

TOGETHER LEARNING TRUST CASTLE HILL SCHOOL

LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 3 December 2024 at 15.30 at the school

Minutes

Governors Invited:	Til Wright (TW)	Chair
	Jayne Askew (JA)	Staff Governor
	Kristy Dyson (KD)	(Vice Chair) Parent Governor (to 17:13)
	Emma Firth (EF)	Co-opted Governor
	Joan Haines (JH)	Co-opted Governor
	Steve Perren (SP)	Principal
	Katrina Whale (KW)	Staff Governor
	Richard Instone (RI) (remotely)	Co -opted Governor
Invited Guests Present:	Carol Carpenter (CC) (remotely)	Clerk (from 16:00)
	Allanna Hoyer (AH)	Business Manager (to 16:19)
	Dan Pearce (DP)	Deputy Principal
	Beth Millar	Art, Dance & Drama Lead (to 16:00)
	Robyn Webster	Music Lead (to 16:00)
Meeting Started at:	15:30	

Item No.	Agenda Item	Action
1	<p>Welcome & Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for this meeting.</p>	
2.1	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest for this meeting's agenda items.</p>	
2.2	<p>Minutes of the meeting on 15th October 2024</p> <p>Governors agreed the minutes of the previous meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED. That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2024 be approved and be signed by the Chair as a correct account.</p>	
2.3	<p>Matters arising (not covered by agenda)</p> <p>All actions from the previous meeting not covered by the agenda have been completed.</p>	

Agreed as an accurate record.

Signed: Print Name: Dated:

3	<p>Trust Update</p> <p>Governors congratulated all staff following the recent Ofsted Inspection. They acknowledged it had been a gruelling couple of days where Ofsted had “dug and dug until they hit gold.” Extraordinary feedback was received from the Ofsted Inspector, regarding the quality of teaching and care in the school which was a testament to the work and dedication of all the staff in the school.</p> <p>Comment. The feedback was a good reflection of the school. We were unable to gauge the Ofsted Inspector’s feelings about the school until the end of the inspection. It was a justified outcome considering the dedication of all the staff in the school.</p> <p>Q. Have you fed back to them that while pleased with the outcome, you felt the process wasn’t as moderate as you were led to believe it would be?</p> <p>A. I am happy to do that once the outcome is finalised.</p> <p>Comment. It would be good to give them some feedback.</p> <p>Q. Do they ask for feedback during the inspection?</p> <p>A. Yes, but it is prudent to be solutions focussed. They asked me if the process was fair and I said yes but it didn’t always feel that way; it was a rigorous inspection.</p> <p>Comment. In a small primary school, it would all fall on a limited number of people.</p> <p>A. Especially if the outcome wasn’t a positive one, it could potentially be damaging to someone’s wellbeing.</p> <p>TLT have asked for feedback on the Ofsted process following the recent inspection. Governors will advise them what process was followed but much of the outcome depends on how you react and respond to the challenge.</p> <p>Comment. They can throw you off, darting between subjects and you need to be prepared to discuss a variety of subjects to demonstrate wider knowledge.</p> <p>Action JH is compiling the report feedback for TLT.</p>	JH
4.	<p>Headteachers Performance Development Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of process • Outline agreed school objectives for coming year 	

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	<p>Governors were advised it had been a successful day. The Panel and School Improvement Partner were given a thorough insight into future plans for the school. All the areas for development that were discussed are in the SIP.</p> <p>There are a couple of building projects planned; one to create a unit for children with complex needs who could present a risk to other pupils as they get older. Also to build a Wheelchair Store. SP met last week with representatives from Pinnacle and Kirklees Council regarding the projects and they were supportive.</p> <p>Other areas of focus are: action research and pedagogy for the new cohort of students.</p>	
5	<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft outturn position for previous year • Management accounts for current year <p>AH referred to the summary dated 24th October and variances against the budget. The original budget was set in June / July for the new financial year. Up to the end of October there is a £22k variance relating to GAG funding originally based on 127.4 students versus the increased numbers of 129.6. GAG funding comes directly from ESFA but GAG funding over PAN is paid by Kirklees Council and is revised termly. School should receive an extra £22k GAG funding this financial year.</p> <p>Pupil Premium funding is on target. Teachers Pay Grant and Teachers Pension Pay Grant allocation comes directly from the LA and they will only pay on the original planned numbers of 124. School continues to discuss this with the LA.</p> <p>School was successful in all their appeals for the nine pupil's High Needs Funding resulting in an extra £73k which will be backdated to March.</p> <p>Up to October, school is anticipating an extra £91k in income overall.</p> <p>There is an overspend in teacher staffing due to the 5.5% increase across all pay points. They are awaiting information regarding the Core School Budget Grant for Special Schools but will be funded for the 5.5%.</p>	

