

Cowley International College

Name of meeting: Cowley International College LGB meeting		Date: Tuesday 30 September 2025
Present: Gary Anders (GAS), Inness Arnold (IAD), Justine Kellet (JKT), Claire Lucas (CLS), Linda Emmett (LET), Corey Gerrad (CGD) and Sharon Ahmed (SAD) Also present: Russell Cormack (Principal) (RCK), Nick Robinson (NRN), Mike Bennett (MBT), Chris Dickinson CDN and Fiona Barry FBY Minutes taken by: Helen Singleton (Clerk) (HSN)		Location: 6 th Form
Apologies: Karl Van Der Laan (KVN), Stacey Hill (SHL), Anthony Burns (ABS), Margaret Bellis (MBS) and Angela Farrell (AFL)		Absent:
Agenda Part 1	Information:	Action By:
1.	Welcome and introductions and apologies.	
1.1	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. Governors were reminded of the confidential nature of proceedings. It was noted that the agenda would be a blend of legacy local authority requirements and the new Trinity Local Governing Board model, reflecting the transitional phase.	
2	Declaration of interests There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	Appointment of Chair and Governance professional	
3.1	Gary Anders volunteered to stand again as Chair, and this was seconded by Claire Lucas. Gary Anders was unanimously appointed as Chair.	
3.2	It was also unanimously agreed that Stacey would continue in the role of Vice Chair.	
3.3	HSN is appointed as the Governance Professional for the LGB.	
4.	Appointment of link governor roles	
4.1	Governors discussed the move away from standing committees towards link governor responsibilities, which will cover key areas such as safeguarding, curriculum, finance, SEND, and behaviour.	RCK to identify Link Governor roles
4.2	Governors were encouraged to volunteer for link roles. Where gaps remain, the Chair and Principal will approach individuals directly. It was emphasised that link roles will strengthen governance monitoring and will be a critical aspect of preparation for Ofsted.	
5.	Safeguarding update – DSL – available on governorhub- brought up the agenda from item	
5.1	The DSL presented a detailed update following the safeguarding review undertaken by Trinity in summer.	
5.2	Key developments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being Team Expansion: A new structure now includes a well-being manager, child protection officers, and a dedicated well-being officer. • Yellow Form Process: Staff now complete paper safeguarding concern forms which are handed directly to the well-being office, logged into CPOMs, and shredded. This ensures immediate action and allows for professional dialogue at the point of concern. • Site Security: New sign-in/sign-out systems, lanyard protocols, and improved safeguarding checks with Saints have been introduced. • Staff Training: All staff received updates on the new KCSIE guidance during September training days, with additional departmental briefings. Governors will also be asked to confirm their understanding of Part 1. 	MBT to send out KCSIE email for Gobs to read. All Gobs to read and acknowledge they have read this
5.2.1	<i>Q: A governor asked how confidentiality of paper forms is ensured.</i> <i>A: The DSL explained that forms are never left unattended; they are handed directly to the well-being office, scanned into CPOMs, and shredded immediately.</i>	

5.2.2	<p><i>Q: A governor questioned why not retain an electronic-only system which would be more secure?</i></p> <p><i>A: The DSL explained that Trinity's preferred model ensures personal, immediate dialogue between staff and the well-being team. This system has been externally quality assured and recognised by Ofsted as best practice.</i></p>	
5.2.3	<p><i>Q: A governor asked how staff maintain confidentiality when they complete the yellow forms?</i></p> <p><i>A: Staff have been clearly briefed to ensure confidentiality. If necessary, a college manager can step into class while the teacher takes time to complete a form in private and hand it directly to the safeguarding team.</i></p>	
5.3	<p>Action: Safeguarding link governor to undertake a monitoring visit with the DSL to review the operation of the new system and report back.</p>	
		RCK
6.	<p>Principal's Report – RCK- available on Governor hub</p> <p>The principal introduced the first LGB Principal's Report under the Trinity framework, providing a comprehensive overview of standards, performance and key priorities</p>	
6.1	<p>Outcomes and Examination Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 GCSE results were significantly below national averages. Attainment 8 and Basics measures (4+ and 5+) were well under national benchmarks. • Over 50% of students did not meet the threshold to progress to Level 3 qualifications. • Some subjects achieved strong outcomes, but there was wide variability. • The new leadership in Maths has already brought visible change and improved teaching quality. 	
6.1.1	<p><i>Q: The results are not good enough, what are we doing to address this?</i></p> <p><i>A: We need to address both the curriculum that is in place and Teaching and Learning. Changes are being made to pace and challenge and this is being done through high quality CPD to plug gaps in content and knowledge. Spotlight sessions are starting, and data is being recorded so we can gather details and put appropriate CPD in place. The key is to create a space where teachers can teach through the BFL policy, See what we have done well and share that and where we are lacking put high quality CPD in place.</i></p>	
6.1.2	<p><i>Q: What urgent steps are in place for current Year 11 and 13 cohorts.</i></p> <p><i>A: The Principal highlighted targeted CPD through Trinity's Expert Teacher Programme, new diagnostic assessments, and intervention planning. Trinity's RAP process is identifying underperforming students and staff are implementing spotlight reviews.</i></p>	
6.1.3	<p><i>Q: How will disadvantaged students be supported.</i></p> <p><i>A: Staff are now expected to know each pupil's context and barriers. The COBRA process identifies highly vulnerable students and enables bespoke tracking and intervention.</i></p>	
6.2	<p>Attendance and Persistent Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall attendance in 2024/25 was deemed unacceptable, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. • Attendance this term is showing early improvements in Year 7 (97.5%) and Year 8. However, Years 9 and 10 remain a concern. • Year 11 attendance is already 90%, an improvement on last year at this stage. • The school has seen a sharp rise in Elective Home Education (EHE) cases: 10 already this term compared with 21 for the whole of last year. 	
6.2.1	<p><i>Q: A governor asked whether rigorous follow-up is driving parents to choose EHE.</i></p> <p><i>A: The Principal acknowledged the possibility but emphasised that staff continue to challenge parents and offer support. Parents' rights are respected but governors noted risks for vulnerable pupils.</i></p>	
6.3	<p>Behaviour, Inclusion and Culture</p>	

