



# The Auriga Academy Trust

## Clarendon School Governing Body Code

### **A: A Shared Vision and a Long-Term Strategic Plan**

The Auriga Academy Trust was formed by Clarendon and Strathmore Schools in October 2016. More recently Clarendon together with the Trust have worked to open an additional special free school, Capella House School, for pupils with Speech Language and Communication Needs.

. The vision of the Trust is to work together to enhance provision for all our pupils by:

- building on our expertise and experience to become a recognised national leader in special needs education;
- giving staff the opportunity to gain and share knowledge, to encourage and inspire each other and others in our wider community;
- addressing the future demand for specialist provision now;
- being in a better position to commission therapy services and engage extra support to ensure that it is as targeted and as responsive as possible; and
- creating economies of scale by sharing core administrative functions and by negotiating bought in services for our schools which will enable greater investment where it matters, in the classroom

Clarendon School is a special school catering for pupils aged 4-16 with complex learning difficulties. The school also manages the Gateway Centre (attached to Twickenham Academy) for secondary pupils with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. An outreach programme enables us to share our expertise with colleagues in mainstream schools, helping them to support other young people with learning difficulties more effectively.

#### **Our Clarendon Vision:**

To be a centre of excellence where all pupils are supported and challenged to:

- Achieve their full potential in their academic, social, creative, personal, physical and moral development.
- Grow in confidence and become as independent as possible.
- Make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community, in which they are valued as individuals.

#### **Our mission statement:**

Our philosophy is that pupils will flourish and achieve their full potential when they are taught:

- In a nurturing, safe and engaging environment.
- With consistently excellent, engaging and progressive teaching and learning opportunities for all
- A broad and innovative curriculum which enriches the experience of our pupils.
- And provided with opportunities for life-long learning, growing independence and to be valued members of society.

For Clarendon to improve further and to meet these aims they have been developed by the whole school community and need to be owned by pupils, parents, staff, headteacher and governors alike. It is the job of the Local Governing Body (LGB) working with the headteacher and senior leaders to agree strategies for their implementation looking forward several years and taking into account outside developments and initiatives impacting on the school. This is facilitated by an annual strategy meeting attended by the full LGB and the headship team with input sought from staff, parents and pupils through a programme of surveys.

This strategic discussion informs the annual school development plan (SDP), the educational detail of which will be formulated by the senior leaders of the school and agreed by the LGB and the Trust Board. The SDP is implemented by the senior leadership team and staff and then its progress and impact on pupil attainment, pupil progress and school improvement is evaluated and monitored by governors, through meetings of the full LGB & its specialist committees and via a link governor visiting and reporting system. There is further oversight by the Board of Trustees and its committees.

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to undertake the day-to-day management of the school, to implement the policies agreed with the governing body and to ensure delivery of the curriculum. The role of the LGB is that of a 'critical friend', providing support and constructive challenge in equal measure. To fulfil this function effectively all governors need to know Clarendon really well, build positive, informed relationships with all stakeholders and become actively involved in the life of the school.

#### **Where we are now:**

- Healthy School Bronze Award 2014
- Sportsmark
- Activemark
- Gateway – National Autistic Society Accreditation with commendation
- Clarendon Cycle Scheme winners of Richmond Den 2013
- Auriga Academy Trust academy order granted July 2016
- Academy Conversion October 2016
- Maaz Free School proposal receives approval to enter pre-opening phase April 2017
- Artsmark Gold re-awarded Summer 2017
- 2018 Moved onto new and separate Clarendon Primary and Secondary Sites
- Ofsted June 2019 – Outstanding
- September 2019 Capella House School opened with independent LGB

#### **Current Priorities**

Above all and throughout everything we do there is the need to prioritise improved outcomes for all our pupils and the wider school community both now and in the future. This requires ongoing strategic planning and effective implementation of planned improvements at all levels.

