 \(November 24 update\).pdf](#) and the [CLA-24-2-04Eii Clarendon School Self Review Autumn 2024.pdf](#). The

Supporting Papers: SDP, SEF, Link Governor Reports

#### 4.F Visitors Reports

The Governing Body **noted** that the SIP report for Autumn had not yet been received and would be shared as soon as it was available. Partnerships and community links

#### 4.I Learner, Family and Community Voice

The Governing Body **received** [CLA-24-2-04I Clarendon School and Gateway Centre - Staff survey data analysis Autumn 24.pdf](#)

The Governing Body **noted** that staff participation and response patterns had remained largely unchanged year on year, but there had been a higher response rate in Spring. The Governing Body **noted** the Headteacher intended to implement 'You Said, we did' and that this would be done probably in a pre-recorded video message as it was more personal.

#### 4.J Finance Commentary

The Governing Body **received** the P1 Management Accounts and noted the earlier discussion on the school's financial position.

4.K Health and Safety / Premises Update

The Governing Board thanked the Headteacher for his report, which was comprehensive. The Governing Board felt that the benefit of accessing in-depth reporting and presentations on key areas improves their capacity to challenge, but as evidenced within this meeting other key areas had not been given discussion time. The Headteacher noted the time taken in preparing his report, based on the Trust model, and limited time to discuss some key points may need to be reviewed. The Chair and Headteacher would take forward this and raise current issues with colleagues in the Trust and Board. **(ACTION)**

*Supporting Papers – Supporting Papers: SDP, SEF, SIP reports, P1 Management Accounts, , Headteacher report, HR Summary, GDPR Summary and Estates Summary.*

**3. Minutes**

The Governing Body noted that the minutes of the meetings held on 8 July and 2 October 2024 would be formally received and approved at the next meeting. The Chair requested that any comments/ amendments to the minutes be sent through in advance of the January meeting. The Chair noted that all actions arising from those minutes had either been on the agenda for this meeting or completed.

**5. Governance**

The Governing Board noted that due to the late running of the meeting that this would be reviewed as a standing item in the next meeting. The Chair and Governance Professional reminded governors to ensure that their training was up to date and to ensure that they arranged Link Governor visits in advance of the next LGB meeting.

**6. Approval of Policies / Statements**

The Governing Body noted the approval of the Teaching and Learning Policy during Item 2.

**7. Review impact, planned actions and agree feedback to the Board of Trustees**

The Governing Body **agreed** that the presentations received at the start of the meeting had been extremely helpful to aid their understanding of the school. The Chair thanked the Governing Body for their diverse opinions on the Inset Day proposal which he would feedback to the Board as not being satisfactory for the LGB to be able to decide on behalf of the Clarendon Community.

The Governing Body noted the actions arising from this meeting.

Number	Extract	Owner	Status	Due Date
1	Clarendon Essentials and Handbooks to be developed and brought back to the LGB. Home learning to also be referenced within them.	ND		Summer 2025
2	Feedback to be given to the Board on the INSET Day consultation	NB/ AW		asap
3	HT to investigate underlying reasons within 'Other' category for staff sickness/ absence and advise LGB	ND		01/01/25

4	HT and Chair to follow up changes to LGB meetings, HT report format etc. with colleagues in the Trust and Board	NB/ND		01/12/24
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**8. Confidentiality**

The Committee **agreed** that the discussion at the meeting, the background papers, and any reports or minutes identified as confidential above, should remain confidential and be excluded from the published minutes and papers.

The date of the next meeting is **29 January 2025**

*Niall Brady*

Niall Brady (Mar 28, 2025 11:25 GMT)

Niall Brady

28/03/25






# CLA-24-2-00 Approved Minutes 271124

Final Audit Report

2025-03-28

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