

Approved Minutes for a meeting of the Clarendon School Local Governing Body (LGB) held on 26 February 2025 at 5.00pm at Clarendon Secondary School (RTS Conference Room) and virtually via Teams.

Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance: *Natalya Bennett, Niall Brady (Chair), Niall Dumigan (Headteacher), Chris Reynolds, James Rimmer and Aminta Townshend.*

Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance virtually: *Kelly Faulkner, Bharat Gopalan and Hanna Shepard.*

Also in attendance: *Angela Mason (Head of Primary), Paul Roberts (Trustee).*

Also in attendance virtually: *Jayne Grey (Gateway).*

Clerk: *Julie Adams*

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

- 1.A The Governing Body **noted** all members were present. The Headteacher advised that Michael Sinanan, Head of Centre had been on jury service and had not been expected to attend.
- 1.B The Chair **reminded** all governors 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.

3. Minutes

- 3.A The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the meetings held on 8 July 2024, 2 October 2024 and the associated set of confidential minutes, and 27 November 2024
- 3.B and **approved** them as accurate records of the meetings.
- 3.C
- 3.D The Governing Body **noted** completed actions from the previous meeting.

Number	Extract	Owner	Status
2	Feedback to be given to the Board on the INSET Day consultation	NB/ AW	Completed
4	HT and Chair to follow up changes to LGB meetings, HT report format etc. with colleagues in the Trust and Board	NB/ND	Completed

- 3.E The Governing Body **noted** actions arising from the previous meeting that were incomplete.

Number	Extract	Owner	Status
1	Clarendon Essentials and Handbooks to be developed and brought back to the LGB. Home learning to also be referenced within them.	ND	Ongoing
3	HT to investigate underlying reasons within 'Other' category for staff sickness/ absence and advise LGB.	ND	Completed

Action #1 The Headteacher **advised** this the 'Essentials' is in the final draft stage and will be fed back to staff next Wednesday and will be circulated with governors. The Headteacher will share at next LGB meeting. **(ACTION)**.

Action #3 The Headteacher **explained** that sometimes staff do not declare why they are ill. He found while investigating that there was inconsistency in the allocating reason between primary and secondary. Senior Leaders and admin teams have been given clearer guidance, and this should reduce in the next report.

3.F The Governing Body **received** the latest published Board meeting minutes and other updates from the Board.

3.G There were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Supporting Papers: [Trust Board Minutes](#), [Clarendon School Minutes](#).

2. Presentation - Proposed Ofsted Framework

The Headteacher **presented** an update on proposed national changes to the Ofsted inspection framework over the coming year and implications for the school and Governing Board.

The changes were proposed following the inquiry into the death of Ruth Perry. The key proposal is the removal of overall grades for schools which is seen as a positive change, with new proposals offering a more nuanced evaluation to better reflect schools as complex organizations. Parents will have access to more detailed information about a school's strengths and weaknesses to give them a clearer picture of a school.

Proposals were published in the last two weeks and there is currently a consultation period ending in April 2025. Anyone can respond to the consultation and the Headteacher will make a submission on behalf of Clarendon School. The final changes to the inspection framework are expected to be close to those proposed they may also differ significantly.

Ofsted's new inspection Framework will be piloted in some schools during the summer term 2025 and is expected to roll out in November 2025. Depending on the timing, the school may be inspected under either framework, with summer and early autumn terms more likely to be under the current framework. The Governing Board **asked** if the school is anticipating an Ofsted inspection. The Headteacher **believes** the likelihood is high as the previous inspection was ungraded and the outcome had been that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were conducted. At the time inspectors indicated a graded inspection in 1-2 years, i.e. from April 2025.

The Governing Body **asked** if this would increase the workload for staff extra work for Clarendon in preparing for an inspection. The Headteacher **responded** that the school's preparation process will not change significantly, but the way that Ofsted's judgements are presented would. He **advised** that the school would be prepared for either, but given that there appeared to be a shift back to outcomes for pupils which had always been strong, the school may be better positioned in the new Framework.

