

The Court School
Full Governing Body Meeting
Tuesday 11 February 2025

Date:	Tuesday 11 February, 2025
Venue:	The Court School
Present:	Cllr. Garry Hunt (GH) (Chair), LA Governor Amy Griffiths (AG) (Vice Chair), Parent Governor Emma Powell (EP), Parent Governor Tanya Griffiths (TG), Parent Governor Denise Sargent (DS), Community Governor Ceri Gibbon (CG), Community Governor Cllr. Jon Shimmin (JS), LA Governor Sarah Jenkins (SJ), Teacher Governor (joined via teams) Glynis Webb (GW), Staff governor Jamyn Beesley (JB), Headteacher Pam Cotter (PC), Clerk
Not Present:	Chloe McBratney (CM), Community Governor Christine Murrell (CM), Parent Governor
Observing	Caroline Joy
Apologies	Naveed Chaudhry (NC), LA governor

Item	Discussion/Actions	Owner
1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
1.1	GH welcomed governors to the meeting	
1.2	No apologies had been received at the start of the meeting. Apologies were received during the meeting from Naveed Chaudhry. Christine Murrell and Chloe McBratney were not present.	

N. Hunt 28.3.25

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	The meeting was quorate.	
2.	<u>Declaration of Interest on items on the agenda</u>	
2.1	No interests in items on the agenda were declared.	
3.	<u>Approval of Minutes of previous meeting</u>	
3.1	<u>Accuracy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tania to be replaced with Tanya • 8.2 - replace Neil as Ross as the DSP <p>Minutes from 3 December were agreed as a true and accurate record of that meeting.</p>	
4.	<u>Matters arising</u>	
4.1	There were no matters arising that could not be dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.	
5.	<u>Headteacher's Report</u> <p>The Headteacher Report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. JB drew governor attention to salient points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson observations - Vast majority of practice has been good-excellent, where there have been areas for development, these have been brought to attention of teachers and improvements have been made. • There has been a ground-breaking activity and ongoing meetings for the new sites. JB concerned about lack of meetings regarding staffing structures. Have a meeting tomorrow with LA and hoping it will come up tomorrow clear plans for staffing are required with financing behind it to recruit. <p>GH agreed to email the council to request ongoing meetings that understand the staffing pupil ratio that is required moving into the new schools.</p>	

J. Whit

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LA has asked JB for his staffing structure, fully costed, which he has sent over 2 months ago but no response. JB followed up with Jennie Hughes via email cc GH before Christmas but no response.

The governing body was disappointed with inaction from LA.

JS - Does the structure include who wants to be on each site. JB said no, this is staffing numbers on each site and staffing who will be across the two sites.

GH Sarah Merry was positive and impressed with JB's vision following her visit recently.

Changing our Mindset Meeting with the Needs of All shared with ALNCos across Cardiff. SJ good workshop. well attended session and lots interested in what was said. **Share this at the next meeting.**

X regularly updated with outdoor learning, musical activities.

Staffing changes. JB now has more capacity to do building related meetings with CJ and Ross here. Responsibilities SJ is on the Extended Leadership Team and is doing work with DARPL, trauma informed work, wellbeing and looking at how they are tracking well-being with some changes being made.

Ross is working on curriculum with Carolann. Focus on writing, immersion weeks and Starter laith.



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	<p>CJ is working on assessment with Neil.</p> <p>CJ commended train the trainer training the staff positive handling training.</p> <p>PPA teacher still out after a nasty accident. OH referrals etc.</p> <p>Significant changes staff wise in Dosbath Cadno TA left before Christmas and replaced, working well.</p> <p><i>Teachers</i> – John Seaward (PPA teacher) is still out of school after a he was hit by a car whilst out on his bike. We are maintaining close communication with him and his family and are providing ongoing support where we can.</p> <p>Zoe Lewis is currently out of school and Claire Mullett is now the class teacher in Dosbarth Cadno. She is doing an incredible job and her hard work and dedication to our school is impressing all of us day in day out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Teaching Assistants (TAs)</i> – The TAs in Dosbarth Cadno are providing high quality support for Claire in challenging circumstances. Will Union, who was working in this class, has now left the school and has been replaced by Tommy Kehoe. <p>Laura Whittle is now the school's first Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) and is undertaking a complex role with responsibility for interventions, Forest Schools and regular class cover.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Psychology students</i> – We have 2 x Cardiff University/Psychology students at present. 1 of these students is thriving and is making a huge difference in Dosbarth Pry-Copyn. Unfortunately, the other student has had a number of family/medical issues which has impacted on her attendance at school (we are doing our best to support her with these challenges). We have another student from Cardiff Met who has been working with us on a part-time basis. She is doing really well with our youngest pupils. In addition, another student from Cardiff Met has	
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just started his 4 x days with us and is already a hit with staff and pupils alike.