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	<p>There is an underspend in support staff of £27k due to recruitment. Six new ETAs Started in December, until the end of October they anticipate a £21k variance against staffing.</p> <p>There is a small variance due to the employee healthcare contract which is £48 per employee up from £45 previously.</p> <p>The Energy Price Cap will also increase by 10% next month.</p> <p>The MAT Top Slice will also increase by an extra £1,760 due to the increased GAG funding due to be received.</p> <p>With the extra £121k against budget a new budget has been submitted to TLT requesting to recruit a new teacher and this has been approved. Going forward, with future staff pay increases they will be close to budget so an extra teacher is not viable without more funding.</p> <p>Q. Do you have plans for an additional teacher?</p> <p>A. If we did, we would go into the red. Currently the books balance depending on support staff pay rises. It is all contingent on funding, we were considering an extra business support staff member also, but we aren't sure it is viable currently.</p> <p>JH advised she had held an in-depth meeting with AH regarding the budget situation that afternoon.</p> <p>Governors congratulated staff for successfully obtaining the extra £91,699 in funding.</p> <p>AH left the meeting 16:19</p>	
6	<p>Headteacher's Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and behaviour <p>SP advised he has completed a case study that demonstrates the variety of issues school faces in managing parental input. Regular conversations are held with parents, with some being extremely frequent during the school day. This equates to ongoing time out of staff members day dealing with students and family and parental need. It gives an indicator of the variety of challenges provided to the school daily.</p> <p>Q. Will that be incorporated into CPOMs or just recorded for the case studies?</p> <p>A. We want it recording so that we can demonstrate the support school gives to parents. We are recording and understanding it and the evidence demonstrates it can be excessive.</p> <p>Q. Don't you have a Family Liaison Officer?</p> <p>A. We do, but this parent calls regularly, often early in the morning and the issues need to be managed in a timely manner and the Family</p>	