The Headteacher **explained** that the key differences in the proposals include:

- Removal of the four inspection outcome categories
- Introduction of report cards with more detailed information in eleven areas, including Early Years and Sixth Form.

- A new 5-point scale: Exemplary, Strong, Secure, Attention Needed, and Causing Concern.
 - The award of Exemplary status requires all other areas to be rated Strong and Secure and would be approved by a panel. This would then be promoted to other schools 'tapping in' to this expertise.
 - Where schools are in the category of causing concern, additional monitoring, support and funding would be directed to them.
 - Attention Needed may not result in active support/ funding being provided but the school would need to address, perhaps with additional monitoring.
- A nominated staff member will liaise with inspectors.
- Removal of curriculum deep dives
- The removal of ungraded inspections, with a **full** graded 3-day inspection every 4-5 years.
- Governance is now explicitly mentioned in a category 'Leadership and Governance'

The Headteacher **expects** Clarendon School to be rated 'Strong' or 'Secure' in most categories. His concern was in the 'attendance' category where rates of absence may be higher and may be outside the school's control. The removal of deep dives may benefit Clarendon School as often in previous inspections special or small schools without specialist lead teachers had been disadvantaged. He felt that the school had good evidence portfolios for the eleven areas, as these had been part of the current four judgments. He welcomed the category of 'Inclusion' as this was a strong area of practice at Clarendon School but did not feel he understood the evidence which Ofsted would want to see.

The Headteacher **noted** colleagues concerns over the pressure on Ofsted to cover all eleven areas in a three-day inspection which would produce reliable judgments. ,

The Governing Body **asked** if there is a case for linking these eleven areas to individual governors, which may be feasible. The Headteacher **felt** that this may not be necessary as he feels comfortable that the additional level of challenge given by Link Governors on specific areas for improvement are well directed. All areas are covered in both the Headteacher and SIP reports to the LGB and while they may not have 1:1 scrutiny are routinely monitored and discussed.

The Governing Body **asked** if the school has the necessary data for an inspection under the new framework or if there are gaps. The Headteacher **explained** that most categories already have the required data. The Governing Body **asked** if the Ofsted would look at how students are prepared for progression from KS4 to KS5. The Headteacher **advised** that as a special school which offers one week of work experience placements in Y10 and two in Y11 is concerned about this currently. In addition, Y11 students also attend College one day per week. This will become an increasing area of focus in 2026 on the opening of the new site.

Governance had been identified as 'in transition' at the last Clarendon inspection. The Headteacher **felt** that that concerns had been addressed quickly by the Governing Body and if governors continue to engage with the school as it does currently, this should not be highlighted in future inspections. The Governance Professional **advised** that the change in language in the new Framework Ofsted needs clarity to confirm if 'leaders' who are referenced in the eleven areas, include governors as in previous Frameworks.

The Governing Body **asked** if the inspections are still school-centric rather than focusing on the trust level. The Headteacher advised that had been discussion about inspecting trusts as well. The Governing Body **noted** that the Independent School sector had recently moved to a similar inspection framework which indicated that Trustees are likely to play a role in the inspection process and trust arrangements.

The Governing Board **suggested** including the safeguarding element with trustees, as Ofsted focuses on this area of the SIP report. It was noted that Trustees have all had safeguarding training.

Draft inspection toolkits have been published as part of the consultation outlining expectations in each judgment area. The Governance Professional will share the link to the consultation and supporting information with the Governing Body following the meeting **(ACTION)**

4. Headteachers Report

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Headteacher [CLA-24-3-04 Clarendon School Headteacher Report.pdf.pdf](#). The Headteacher **thanked** governors for their questions asked in advance on the HT report. **Clerks note :These have also been added to the meeting papers.*

4.A General Update and key risks

4.B Pupil Numbers for 2024-25 and Attendance

4.C Safeguarding and behaviour

The Safeguarding Link Governor **advised** she had visited the Primary centre to meet with Angela Mason. There had been an issue with the astroturf which she needed to bring to the LGB's attention, however she understood that it had now been resolved. She would complete a visit report and circulate it. **(ACTION)**.