#### **Trust**

With the formation of the new Auriga Academy trust there are have been changes in the governance structures and reporting schedules that have been established but these continue to need appropriate tailoring and embedding. Significant work has gone into setting up core financial and administrative functions, aligning the systems and core policies across Clarendon, Strathmore and Capella while ensuring

that the distinctive community and ethos of both schools is maintained. Joint working is beginning to be implemented. Key areas for continued development are:

- Review and refine the structure and operations of the Trust to support improvement objectives across the schools
- Develop collaboration and mutual support across the Trust
- Investing in our staff through further development and implementation of the Auriga People Plan This includes initiatives to improve the recruitment and retention of staff and to ensure sharing of outstanding practice and provision of mentoring and development opportunities for staff
- Working with AfC to identify and meet the growing demand for specialist provision
- Develop and resource a joint outreach programme
- Having brought OT provision in house consider options for wider therapy oversight
- Research income generation to support school and trust budgets
- Embed and streamline central support services

### **Clarendon**

The corona virus pandemic had a significant impact on the school community and school operations for a significant part of last year and we were all forced to find very different ways of working. The virus continues to have an impact and cause uncertainty and is likely to require ongoing flexibility in the way we operate over the coming year

Key considerations for the coming year include:

- Prioritise the provision of as safe an environment as possible for pupils and staff on all our sites
- Establish strategies and practices to support pupil and staff wellbeing in these uncertain times and to maintain effective communication with parents/carers
- Identify pupils whose outcomes have been affected by the pandemic and implement effective interventions to narrow and close those gaps
- Continue to develop a rich and appropriate curriculum for all Clarendon pupils supported by appropriate specialist methodologies. Support and embed the new curriculum leadership structure to upskill staff and enable them to grow in confidence.
- Continue to develop the integration of the therapies with teaching and effective collaboration between teaching and therapeutic staff
- Pilot the development of a total communication environment for the support of non-verbal pupils at Primary
- Build further collaboration with colleagues across the trust to support staff training and development and the sharing of best practice.

### **Gateway**

Gateway continues to face a period of change, challenge and opportunity, particularly with the delay to buildings improvements being exacerbated by the pandemic.

- Restart the programme of improvement to the Gateway working environment
- Prioritise improving pupil outcomes through quality of teaching and assessment and improved attendance and targeted interventions for pupils adversely affected by the lockdown.
- Continue working to build effective partnership working with Twickenham School
- Develop the staff training offer and strategies to support staff wellbeing

- The changing profile of wider SEND provision and of pupil referrals continues to need careful liaison with partners and stakeholders, including AfC to plan for the future while ensuring appropriate staffing and curriculum provision for current Gateway pupils.

## B: A Framework for Governance

The Governing Body (LGB) has three core functions for the school:

- Setting the strategic direction for Clarendon
- Holding the headteacher to account for performance and improvement of the school
- Ensuring financial health, probity and value for money

How we work:

### 1. Composition and remit

The composition of the LGB is laid out in the Auriga Academy Trust Scheme of Delegation and aims to include a wide cross section of the stakeholders from the community we represent.

The current composition is 11 governors (2 parent governors, 1 LA governor, 2 Staff governors and 6 co-opted governors).

- Parent governors are elected by the parent body.
- The two staff governors comprise the HT and one teacher elected by the teaching staff.
- The co-opted governors will always include one member of the wider support staff.
- The appointment of other co-opted governors as vacancies arise will have regard to any gaps in skills that are identified as being required by the LGB. The governing body will undertake a skills audit biannually to ensure current skill sets are identified and utilised and potential gaps highlighted.

Currently the LGB also has several Associate Members, who support its work across the provisions as Heads of Centres but have no voting rights. Additional associate members may be appointed as necessary to further meet skills gaps or support succession planning.

The LGB is a corporate body of volunteers who make their decisions jointly and democratically. All members have equal status and responsibility and do not act independently without agreement and authority from the full LGB. All governors abide by and support the majority decisions of the full LGB. The overriding concern of all governors is the welfare of the school as a whole and not the separate interests of the individual stakeholder groups from which they might be drawn.

All governors are expected to abide by the Nolan principles of public life:

- **Selflessness** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.
- **Honesty** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## 2. Commitment

### Governors

The role of a school governor takes a commitment of time and energy in getting to know the school well and in becoming actively involved in the work of both the LGB and the wider life of the school.