It is mutually beneficial having these students work at the Court School. They have the opportunity to experience working with our wonderful (but challenging) pupils/learn from experienced colleagues and we benefit from additional staffing who are usually dynamic, responsive and popular with our pupils.

JS asked what Cardiff met students are studying - JB teaching, part of their teaching qualification.

JB explained that the school prioritise time together and wellbeing. Every half term there is a wellbeing focus, e.g. quiz, chat, crochet and chocolate. This is optional for staff.

- 1) **Consortium/Estyn:** I am meeting with our Improvement Partner (IP) from the Consortium on 17th February to discuss the school's priorities and the Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting cycle.

Nothing to report in relation to Estyn as our full inspection was June last year. Our next visit is likely to be an interim inspection which will focus on the recommendations from our last visit which were:

- Refine self evaluation processes so that learners at all levels collect and analyse data and other important information systematically to identify strategic priorities accurately
- Strengthen assessment process to take account of pupils' progress in all areas of their learning

Exclusions

JB reported 14 days exclusions, noting that this reflects a slight increase.

GH asked if there is a small number of children with a large number of exclusions? JB agreed that this was the case and that the philosophy behind exclusions, is to think of how to do



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	<p>things differently. JB advised that they attempt to keep numbers of exclusions down, and that exclusion is the last resort.</p> <p>JB informed governors that the criteria for intervening for positive handling is where the behaviour has an impact on the learning environment.</p> <p>JB reported that attendance has dropped a little partly because more pupils are on PSPs. JB explained that more parents have made requests for shorter days, particularly those in year 6 who are struggling with the idea of leaving the Court school.</p> <p>GH invited questions. There were no questions.</p>	
6	<p><u>SER/SIP</u></p> <p>JB shared presentation on the screen reflecting on priorities this year</p> <p><u>Inspection Area 1: Strengthen pupils writing</u></p> <p>Files were available for governors to look at showing evidence around pupils writing and the programme that Debbie Evans is running with pupils; JB explained that this project sees pupils on daily bases to reinforce key writing skills. JB further explained that this is bespoke support and the impact of the work is immediate.</p> <p>GH asked how many pupils at the school whose English as second language children. JB advised there is one pupil. CJ added that she had a review with the parent whose child is receiving the intervention and they were blown away with progress of child</p> <p>JB explained that most actions from the second part to this target are from the spring term onwards; JB requested that the LLC coordinator attends at future meetings. GB agreed. JB added that the writing programme is a two-year project and that the LLC</p>	



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coordinator has attended Get Writing Program course with the CSC.

JB advised that they have strengthened the assessment process to take full account for pupil progress in all areas of their learning. JB reported that progress meetings have changed; they have moved into feeding into progress meetings looking at intended outcomes and what is being done to support the children and what progress the children are making.

CJ reiterated that the progress meeting has completely changed, though a work in progress. CJ further noted that it now involved three weeks of after school meetings but that the process is valuable.

GH talked about the process being more academic.

Inspection Area 2: Wellbeing, care, support and guidance.

JB explained that physical interventions were previously not sufficiently tracked. JB further explained that they now have a monthly capture of physical intervention. JB noted that the numbers tracked are high because children struggle to be together, so staff have to intervene and release.

JB provided an example to governors, advising that there were 15 interventions on the previous day. JB noted that sometimes there are two and occasionally there are 0.

DS asked if tracking physical interventions is differentiated where children are physically fighting and require an intervention and an



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intervention to keep staff safe. JB advised that staff would physically intervene for both reasons.

CG asked if the school has developed the space to be able to escort and release. JB advised that they have and that they have developed the practice.

JB shared October's data with the GB.

Inspection Area 3: Leading and Improving

JB explained that they have restructured and strengthened the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) at the start of the year which has made a positive impact. The area leads are as follows:

- Assessment: Neil and Caroline
- Curriculum: Carolann and Ross
- Wellbeing: Sarah and Jamyn

SJ gave an overview of Motional which is a piece of software to assess the children's mental and emotional wellbeing and plan strategies for improvement. Motional is closely aligned with trauma informed approaches, it tracks wellbeing and suggests strategies to put in place to support the children. SJ informed governors that there is a training session during the second week back after half term. Motional will be used as an alternative to Boxall from this academic year.