The Governing Body **reviewed** the attendance data. The Headteacher **noted** that two pupils were not attending and were unlikely to be coming back to school, but they had to be kept on roll until alternative placements were found. He **confirmed** that Emergency Annual reviews had taken place for them. This had affected the figures by 4%. He could present the figures excluding these if the LGB would find it helpful which would then be 80%. The Governing Body **agreed** that it would be sufficient to include a statement in his commentary to reflect this, but not to amend the figures. The Governing Body **noted** that the figures for Secondary and Gateway were slightly higher than the previous year, but there had been a drop for Primary pupils. The Headteacher **explained** that this was due to come medical issues leading to operations.

The Governing Body **asked** if the family support worker role had been filled. The Headteacher had **revised** the application pack to highlight the role's benefits and offered a higher salary commensurate with the responsibility renaming as a Family Engagement Coordinator. The role would also include more responsibility for marketing, and was quite different from similar roles in other Trust schools. The school received four high-standard applications and will conduct the interviews in March.

The Headteacher **thanked** governors for the offering to observe the half termly team meetings and would advise the dates of these in the next week. **(ACTION)** The Governing Body **asked** if there are any other parent facing events they could attend. The Headteacher confirmed that governors are invited to the Primary Spring Showcase (4 April), Enterprise Day (26 March) and a coffee morning with Parents run by the Therapy team (4 March). The Governing Body asked that full details of these, including times and expectations of numbers of governors required, be circulated **(ACTION):**

4.D Pupil progress and achievements

The Governing Body **received** pupil progress information for Autumn Term 2025.

4.E Received School Development Plan and School Self Review

The Chair **noted** that that in addition to the questions asked in advance of the meeting regarding the School Improvement Partner has suggested some questions which governors should seek assurance on.

SDP 1 To ensure that Clarendon School's curriculum is well-aligned to national standards & qualifications , ensuring coherence, small steps, clearly defined end points, and logical progression between and within all phases (particularly between KS2 & KS3)

Q: The long-term plan for mathematics is to cover three topics each term. The Headteacher is concerned that numbers need to be threaded throughout each term, not cyclically. Governors may wish to inquire how this issue has been resolved.

A: The Headteacher **confirmed** that changes have been made at secondary to address this.

Q: Has there been a further visit by the lead advisor for mathematics scheduled for the Spring Term 2025? Governors will wish to know the outcomes from this visit and whether pupils' progress in mathematics is now stronger and more secure.

A: This visit has not yet occurred, but a maths learning walk has been conducted.

Q: How are subject-specific progression maps used to inform teaching and learning?

A: Progression maps are being used extensively at secondary to develop long-term curriculum plans and sequencing, which is expected to start in the summer term. Due to the number of schemes of work with English, Maths, and Science are being prioritised, other subjects will follow.

Q: Are the curriculum plans broken down into smaller, achievable steps to ensure gradual progression?

A: School leaders are currently working on new templates and grid for curriculum plans and progression. There are prompts for smaller steps so that individuals will know that if you are in week 2 of history in the spring term, exactly what should be covered.

SDP 2 To ensure that Teaching and Learning standards are consistently strong across the school, achieved through nurturing a culture of learning and development for all staff.

Q: How does the school support staff in developing their expertise in specific areas, such as pedagogy, assessment, or curriculum development?

A: Many curriculum leaders have undergone training in curriculum development. The biggest priority is supporting curriculum leaders who are not specialists in their subject area. Subject leads network into AfC networks and attend meetings to connect with other curriculum leads.

Q: What strategies are used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning?

