

Approved Minutes for a meeting of the Clarendon School Local Governing Body held on 1 October 2025 at 5.00pm at Clarendon Secondary School (RTS Conference Room)

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

[Link to Papers CLA-25-1 011025](#)

Key:- ➤ Note; ⦿ Discussion; ☑ Discussion and Decision; **XX** Sponsor/Lead; **X mins** allotted time.

Items in square brackets are references to documents related to this agenda found in the folder CLA-25-1 011025.

Members of the Governing Body in attendance: Nataliya Bennett, Jenny Bissett, Niall Brady (Chair), Kelly Faulkner, Beth Reynolds (appointed at Item 1.2), Hanna Shepard and Aminta Townshend.

Also in attendance: Niall Dumigan (Headteacher) and Andy Whiteside, Trustee, Heads of Centre, Jayne Grey, Angela Mason and Michael Sinanan.

Clerk in attendance: Julie Adams, Governance Professional.

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

- 1.1 The Governing Body **noted** all members of the Governing Body were present.
- 1.2 Beth Reynolds **introduced** herself as a deputy head at a secondary school in Southall, with a remit for inclusion and safeguarding. She noted she had previously worked at Teddington School for ten years, had some engagement with Clarendon at its old site, had been a deputy head for five years across different schools, and lived locally. The Governance Professional **recommended** Ms Reynolds appointment as a co-opted governor to the Governing Body. The Governing Body **agreed** to appoint Ms Reynolds with immediate effect as a co-opted governor for a period of four years.

All other attendees introduced themselves.
- 1.3 The Chair **reminded** all members of the Governing Body 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.

Supporting Papers: Personal Details Check (Hard copy to be given out at meeting)

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 [CLA-25-1-02.1 Previous Draft Minutes 080725.pdf] and, subject to a minor correction to the assignment of the Chair, were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 2.2 The Governing Body **noted** that an action had been incorrectly assigned to the Headteacher, but had been completed by the Chair. All actions had been completed.

- 2.3 The Governing Body **noted** that a confidential item from the Board of Trustees would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

See also Confidential Appendix A to these minutes

- 2.4 There were no other matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Supporting Papers: Trust Board Minutes, Clarendon House School Minutes

3. Headteachers Report

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Headteacher CLA-25-1-03 Clarendon House School Headteacher Report.pdf to include Items 3-11. The Headteacher **thanked** governors for their comments and questions on his report received in advance of the meeting. The Governing Body **agreed** to work through his report section by section.

3.1 General Update and key risks

The Headteacher **provided** an update on the new build project, noting extensive discussions at the July LGB. A Memorandum of Understanding (Item 3.11) had been approved by the Board, securing a 'cast iron commitment' from Achieving for Children (AfC) to cover all costs of the new centre for the first five years and clarifying that Auriga or Clarendon would not be responsible for any delays, with AfC bearing that responsibility until the building's occupation. This significantly reduced financial risk.

The Headteacher **stated** that AfC had agreed and signed off on the staffing model for the new build, which had been developed in collaboration with the Auriga Chief Operating Officer. He added that while confident in the strong financial position regarding the build, the physical construction presented a mixed picture.

The Headteacher **reported** that the main contact at Richmond and Wandsworth Council, who were responsible for the build had advised them to expect a delay of at least three weeks to a month due to potential winter weather issues, such as high winds or water affecting watertight construction. This advice was based on experience, not official reports, despite the project being officially on schedule with no delays reported to date. The current projection is for a mid-August occupation. The Governing Body **queried** the contingency plan is the new school build is not ready in September. The Headteacher **advised** he is due to attend a meeting on 14th October with the Auriga CEO and Charis Penfold, AfC Director of Education, to establish AfC's progress on 'Plan B'. Indications were that they would have a concrete plan in place.

The Headteacher **stated** that the best-case scenario for 'Plan B' would be a short delay of one to two weeks to prepare the building, with a longer delay necessitating alternative educational provision from AfC. The Headteacher **confirmed** that existing Clarendon pupils would not be affected by Plan B, as they would receive education from Clarendon School regardless of the site.

The Governing Body **asked** who was managing the communication plan for identifying new pupils and the associated processes, noting its October commencement. The Headteacher **confirmed** that AfC will manage all communication with prospective parents, although Clarendon would be involved in open mornings and tours as normal. The Governing Body **expressed a concern** for the potential educational impact of delays on new children. Whilst recognising this, the Headteacher emphasised AfC's duty to ensure their education.

