



Olchfa School Governing Body
Minutes of the Care, Support & Guidance Committee Meeting held
on Wednesday 2 April 2025 at 5.15 pm
in the Conference Centre

Present	Prof Ann John Cllr Jeff Jones Mr Matthew Jones Mr Julian Kennedy	Mrs Aderinola Omole Mr Damian Rees Mr Ian Stewart
Apologies	Cllr Mike Day Mr James Ellis Mrs Suzi Smith	Mrs Hannah Vincent Mrs Lynda Westhead
In attendance	Mr Andrew Charles, Assistant Headteacher Mrs Jan Platt, Clerk to the Governing Body	

		ACTION
CS&G24.09	Apologies	
1	Apologies were received and accepted from those named above.	
CS&G24.10	Minutes of the last meeting (18 October 2024)	
2	The minutes were agreed to be a true record.	
CS&G24.11	Pastoral Update	
3	Mr Charles said that the second Wellbeing Fayre had taken place in October and there had been a great deal of positive feedback.	
3.1	There had been changes to the pastoral team. The financial picture had not been good at the start of the term and the Family Engagement Worker had not been replaced when the funding ended. The school was now in a better financial position and an advert had gone out to replace her. The school had also employed a new Pastoral Guidance worker who was settling in well. Due to Caryl Tucker's maternity leave, Adam Marsh was currently covering two year groups and that was going well.	
3.2	Parent meeting sessions would be starting in the summer term. There was no a more targeted approach as those who usually engaged were probably those who did not need as much support as others.	
3.3	A student support email address had been set up. There had not been much traffic thus far but there had been one significant communication from a pupil with a high level of need so even that made it worthwhile.	

3.4	CHAT would be visiting primary schools in the summer term and were building links with Swansea City Football Club. Evolve were doing drop-in sessions once a fortnight which were well attended. He noted that some pupils with significant needs and disabilities would be joining the school in September and the PWO and other pastoral workers were receiving training in order to be able to support them.	ACTION
3.5	Mr Stewart said that he was concerned about a Learning Leader having enough time to look after two year groups. Mr Kennedy said that this was something they had thought carefully about. Mr Marsh was an experienced Learning Leader and Mr Charles and Mrs Thompson checked in on him regularly. He was coping well. Mr Stewart thanked Mr Charles. In terms of Learning Leader support roles, Mr Stewart thought it would be a good idea, if capacity existed, to expand these roles given the growing number of students in the school.	
3.6	Mrs Omole asked if students were aware of the support email address. Mr Charles confirmed that they were. Prof John said it would be useful if the email could be included on computer screensavers. Mr Charles agreed this was a good idea.	ADC
CS&G24.12	All Wales Core Data Set/'Attendance Update	
4	Mr Charles had provided Governors with the attendance data in advance. He said that there was a steady increase in the percentage year on year but that the school was not complacent in this regard.	
6	In terms of the FSM/non-FSM gap, an area to work on was the current year 8 and, when the new FEW was appointed, part of their role would be to unpick this. The school was doing a great deal of work with the current Year 11 in order to try to narrow the gap between vulnerable learners. The All Wales Core Data showed how Olchfa was performing against the benchmark. The gap was narrowing but this was a constant focus.	
7	In terms of exclusions, Mr Charles explained that the school was now using less days than in any of the four years up to this point. It was important to keep tabs on this but the decrease was encouraging. In answer to a question from Cllr J Jones about where the drop was coming from, Mr Charles explained that it was due to a number of things including the new behaviour policy, enhanced provision, more intervention and bespoke packages around pupils at risk of permanent exclusion. Mr	

- Rees asked about the data for the years before that. Mr Kennedy said that would be the atypical Covid years but there had been some exclusions in 2018/19. Mr Rees asked how many pupils were on less than a full day's timetable. Mr Charles said that there were 6 pupils on PSPs and, of those, only one was on a reduced timetable, coming in after break and leaving at lunch. Mr Kennedy explained that there were also children on EOTAS. In terms of PSPs, they worked closely together with the LA and he signed everything off personally.
- 8 Prof John said the figures were impressive compared to other schools in Wales. She was concerned about the long-term outcomes following exclusion. Mr Kennedy said that, fortunately, they did not often have to consider a permanent exclusion. There were lengthy conversations around each incident focusing on whether or not there was a need to exclude at all and how to keep the exclusion to a minimum. Prof John said they should also be considering where they were excluding pupils to. Mr Kennedy said this formed part of the conversation. Prof John asked about interventions at this stage, eg for substance misuse. Mr Charles confirmed that Barod and other organisations were invited in to speak to pupils as part of the package.
- 9 Mr Stewart said that belonging was important. When pupils were excluded they were 'othering' them so they felt they did not belong. Anything to encourage these pupils to feel part of the community would be beneficial. Prof John agreed that belonging and loneliness were important aspects to take into account and could be measurable. Mr Kennedy agreed. He said that a lot of work was happening regarding avoiding repeat issues around bad behaviour and poor attendance. Mr Rees said this could be evidenced more and if it was not happening then steps could be put in place.
- 10 Mr Charles said that the AWCDS was in two parts and key was what the school was doing to improve. Mr Kennedy said that the Welsh Government performance measures around qualifications and attendance was collated following the results in the summer and the verified data published in January. These broadly compared schools of a similar nature. There were families of 10 schools with a broadly similar socio-economic background. There was a wider benchmarking group of 30 schools based on FSM. The school could use the data to identify schools with a similar profile who were managing to improve their

- outcomes. Pontarddulais, for example, had better attendance even though it was more economically challenged so not in the same family. Staff would be visiting to find out what more they could do to improve attendance percentages at Olchfa. Mr Charles then ran through the data sets. The overall headline was that the school compared well. The FSM v non-FSM gap was smaller than other schools, there were lower amounts of students hitting the persistent absence threshold and the school was outperforming all averages in the family, the LA and Wales.
- 11 Mr Kennedy said that one school found fines effective and said that the LA would like Olchfa to explore their use. He had reservations, but would need to explore within the Committee in due course. Mr Rees said that this was a punitive measure contrary to the school's culture. This should be about inclusivity and support. Prof John said she had done some work around evidence based interventions for attendance and would share this with the school.
- 12 Mr Charles said FPNs might be worth exploration. If a family was not engaging at all and a child refusing to attend school this could be used as another layer of intervention with the family. Prof John pointed out that the pupils who were not attending were usually doing so for genuine reasons, eg self-harm, anxiety, depression. Putting in place punitive measures was not helpful. Mr Rees agreed, saying that it was necessary to understand the core issues. Mr Kennedy said this would be returned to in due course. Mr Stewart mentioned ELSA training, on which he had received feedback. He pointed out that ELSA only worked when staff had chunks of time available to devote to it. Maybe more staff should be trained? Mr Rees agreed that resources were an issue.
- 13 Mr Kennedy gave Governors an update on the STF process. He said that the formal redundancy process had started and concerned the role of the Teacher of the Deaf. In terms of physical work, it realistically needed to be done this financial year in the summer. He would update Governors at the next meeting.
- CS&G24.13 To note the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 11 June 2025**
- 14 Governors noted the date of the next meeting.
- 15 There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.40 pm.