A: The main strategies for monitoring and evaluation include are book-looks, learning walks and moderation. There are three moderation meetings per year in core subjects. Learning walks will be more planned and systematic, with 2-3 per half term based on priorities, so teachers know when to expect visits. In addition, there is also external support from the SIP and the CEO. There will be a move to develop peer observation structures and teachers' self-assessment and to share demonstrations of good practice.

The Governing Body **asked** when dates will be planned and if there are learning walks for support staff and teachers.

Q: How does the school support teachers in developing their instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of all learners?

A: Through a specific training program on neurodiverse needs from the Therapy Team which is then implemented in the NEST provision in primary and themes in secondary. There is also access to SCERTS training but that is expensive and not subject specific.

SDP 3 To ensure that Leadership and management is strengthened at all levels of the school, enhancing our culture of high-expectations, accountability and stakeholder engagement.

Q: How effectively is the school's vision shared across all sites, ensuring a unified approach to school improvement?

A: All staff joined together at an INSET session to ensure alignment with the school's culture, vision, values, and SDP priorities and the Headteacher makes sure that the school is place of learning for everyone. Curriculum leads in primary and secondary now work together. The Head of Primary Centre felt that this has been more evident this year than previously. Social events still have the barrier of the distance between the schools being a challenge. Staff have also established whole school wellbeing group. The Governing Body **suggested** more informal team-building events, such as an optional evening pub quiz with minibus transport.

Q: How are leadership responsibilities shared and distributed across the different sites?

A: There are differences across the sites, with disparities in SLT responsibilities as the primary colleagues maintain a teaching responsibility. The Head and Heads of Centre meet weekly, and include the Assistant Headteachers fortnightly. There is a gap with the senior teachers but a review on TLR's, responsibilities and capacity planned is planned for next year.

Q: How does the school assess the quality of leadership at all levels?

A: One area is performance management and the appraisal process. The Governing Body **asked** if there is a framework to follow. There are leadership frameworks, and the school has a strong team. The Headteacher **added** this is also in the performance Management Policy. There are also coaching and management training which has helped to identify management styles. The Headteacher **stated** that this question had been one he wished to raise with the SIP at the next meeting to enable him to give more thought to it. He felt he needed some examples of what was meant by the question.

(ACTION)

The Governing Body **asked** if the new SIP wanted to attend board meetings. The Headteacher **explained** that there is no long-term plan for the SIP to attend LGB's. Comments in the report indicated that the Governing Body had made 'very good progress' and that 'governance was already much more effective' and therefore specific support in this area was no longer required.

The Governing Body **asked** if senior leadership objectives are linked to the development plan. The Headteacher **advised** they were, and the appraisal process supports the discussions and development of these and are set by the Headteacher in conjunction with the CEO.

The Governing Body **noted** the 'red' areas on the SDP leadership priority are linked to enhancing communication and parent engagement. The Headteacher agreed that this had been challenging due to the lack of a family support worker, in part due to the quality of the previous post holder. The Headteacher **acknowledged** that engagement with the parent's survey had been lower in the autumn term, but the summer term had eighty responses. He **felt** that parental relationships are strong in school, which had been acknowledged by Ofsted. He agreed that communication could improve but not that it was a 'problem'. The school does not have a PTA, but one is being established. The Governing Body **noted** that they had not received newsletters. This would be investigated and rectified **(ACTION)**.

The Governing Body **asked** what social media is being used to communicate with parents. The Headteacher **suggested** Clarendon is behind the curve in this area and need to move onto app-based comms such as Instagram stories but there is the issue of safeguarding as a special school.

4.F Visitors Reports

The Governing Body **noted** this had been discussed in conjunction with the SDP.

4.G Partnerships and community links

4.H Staffing

4.I Learner, Family and Community Voice

4.J Finance Commentary

The Finance Link Governor **advised** that the accounts to the end of December 2024 was lightly ahead of its forecast budget by £36k. A significant deficit is still predicted by the end of the financial year. In addition, extra staffing had been needed for two pupils with complex needs requiring 1:1 support. The outcomes of Emergency Annual Reviews, which take 10-12 weeks were awaited but there was no guarantee the proposed additional funding would be agreed. This would increase the deficit further. The training which had been provided on Carecalc had been helpful in making the cases for the additional funding.