The school has its own communication plan, detailed in the SDP, for current parents, especially the 20-25 pupils expected to move to the new site, which had been developed with the Head of the Primary Centre. The Governing Body **noted** spaces would be freed up at the current school sites. The Headteacher **confirmed** this would create many places at the primary site but fewer at the secondary site.

Andy Whiteside **drew** on his direct experience of the Capella Primary opening, which had been delayed by a year, noting that short delays can be managed and that the phased opening of the new school was designed to accommodate inevitable delays and helps mitigate risks. He reemphasised that 'Plan B' is AfC's responsibility and that multiple versions may be needed depending on the length of the delay.

The Governing Body **noted** that community newsletters and video footage of the build's progress are being shared with the local community. The Headteacher **advised** that he would arrange a visit to the new build site for governors. **(ACTION)**

3.2 Pupil Numbers for 2025-26 and Attendance

The Governing Body **requested** clarification on the acronyms LBRuT, RBK and OoB in the pupil number table. The Headteacher **confirmed** they were London Borough of Richmond on Thames (LBRuT), Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) and Out of Borough (OoT). The Governing Body **noted** the drop in pupil numbers between years 10 and 11 and asked why this happened. The Headteacher **explained** this is likely to be a historic 'bulge' year when the school had capacity to take on more pupils. He **confirmed** that in 2024-25 there had been 350 consultations for 20 places. Next year there will only be 5 places available for secondary school admission for secondary.

The Headteacher **presented** attendance data from the previous year, indicating a mixed picture with some improvements but also continuing areas of concern. The Governing Body **noted** a significant drop in primary attendance, which the Headteacher was attributed to a small cohort and a persistent group of school refusers disproportionately affecting primary numbers.

The Headteacher **explained** that the Family Engagement Coordinator, who joined in April of the previous year, contributed to a much-improved attendance picture from the summer term compared to the autumn term. The Governing Body **asked** where the Headteacher felt the most impact had been seen. The Headteacher **attributed** this positive shift to the coordinator's increased capacity to contact parents, offer reassurance, and conduct home visits, noting that attendance had been at its lowest in the autumn term before recovering as the year progressed. The Governing Body **suggested** it may be useful for them to have some case studies to illustrate the FEC's work. After considering, if

a governor visit may also be useful the Governing Body agreed that a presentation from the FEC in the Spring Term to the LGB would be more suitable. **(ACTION)**

The Headteacher **explained** that as there 50 pupils in each child represents 2% of the attendance figures. He explained the circumstances affecting one particular pupil, who had not been in school for the entire year. Home visits and key workers had visited but there was limited external services who could assist as the pupil did not use language functionally. The parents agreed that the school cannot meet needs, but the local authority are reluctant to agree this.

3.3 Safeguarding and behaviour

Following a **question**, the Headteacher **reported** a substantial increase in the frequency of sexualised behaviour, attributable to a small number of pupils (3 or 4) repeatedly demonstrating these behaviours, rather than a widespread issue. He **noted** these pupils struggled with boundaries and impulse control. He outlined the school's response, which included upskilling staff providing training with external experts during the additional November INSET days in conjunction with colleagues from other schools. An effective RSE intervention programme was already running at secondary, and the issue was primarily, but not exclusively, seen in the secondary phase.

The Governing Body **asked** if this impacted other pupils through observation or experience. The Headteacher **clarified** that a very small proportion of incidents were peer-on-peer, with much being self-stimulation or potential exposure, and many reports originated from home or online safety concerns. There were no known instances where another pupil had required support as a result.

The Governing Body **asked** if staff were aware and able to identify issues for pupils with communication difficulties, who were particularly at risk. The Headteacher **reassured** governors that staff were very cognisant of these pupils and attuned to any differences in mood that might indicate an issue, even if not verbally expressed.

The Governing Body **asked** about if there were particular incident hotspots and if CCTV could be invested in for those specific areas. The Headteacher **explained** that the playgrounds were identified as hotspots due to unstructured time and lower supervision. These areas do have some CCTV coverage. Toilets were also mentioned as a hotspot, but it was noted that installing CCTV there would be inappropriate due to privacy issues. The Head of the Secondary Centre explained that external CCTV was not very effective, often not working or being inaccessible when needed, and was difficult to access as it was locked in the server room. The Headteacher **clarified** that CCTVs purpose was security, not incident review, and that installing comprehensive internal CCTV would cost tens of thousands of pounds, making it unrealistic.