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	<p>Liaison Officer doesn't always have the capacity to deal with it. It is a reality of the world we live in; it is a case of managing and supporting parents who may have anxiety and seek reassurance.</p> <p>Q. If parents need support, is there a need for that role in school?</p> <p>A. It would be great to have a dedicated member of staff for that but we don't have the capacity to provide another person.</p> <p>Comment. Sometimes for staff wellbeing, you have to put the boundaries in as well as managing the parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance report <p>Governors confirmed they have all read the updated attendance report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety / Premises Update <p>SP explained there is no pattern in terms of when or where Health & Safety Incidents occur. They have a comprehensive risk assessment process in place.</p> <p>Q. Do you report back regularly to TLT?</p> <p>A. They have completed an audit. TLT and Pinnacle are two different organisations and both involve different reporting. We report Health & Safety, building issues to Pinnacle. Serious accident reporting would go to TLT, although there is some crossover. Staff are asked in the weekly Thursday morning meeting to report any Health & Safety Issues they come across.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Improvement plan, SEF and SEF summary <p>The SIP visit last term was focused on EYFS.</p> <p>Q. Do we have a report?</p> <p>A. Yes, it will be in the next Head Teacher's report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Premium Action Plan- Review and approve <p>The documentation is on the Website. Pupil Premium review has been completed. There are some challenges around Pupil Premium currently due to long term staff absence. It is challenging to ensure that teachers and support staff can complete the Pupil Premium challenges.</p> <p>Q. Is there a Pupil Premium Champion?</p> <p>A Yes, two Senior Practitioners are backfilled to free them up but in the case of staff absence it can present a challenge.</p> <p>Q. But there are two?</p> <p>A. Yes, and we backfill for a total of five days.</p>	
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	<p>Comment. £50k is a significant amount of money. A. Yes, and our outcomes for Pupil Premium Pupils are good.</p>	
7	<p>Business Compliance and Risk Register – Actions Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Register Update <p>Finance - budget risks were acknowledged as discussed earlier in the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection Update <p>TW has emailed GF who advised that that TLT have signed up with DPO Coms which is a DATA Mapping tool. This will be used to highlight any risks with data processing. The school continues to manage Subject Access Requests and any Data Breaches. This work links to the TLT Data Management Policy.</p> <p>Comment. It was mentioned that if governors are using their own laptops at home they should be encrypted. A. Yes. Q. Is that on top of the dual factor authentication already in place? A. Yes, it would seem so, but we will look into this further.</p> <p>Action. KD to clarify with GF what is required, as Governors are viewing information rather than storing it and advise at the next meeting in January.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Business Continuity and Emergency plans <p>Governors reviewed the Business Continuity Plan.</p> <p>Comment. Some of the names are different. A. Yes, some of them have changed. Q. Should Til's be on there as The Chair of Governors? A. It's operational, in an emergency The Chair would be informed.</p>	KD
8.	<p>Curriculum presentation: Expressive Art and Design by Robin Webster, Music Lead and Beth Millar, Art, Dance & Drama Lead</p> <p>Robin and Beth delivered their presentation, questions from Governors were as follows:</p> <p>Q. Having both developed your areas of creativity, how do you find other teachers are in their ability to promote these activities within their normal teaching? A. It's seeing how visible the subjects are through people's planning. Creating the resource packs opened a dialogue about what does art</p>	

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	<p>look like for you? Is there anything that could be added? It was shaking up what our art sessions look like and then passing that on to other practitioners and seeing if they gained anything from that. By scaffolding our art sessions with an inspiration, including: listening to a piece of music or a link to a piece of art it helps it work across the curriculum.</p> <p>My learners don't necessarily want to engage in the actual art making process for as long. It is really important to have an inspiration section and a producer section and then we share what we've done with the class. Other practitioners in school really find that a helpful system to use as well.</p> <p>We're always looking at promoting music and providing opportunities for staff to engage in music opportunities. The training that's provided is the most impactful, it's about having that confidence to produce music. But we're a very musically inclined school, we have singing for transitions, singing to support with structure to start with understanding what's happening next. There's a lot of music that's involved, music and touch. Having those training sessions that provide a little scaffold in what music might look like in your classroom or how we might be able to engage in music within your classroom have been really impactful.</p> <p>Q. What would you say doing the music and the art and the dance does for you as adults?</p> <p>A. It's incredibly rewarding, having our chance to express that creativity within the classroom and then seeing the impact. The videos show that the children are able to develop their confidence and express themselves through music. It's incredibly rewarding, especially when you see that translate into the children developing.</p> <p>It's lovely to have this output for creativity passed on to the children and considering how to tune into the children in a way that they can then express themselves. Once you find it and have that wow moment, then it's really rewarding and exciting.</p> <p>Governors thanked Beth and Robin for the presentation. Beth & Robin left at 16:00.</p>	
9	<p>Policy review</p> <p>The policies had been distributed to Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour • Feeding • Fire procedure • Medical Medicine and High Needs Support Policy 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND information report Admissions Agreement Emergency Evacuation Attendance <p>Governors ratified all the above policies including the attendance policy which had recently been revised following review during the recent Ofsted Inspection.</p> <p>Curriculum Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art <p>Action: RI to review and advise SP and TW when complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music <p>Governors agreed it is an excellent policy.</p>	RI
10	<p>Governance Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGC Strategic plan Set objectives for Governing Committee for coming year Outstanding Compliance documents (Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interest) / Training (safeguarding / Cyber security) <p>TW advised they plan to discuss the LGC Strategic plan and the objectives for the Governing Committee for the coming year during a meeting towards the end of half term in February. SLT will also be invited to attend.</p> <p>Governors will be asked to ensure they have read the TLT Scheme of Delegation and The Governor Code of Conduct. They will also be examining the review of the year that governors have compiled, the strategic plan and how the two link and how the current roles fit with the new plan.</p> <p>TW will also feedback from the Chair's Network Meetings, involving linking with businesses and succession planning.</p> <p>Comment. A key point in the DfE Governance Guidance dated October 2024 is Governors set the strategic direction and vision.</p>	
11	<p>Governor Visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link Visit feedback Visit forms handed to clerk Visits for next term 	