The Headteacher has also been rigid and rigorous in limiting agency cover. The Governing Body **acknowledged** that there had been an improvement and that it was difficult to find a balance without jeopardising safety.

The Governing Body **asked** what happens to funds when a child is permanently excluded. The Headteacher **explained** that the funding is terminated when the child is removed from the roll. He considers permanent exclusion a very last resort and would be unlikely.

The Governing Body **noted** that Bharat Gopalan will be stepping down as a governor and as Finance Link Governor at the end of the year and that Natalyia Bennett would take over from him. A transition process is planned.

The Headteacher **reported** that the P5 Accounts published today include benchmarking figures, indicating that the Clarendon School is in the top percentile for teaching and support staff costs which is of significant concern. He **noted** that in previous years the comparator schools had not been equivalent to Clarendon, i.e. being multi-site. The Headteacher **advised** that there was a meeting with the CEO and Finance Team in mid-March to consider implications for staffing structure and decisions to be made ahead of the 2025-26 budget. The Headteacher wants to ensure that any decisions taken will not have an impact on pupil provision, recruitment and retention of staff and workload. The Governing Body **noted** that the school was potentially a year away from opening a the Petersham site and the 2026-27 budget needed to consider how this would be staffed.

4.K Health and Safety / Premises Update

5. Governance

5.A The Governing Body **reviewed** the membership overview. The Governance Professional **reminded** governors to address any confirmations or training highlighted in red, especially safeguarding training.

5.B The Governing Body **noted** the previously discussed comments on improvements to governance by the SIP.

5.C The Chair **reminded** governors to send through their outstanding link visit reports and asked that they continue to arrange visits in the Spring and Summer term, including one to review the schools work experience offer.

6. Approval of Policies / Statements

The Governing Body noted there were no policies for approval.

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

The Governing Body **noted** the helpful presentation on the proposed changes to Ofsted inspections, the depth and discussion on the Headteachers report and the questions posed in advance of the meeting and the continued concern regarding the schools' financial situation.

The Governing Body **agreed** that the next meeting would be held at the Primary Centre in Hampton.

Governors **suggested** that it may be helpful for the local MP Munira Wilson to be invited to the school for the Enterprise Day, Prize Giving or Leavers Event to build the schools profile. They also suggested building a relationship with Brentford FC Community Trust who may be able to subsidise activities through the PE and Sports Premium. The Headteacher would investigate (**ACTION**)

The Governing Body **noted** the actions arising from this meeting.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Final 'Clarendon Essentials' document circulated and discussed at next meeting	ND	30/04/25
2	Links to the Ofsted Consultation documentation to be shared with all governors	JA	asap
3	Safeguarding Link Governor to share visit report for visit to Primary Centre	MT	asap
4	Curriculum Link Governors to be invited to observe curriculum lead meetings	ND	asap
5	Governors to agree attendance at Spring Showcase (primary), Mini-enterprise Day (sec) and Coffee Morning with OT	JA / All	April
6	Comments in the SIP report re how the school assesses the quality of leadership to be clarified and expanded on with the SIP.	ND /SIP	30/04/25
7	Newsletters to be shared with all governors regularly	JA /ND (admin)	half-termly ongoing
8	Governors to address any outstanding confirmations / training especially safeguarding training	ALL	asap
9	Outstanding Link Governor reports to be sent through and visits to be arranged for the spring / summer terms	ALL	asap
10	Consider approaching local Lib-Dem MP Munira Wilson re visit and Brentford FC Trust for funding	ND	30/04/25

8. Confidentiality

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

The date of the next meeting is **7 May 2025** at the **Primary Centre**

Niall Brady

Niall Brady (May 21, 2025 17:27 GMT+1)

Niall Brady

21/05/25






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Final Audit Report

2025-05-21

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