The Governing Body **noted** that the Designated Safeguarding Lead would be invited to present at the November meeting **(ACTION)**.

3.4 Pupil progress and achievements

- [CLA-25-1-03.4ii Gateway Centre Progress Data]

The Headteacher **introduced** separate papers from Gateway and the Secondary Centres. Jayne Grey, Head of Gateway Centre advised they had a fantastic set of results as they had a quite able and independent group of learners. The Governing Body **noted** the focus with a small number of pupils to help them when doing a full spread of GCSE's, especially when they may be facing struggles in other areas of their lives. Ms Grey **advised** that the next cohort to come through in 2026 has a lower level of ability.

The Governing Body **asked** if there were alternatives to the GCSE exams offered at Gateway. Ms Grey **explained** that some pupils took hospitality and catering which was offered by Twickenham School and some do the cycling scheme which are the vocational courses. She explained that Clarendon students are disadvantaged by the language and amount of work to achieve a GCSE particularly as the modular elements have been removed. She advised that entry level qualifications are a buffer.

The Governing Body **asked** how grades are predicted. Ms Grey advised that students sit a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) when they join Twickenham School in Year 7, then as they move through into Year 10 grades are adjusted. The Governing Body **commented** that GCSE's are largely a measure of ability to sit a GCSE and are challenging for pupils with sensory and emotional needs whose performance can differ on a particular day.

The Governing Body **noted** the excellent results overall from Gateway, particularly in English, noting teachers such as Mr Thompson and Mr Raymonds who provided extra interventions. It was noted that grade boundaries had moved in geography which had contributed to a nationally lower level of attainment.

- [CLA-25-1-03.4iii Clarendon School Exam Results]

Michael Sinanan, Head of Secondary Centre **advised** that they had been very pleased with the results as all pupils had left with a qualification or accreditation. He **highlighted** the improvement in English which had now recovered to expected levels. He advised that the Art GCSE had not been as successful as expected. The Governing Body **asked** if there were any lessons to be learnt from the absence of the Art teacher, for example replacing him at an earlier stage. The Headteacher **explained** that the Art and DT teacher had taken time off in January and then they had been intermittently present during the spring term. The Art and Design teacher from Capella House School was brought into support the class as the teacher had a long-term sickness just before the controlled assessment. The Headteacher realised this was a critical time for the pupils but there was little that could be done as he had not thought there would be a continuing absence.

The Governing Body **noted** the support of the Capella Art teacher and asked if there are more opportunities for staff to be shared between schools. The Headteacher **advised** that there are opportunities, however, there can be complications with the line-management of the individual, communications with parents, attendance at parents evening etc.

The Governing Body **asked** if there was any learning that could be gleaned from the issues which arose with the Art exam. Mr Sinanan **advised** that there are contingency plans for

exams already in place. He added that consideration is being given to bring in earlier internal moderation of pupils' work.

The Headteacher **noted** that standardised assessment scores had improved particularly in reading, with maths slightly down. He reminded governors that with the primary data there is a high number of children who are not speaking, and the data does not reflect that. He assured governors that the cohort is doing well. The Governing Body **asked** how they can gauge the development of EHCP targets in areas which are more related to personal development, i.e. being able to sit in one place. The Headteacher **explained** that this cannot be expressed in a table. Looking behind the data, he explained that there are currently 9 children in Key Stage 1 and Early Years, two of which are in Reception, and one is a school refuser. He suggested that case studies may be a better way to demonstrate the progress and careful monitoring for each child.

The Governing Body **asked** if the annual outcome targets are separate to the plans themselves and do incorporate more holistic measures. The Headteacher **advised** that primary is exploring 'Earwig' which is used at Strathmore for assessment and Capella's peer assessment tool which considers personal development. The Governing Body **agreed** that they should be receiving reporting which outlines the progress perhaps by cohort in a RAG rated way which incorporates therapy and life skills. The Headteacher **agreed** to trial this for the next LGB meeting to see if it meets their needs (**ACTION**).