- Attendance is expected at all full LGB meetings, including the annual Strategy Day with apologies sent to the clerk in advance in those exceptional circumstances where attendance is not possible.
- A high level of attendance is essential in remaining in touch and informed about the school and the LGB reserve the right to revoke membership of the LGB in the case of governors missing three meetings in any 12-month rolling period (to including the Autumn Strategy Day, full LGB meetings and committee meetings). The clerk will send a reminder of this after two absences.
- Governors should commit to membership of at least one of the LGB committees. They should present apologies in advance of any of these meetings they might be unable to attend.
- Governors should come to meetings having read all the papers beforehand and prepared to actively contribute to discussions and ask questions.
- All governors should undertake visits to school other than for meetings ideally every term.
- Governors should be prepared to take on delegated roles on behalf of the LGB and, in particular for non-school governors, that of one of the link governors.
- Governors need to be willing to undertake appropriate training to support them in their role (see section 6)
- Governors should always feedback the knowledge they gain from visits and training to the full LGB, in written form. There are forms designed for this purpose.
- Governors will always respect the confidentiality of discussions and votes within LGB and committee meetings as well as those subjects that are deemed by the LGB to be confidential.

### School Leaders

- The headteacher and senior leadership team undertake to provide the LGB with the information they need to fulfil their role, to provide reports and requested data and information in a timely manner, to answer their questions openly and honestly and to facilitate governor and trustee visits to the school.
- The school and LGB take data protection issues seriously and individual pupils must not be named or identified in LGB meetings or documents and pupil data must be anonymised before presentation to governors. Where appropriate staff data will also be anonymised.
- Clarendon recognises the importance of well-informed governors and the important part training can play in this and supports access to the governors training provided by Achieving for Children (AfC) and other necessary training as agreed in LGB meetings.
- The school will provide reasonable expenses, including childcare, to governors to enable them to carry out their duties as outlined in the Governors' Allowances Policy.

## 3. Meetings

An outline programme for all meetings of the full LGB and its committees is set out in the Annual Programme. The full LGB meets termly with an additional Strategy Day at the beginning of the autumn term. The dates for all meetings across the Trust are set at the end summer term for the full subsequent academic year to ensure the appropriate flow of information between levels of governance within the Trust.

The four committees meet termly and more often if required by the LGB or by their workload. Each committee will have at least one link staff member from the headship team.

The four committees are as follows:

- ✓ Pupil Achievement and Wellbeing
- ✓ Pay and Personnel
- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Health and Safety and Premises

Additional working parties may be convened by the LGB to undertake specific, well defined projects. Agendas for all meetings are agreed between the chair, headteacher (or relevant staff member) and clerk and circulated well in advance. In principle as much information as possible should be circulated in written reports 7 – 10 days in advance to enable governors to arrive fully informed and ready and able to contribute constructively to discussions and ask pertinent questions. Commitment from all governors to regular attendance at meetings, full preparation and a willingness to make contributions to discussions and become involved as far as possible in the life of the school are essential to the effective functioning of the LGB. All meetings are clerked, actions noted and minutes circulated to all governors and noted at full LGB meetings.

#### **4. Link Governors**

These governors undertake to attend relevant meetings, liaise with named members of staff and feed back to the full LGB via a governor visit report form. It is expected that these positions will require a minimum of a termly visit to school. Governors have a responsibility to inform themselves about these areas of specialism and to attend any relevant training. There is a LGB document outlining in full the roles and responsibilities of these governors. The areas of responsibility for the link governors are reviewed at the beginning of each year and are allotted to cover statutory responsibilities (e.g. safeguarding) and key school development priority areas as well as to foster governor relationships with all the Clarendon provisions.

#### **5. Governor Visits**

These form a vital part of the monitoring role of governors enabling them to get to know the school and how it operates, assess the implementation of actions arising from their decisions and to appreciate the successes being achieved and the challenges being faced.