SJ further informed governors that the system produces excellent data and is far more useful for teaching staff than previous tools used.



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	<p>GH thanked JB, and acknowledged the visible and tangible progress being made. GH invited questions. There were no further questions.</p> <p>It was agreed that CJ would share progress forms and progress meeting information and that Neil would attend the next meeting.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Safeguarding update (HT)</u></p> <p>JB informed governors that a number of MARFs have been submitted; JB explained to governors that safeguarding concerns are noted on the My Concern system and discussed during the day through bulletins and conversations. JB further explained that the school has strong links with Children Services and that they are attending CASP meetings and Case Conferences.</p> <p><u>CLA update</u></p> <p>CJ informed governors that there are three CLA and provided an update on each.</p>	
6. 6.1	<p><u>Committee Reports</u></p> <p>Finance</p> <p>GH informed governors that the finance committee had met before the meeting with LFSM officer Paul Mellin. GH further informed governors that the governor agreed deficit was £161k and currently it is £167k. GH advised governors that the LFSM offer expressed that he was reasonably comfortable with the deficit.</p> <p>GH informed the GB that he and JS would discuss with Cllr. Sarah Merry the disparity between MSF cover available to special schools, mainstream schools and SRBs in mainstream schools</p>	



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	<p>GH further informed governors that the main difficulty with the budget is with agency staff and costing. GH advised governors that JB is recruiting for staff on permanent contracts on 19 February.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Health & Safety</u></p> <p>7.1 GH attended a Health and Safety walk with Clive the Health & Safety officer in November 2024.</p> <p>7.2 GH advised that there were no major repairs required.</p> <p>CJ stated that it was important to note how exceptional Chris is; governors and JB agreed that Chris is efficient and helps with saving costs with repairs.</p> <p><u>Curriculum</u></p> <p>CG provided an update on curriculum following her meeting with Carolann and Ross, drawing governors attention to the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative planning: Inset time had been used for collaborative planning, identifying where the strengths are, helping with consistency and ideas. During this time, the team could ensure that high standards are shared, enabling people within groups to be able to learn from one another. • CG explained how Carolann and Ross talked about finding the way into learning and finding the right approach to settle dysregulated learners, to enable them to learn • CG explained that Estyn had picked up in a local school was about keeping other children learning. The Court recognises the importance of intervening early. 	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrich Learning: This is a science and tech approach, an online science tech activity and people are coming in to support with that. Working with Melin Reeve an independent comp to incorporate that. • Upbeat Music, they are working with the school. Welsh music day on Friday and on a weekly basis. • The school is working with DARPL modelling curriculum resources; Sarah is working with a TA on designing an anti-racism policy and graduated responses • Middle leaders, AoLE leads have time and opportunities to write across the curriculum • Get Writing Programme with the CSC 	
9.	<u>Policies</u>	
9.1	<p>Governors approved the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive handling policy • Schools Resolution Policy • Contenance & Intimate Care Policy • Trauma Informed and Relationships Policy <p>JB explained to governors that he wrote the Trauma Informed and Relationships policy which reflects the process at the school. JB further explained that SJ, CJ and Neil had reviewed this and AG had provided comments too which had all been incorporated.</p> <p>GH invited further comments from governors.</p> <p>EP suggested including staff training within the policy. JB and governors agreed.</p>	



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	AG stated that in old behaviour policies there are references to parents and children signing a behaviour agreement and asked if The Court school is doing away with this. JB advised that they do not do this and instead have an agreement that is more to do with attitude than behaviour.	
10.	<u>Governor training and development including compliance with mandatory training</u>	
10.1	AG has attended Schools of Sanctuary training TG has attended Disability Awareness course through her daughter's primary school, Springwood	
11.	<u>Correspondence</u>	
11.1	None.	
12.	<u>AOB - discussions with LA</u>	
12.1	GH informed governors that he and JB have been in discussions with the Head and CoG of Fairwater and Pen-Y-Bryn about caretaking arrangements and they have come to a provisional agreement that the Court school will have it's own caretaker on each site, so will need to recruit another caretaker.	
13.	<u>Date and time of next meeting</u>	
13.1	Tuesday 25 March @ 5pm.	
14.	<u>Determination of matters to be regarded as confidential</u>	
14.1	JB informed governors of the HR meetings.	