The Head of Gateway **suggested** that 'Outcome Stars' is used in other secondary settings and whilst it would not be suitable for Primary may be something to consider for the Head of the Secondary campus (**ACTION**).

3.5 School Development Plan and School Self Review

The Governing Body **discussed** the technical difficulties in accessing the School Development Plan (SDP) link. The Governance Professional **advised** that a 'moment in time' copy of the SDP was available in the 'key school information' section of the main Governors folder. The Headteacher **advised** that the link in his Headteacher report was to the live document. The Governing Body **noted** that over time documents would be transitioned to Google with a full migration expected by the February half term, which would streamline access.

The Headteacher **explained** that the SDP outlined priorities agreed at the end of the previous year, now with detailed with action plans and objectives, and contained no unexpected elements or surprises.

The Governing Body **noted** and **agreed** the allocation of link governor roles:

- Hanna Shephard - Priority 1: Quality of Education
- Minta Townshend - Priority 2: Personal Development
- Kelly Faulkner and Jenny Bissett: Priority 3: Leadership and Management
- Niall Brady Priority 4: School Expansion
- Natalya Bennett and Beth Reynolds – Finance

- Beth Reynolds - Safeguarding

Supporting Papers: SDP, SEF, SIP Reports

3.6 Visitors Reports

[CLA-25-1-03.5 2025 Summer SIP Report Clarendon House.pdf]

[CLA-25-1-03.5 NOA Understanding the World 100725]

The Governing Body **received** the visitors reports above.

3.7 Partnerships and community links

[CLA-25-1-03.7 AfC letter to all Headteachers Sep 2025]

The Headteacher **reported** that the school was reconstituting its Parent Staff Association (PSA), which has an associated charity account from 1974, and noted the existence of old minutes and constitution. He **explained** that the association needed to be separate from the school and required steering, and that he could not be directly involved. Its purpose would be fundraising and deciding how to allocate funds for school projects.

The Headteacher **highlighted** that Strathmore School had a very effective 'Friends of' organisation, which Clarendon had not historically matched, but there was now an opportunity to establish something similar and improve community links. The Governing Body **suggested** that establishing such a group would allow them to seek funding from organisations like the Victoria Foundation and explore potential partnerships.

The Headteacher **explained** that establishing a charity account would enable access to a wider range of grants, allow the school to claim Gift Aid, and support Gift-Aid programmes. The Governing Body discussed community fundraising opportunities such as the Waitrose green tokens and Tesco blue tokens schemes.

The Headteacher **invited** any interested governors or individuals to help form a committee alongside interested parents. **(ACTION)**

The Governance Professional **advised** that any governor involvement should be as a liaison to avoid excessive overlap with their LGB duties and conflicts of interest. The Governing Body **noted** that engagement with a parent-teacher association was part of the LGB's stakeholder engagement remit and suggested this could be a good avenue for governors to be involved in.

3.8 Staffing

The Governing Body **asked** about the impact of the secondment of a primary teacher to another school in the Trust on staff time and morale. The Headteacher **stated** that the situation had been managed extremely well by Head of the Primary Centre and the leadership team, and that he was not observing a serious drop in morale. He stated the main impacts were difficulties around lunchtime supervision and a reduced flexibility, which could lead to a greater need for agency staff during periods of high absence. He confirmed there was budget provision to appoint lunchtime supervisors if needed. The

Head of Primary **added** that despite these challenges, the situation was working well, aided by an experienced teacher providing one day of interventions and Juliet now being out of class to provide cover and EPA support, which required juggling various jobs.

See also Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

Supporting Papers – 10. Guidance for LGB's on recommendations for Teacher Pay Progression.pdf, HR Summary

3.9 Learner, Family and Community Voice

The Governing Body **discussed** a previous staff survey which indicated low confidence in the Trust amongst staff, suggesting a lack of unity. The Headteacher **acknowledged** this but stated the relationship had improved significantly in the last year, noting improvements over the past 12 months.

3.10 Finance Commentary

The Finance Link Governor **reported** on the management accounts, indicating a projected year-end deficit of £235k, including capital and subject to audit. This included an unbudgeted £133k for ill-health retirement. The underlying deficit was therefore approximately £100k a significant improvement from the budgeted deficit of £292k. The Governing Body **commended** this much better position than had been predicted.