There is a protocol for governor visits which governors should familiarise themselves with and observe and also a feedback form to complete after each visit (termly for regular visits) to provide more targeted information to the full LGB. Completed forms should be sent to the HT out of courtesy and to minimise misunderstandings. The HT will forward these to the clerk for full circulation ahead of the subsequent full governing body.

#### **6. Policies and Procedures**

The LGB are responsible for determining that all necessary statutory and other appropriate policies, plans and procedures are agreed, implemented and functioning to provide an effective framework to ensure that Clarendon is a safe environment for all pupils and staff and that our aims and objectives are met. Each committee has responsibility for reviewing and monitoring the relevant policies and sections of the SDP as set out in the annual programme. Some policies may be decided by the trustees, but oversight of their implementation is the responsibility of governors.

## **7. Training**

- Governors should take every opportunity to enhance their effectiveness through the training available both through the Local Authority Governors Support Service, online through the NGA and through specific school-based sessions as well as other opportunities that may arise.
- Those new to the role should undertake the two-part LA course 'New Governors – Understanding Your Role' as soon as is practical and which must be completed within a year of appointment.
- All governors should also undertake the LA Safeguarding for governors training at an early opportunity.
- All governors should attend a minimum of one training session annually. It should be noted that best practice involves refreshing training in any subject every three years.
- Knowledge gained from training should be shared with the full LGB by means of a written report of at least key points, there is a pro-forma to provide guidance on feedback.
- Training needs will be reviewed regularly in full LGB meetings.

## **8. Self-Evaluation and Engagement with Stakeholders**

- Governors will undertake an annual self-assessment of the effectiveness of the governing body.
- The governors' section on the school website will include an annual report of the governing body's work.
- Trust newsletters to Clarendon stakeholders should include a governors section.
- To supplement feedback from staff gained in visits and school meetings attended governors will circulate a questionnaire to all staff annually.
- The chair of governors attends the new parents' induction afternoon and the LGB will ensure that there are governors available to attend all parents' evenings.
- Questionnaires will also be used to gauge parental satisfaction to supplement feedback in annual reviews.
- A standard pupil questionnaire is undertaken every three years which will be supplemented by less formal polls facilitated through the school council and feedback in annual reviews.



## C: Monitoring of School Performance Indicators

- Pupil Profile  
Annual report to Pupil Committee on pupil profile  
(Including no each class, no FSM, No ESL, SEN bandings, Looked after – official and unofficial)
- Attendance  
Monitored in termly report from HT and by Pupil Committee
- Exclusions  
Chair directly informed and monitored in each Pupil Committee as well as in termly HT report
- Behaviour  
Monitored in Pupil Committee meetings
- Pupil Premium  
Reports to Pupil Committee and through HT reports
- Academic: Presentation of both targets and results by key stage and also analysed by subgroups.  
Headteacher provides explanation for each pupil not reaching targets or not making progress together with actions being taken.  
Overall English % Progress measured by Classroom monitor steps  
Progress in Reading Age  
Overall Maths % Progress measured by Classroom monitor steps  
MALT test results  
All set for individual (anonymised) pupils for each year group  
KS4: GCSE, Entry Level, D of E, ASDAN and other accredited awards
- Reports from link governors for each of SDP priorities and other priority areas.
- Commentary on destinations of leavers from both Clarendon and satellite provisions annually
- Summary report on participation in extracurricular activities to Pupil Committee
- Termly reports from all the satellite provisions & project groups
- Report on life skills and wider training and curriculum
- Termly report on school trips and visits with curriculum links
- Annual report on work experience
- Termly reports from link governor to school council and triannual pupil satisfaction survey
- Staff CPD report to Pay & Personnel Committee annually
- Annual report on staff absence to Pay and Personnel Committee
- Annual report on Safeguarding and LAC to Pupil Committee

## Signed Agreement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Clarendon Governing Body Code. I am prepared to make the commitment involved in becoming an active member of the Clarendon Governing Body as outlined in the Code above and to play my part in supporting Clarendon in its aspiration to be a centre of excellence always striving for improvement.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_