6.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new behaviour system introduced last year has had a significant impact. Suspensions halved in the final term of 2024/25 and are currently 50% lower than the same period last year. Connect Room: Provides structured support for Year 7 pupils struggling to transition. Reconnect Room: Supports pupils at risk of repeated suspension or permanent exclusion with a bespoke curriculum and high-quality teaching. Student and parental feedback suggest greater consistency and calmer classrooms. 	
6.3.2	<p><i>Q: Do pupils understand the new behaviour systems.</i></p> <p><i>A: Yes. Student voice surveys and parental comments confirm the new systems are understood and welcomed.</i></p>	
6.4	<p><i>Q: Have you had feedback from parents?</i></p> <p><i>A: There was a fear around how students would respond particularly our students with special needs as the consistency has helped those children. SAD a parent governor backed this up advising that it certainly has had an impact on her child who has attended every day which is a positive start.</i></p>	
6.4.1	<p>Staffing and Workforce Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff turnover has been high but there have been many new appointments, particularly in core subjects. Staff absence has reduced overall compared to last year, though there remain challenges in HR and finance staffing. Some staff unions have expressed concerns about new systems, but the Principal reported strong overall staff support. 	
6.5	<p><i>Q: Are you getting any support from the Local Authority?</i></p> <p><i>A: They are supporting where they can in HR and Finance, but they are stretched. We are also getting support from Trinity MAT.</i></p>	
6.5.1	<p>Other information – there has been a lot of communication to students and parents around the changes to the school uniform and students look great and parents have been supportive. Changes to the school day has had a huge and fast impact and we have had less behaviour issues at lunch. Curriculum for Life has been introduced and weekly CPD is working well. We have had a number of complaints and are dealing with those.</p>	
6.5.2	<p><i>Q: Has there been any backlash against girls having to wear tights?</i></p> <p><i>A: No there hasn't we had two girls attend without tights today as they couldn't find any tights at home, so we gave them each a pair and they put them on without any issues. We have had some students with sensory issues, but we have dealt with that.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are any of the complaints an Ofsted qualifying complaint?</i></p> <p><i>A: Yes, one is a qualifying complaint, and we have spoken at length with the HMI about that.</i></p>	
7.1	<p>Improvement Plan 2025-26</p> <p>The Principal presented the new Improvement Plan and discussed work on the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan is structured around four priority areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Learning Behaviour for Learning Attendance Leadership at all levels Governors noted the alignment with Trinity's frameworks and toolkit. The plan sets out bold but realistic targets, aiming to raise outcomes to at least national averages. SLT worked intensively over the summer to draft the plan, supported by Trinity leaders. From the CIP the SEF will be developed using the new Ofsted Framework 	
7.1.1	<p><i>Q: How will progress against the plan will be monitored.</i></p> <p><i>A: Regular spotlight reviews, performance reviews, and curriculum leader meetings will provide evidence of impact. Governors will receive updates at each LGB meeting.</i></p>	
7.1.2	<p><i>Q: Is the SEF honest about the schools' weaknesses.</i></p> <p><i>A: Yes. Leaders confirmed that the SEF is frank about areas of underperformance, while evidencing rapid change and improvement.</i></p>	
7.2		

	<p>Action: Governors to review the Improvement Plan and provide feedback to SLT. Link governors to monitor progress in their areas.</p> <p>[Fona, Chris and Mike leave the meeting]</p>	
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>This is a hybrid between the LA ToR and those provided by Trinity. If governors have any questions, please send them to KJN.</p>	
<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p>	<p>Governor membership</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our Single Central register with support from TMAT. Karen will chase governors if a new DBS check is required.</p> <p>If governors are getting any suspicious emails, please do not open them and forward them on to Karen.</p>	KJN
<p>10.</p> <p>10.1</p>	<p>Minutes and matters arising from the meeting dated 17.07.25</p> <p>The minutes are agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Finance and Resource Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school continues to operate with an annual deficit of around £500k. • Year 7 entry is full, and Year 12 recruitment is at its highest level (200 students) for many years, which supports future funding. • The sixth form curriculum offer will need restructuring to ensure efficiency and financial sustainability. • We are now using Curriculum led financial planning (CLFP) supported by TMAT. • Bold decisions will need to be made around recruitment and Sixth Form curriculum. 	
<p>12.</p> <p>12.1</p> <p>12.2</p>	<p>Policies for review</p> <p>The following policies were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory updates) • Financial Regulations • Petty Cash and Charge Card Procedures • Governors' Code of Conduct <p>School term dates remain under review; governors expressed concern about two-week half terms and potential negative impact on feeder schools.</p>	
<p>13.</p> <p>13.1</p> <p>13.2</p> <p>13.2.1</p> <p>13.3</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>The importance of early link visits was emphasised to governors. Templates will be provided to ensure consistency and focus.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each link governor should complete at least one visit before Christmas. • Governors will receive a dedicated Ofsted preparation session. <p><i>Q: How will governors be supported to answer Ofsted questions.</i></p> <p><i>A: A governor handbook and briefing session will be delivered before Christmas to ensure governors can confidently articulate strengths, challenges, and impact.</i></p> <p>The chair and Principal asked that their thanks to TMAT for all their support be minuted.</p>	