Following a **question**, the Headteacher **stated** that the revised budget for P1 was still awaited, with a meeting scheduled for the following week to review it. It was anticipated that the projected deficit would be significantly reduced due to staffing decisions made in the previous year.

The Headteacher **confirmed** that budget projections had been extremely cautious, primarily due to initial forecasts of reduced income from a new funding formula rolled out by AfC. However, AfC eventually conceded, allowing the trust to budget based on original funding bandings, which immediately increased income by approximately £100k.

Andy Whiteside **corroborated** that this conservative estimation and better-than-expected funding recovery was a common trend across all three schools within the trust. He cautioned that while short-to-medium term negotiations and work with AfC had been positive, it would be dangerous to assume this would continue in the long term. The long-term outlook remained uncertain due to significant pressures on high needs funding in both boroughs and nationally. The Governing Body **noted** the pending SEND white paper as an additional factor contributing to the uncertainty.

The Headteacher **highlighted** that last year's budget monitoring was effective, with agency spend largely aligning with expectations, demonstrating good financial management by the team. An overspend on staff overtime was noted, attributed to using overtime from part-time staff to cover a long-term absence and investing in additional curriculum development work to get ahead, which was deemed a worthwhile investment.

3.11 Health and Safety / Premises Update

[CLA-25-1-03.11 Auriga_ AfC MOU - C@P and S@H - September 2025]

The Governing Body noted that this had been fully discussed during Item 3.1.

4. Governance

4.1 The Governing Body **noted** the membership overview would be reviewed at the next meeting. The Governance Professional thanked all governors who had completed their safeguarding training and requested any outstanding courses be completed asap.

4.2 The Governing Body **received** Governance documentation approved by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on 18 September CLA-25-1-04.2 Governance Documents for 2025-26. The Governance Professional **highlighted** changes including updates to the privacy notice and the removal of the ability to suspend governors for a breach of the code of conduct, as governors unable to perform their duties should not remain in post.

Supporting papers - Governance Documentation

4.3 The Governing Body **noted** that the annual Governance Report for 2024-25 and

4.4 Governance Development Plan for 2025-26 were absent from the meeting papers.

4.5 The Governing Body **received** the Link Governor Visit Report CLA-25-1-04.5 LG HS JB Curriculum Spring Showcase 040424

5. Approval of Policies / Statements

The Governing Body **approved** the Clarendon School Keeping Children Safe Policy CLA-25-1-05.1 Clarendon Keeping Children Safe Policy.pdf

6. Election / Appointment to key LGB roles for October 2025-26

The Governing Body **noted** that this item had been discussed at Item 3.5.

The Governing Body **asked** if there is still a requirement for a deputy Safeguarding Link Governor. The Governance Professional **explained** that the Board of Trustees had determined that LGBs could operate with 'a minimum of one' finance link governor and safeguarding link governor. This flexibility was introduced due to the difficulties in recruiting governors and the specialised skills needed.

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

The Governing Body **noted** their discussions on assessment and finance and plans for future presentations to the LGB. In addition, the Governing Body **agreed** to highlight the areas of concern noted in the Appendix A Confidential minutes to the Board of Trustees.

The Governing Body **noted** the actions arising from this meeting which include four items within the Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Headteacher to arrange invitation to the new build site for governors	ND	asap
2	Family engagement co-ordinator to present to Spring LGB	ND / AJ / JM	01/02/26
3	Designated Safeguarding Lead to present to the LGB November 2025	ND/MvM/ JA	26/11/25
4	Headteacher to trial rag rating of progress data as suggested by HS at next meeting	ND	26/11/25
5	Outcome Stars to be reviewed for appropriateness for tracking personal development targets	ND /MS/ JG	asap
6	Interested governors to volunteer to assist with forming Committee to establish a PTA	All	asap

Supporting Papers – [17. Committee reporting template.docx](#)

8. Confidentiality

The Governing Body **agreed** that the discussion at the meeting, the background papers and the reports identified as confidential above, (and the minutes contained in the confidential appendix to the minutes relating to Items 2.3 and 3.8,) should remain confidential and excluded from the published minutes and papers.

The date of the next meeting is **26 November 2025**

Niall Brady

Niall Brady (Dec 2, 2025 15:58:24 GMT)

Niall Brady

Chair of the Clarendon School LGB

02/12/2025







CLA-25-1-00 Approved Minutes 011025

Final Audit Report

2025-12-02

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