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	<p>Governor Pupil Premium and Wellbeing Visits had been completed. Action - Governors were reminded to upload completed forms to the Governor's working folder under link governor visits logs.</p> <p>Monitoring Visit Template</p> <p>Comment. On the SharePoint there are templates for the other school but not one for Castle Hill.</p> <p>Action. TW to add the template and include a section for Regulation.</p> <p>Q. Are we keeping the hard copy file? A. Yes, at the moment.</p> <p>The Chair advised she meets regularly with the Head. Brief notes of the subjects discussed will be added to the working folder under Governor Visits. 23/24 and 24/25.</p>	<p>LGC</p> <p>TW</p>
12	<p>Governor Training / Network meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training attended since previous meeting • Network Meeting Feedback <p>Action – TW will feedback from the network meeting at the February meeting.</p>	<p>TW</p>
13.1 13.2	<p>13.1 Any other Business – WhatsApp Group Chat</p> <p>Governors decided to close the WhatsApp Governor Group Chat. It was felt that governor emails were a sufficient method of communication.</p> <p>13.2 What differences Governors have made today re outcomes for children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors had an impact last week during the Ofsted inspection in conjunction with the staff, pupils and parents. • Raising the questions regarding appointing additional teachers, considering the healthy budget not being predicted to be sustainable for the next two years. • Positive things noted from the presentations given. • Reviewed and helped amend school policies. <p>Comment. At the last meeting we discussed the challenges we are facing re finances and teachers, and it was relevant during the inspection.</p> <p>A. Ofsted are aware of the challenges we face in terms of capacity; similar situations are faced by Special Schools around the country. All schools face capacity challenges and Ofsted were aware of how we filled teacher gaps effectively. We were open and honest, explaining</p>	

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13.3	<p>how we navigate those difficulties. They are aware of the restrictions we face, being part of an academy versus being a maintained school and the potential conscious or unconscious bias toward maintained Special Schools within the LA funding system. We also face higher staff turnover as other schools with more funding can employ staff on higher pay bands than we can.</p> <p>Q. Will the additional teacher release SLT time?</p> <p>A. It's unlikely with our current budget constraints. If some SLT staff hadn't left, we could have faced SLT redundancies. The model will continue with SLT in class. We will also face teaching capacity issues during forthcoming maternity leaves, but we are an everchanging school responding to an everchanging environment.</p> <p>Date of next meeting Full Governors Meeting, Tuesday 21st of January 2025.</p> <p>Governors were invited to attend forthcoming activities in school including the Christmas Assembly.</p> <p>Action. TW will be in touch re one-to one meetings. She may share the meetings as part of succession planning.</p> <p>Action. Governors to consider future training requirements.</p> <p>Q. Is the safer recruitment training due?</p> <p>A. It is online now and all governors are up to date.</p>	
14	<p>Agenda, minutes and related papers - school copy</p> <p>RESOLVED: That no part of the agenda, minutes or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the school, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.</p>	
	<p>The meeting closed at 17:30.</p>	

MINUTE	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
3	Action JH is compiling the report feedback for TLT.	JH	
7	Action. KD to clarify viewing information rather than storing it with GF and advise at the next January meeting.	KD	
9	Action: RI to review and advise SP and TW when complete.	RI	
11	Action - Governors were reminded to upload completed forms to the Governor's working folder, link governor visit logs.	LGC	
11	Action. TW to add the template and include a section for Regulation.	TW	
12	Action – TW will feed back from the network meeting in the February meeting.	TW	
13.3	Action. TW will be in touch re one-to one meetings. She may share the meetings as part of succession planning.	TW	
13.3	Action. Governors to consider future training requirements.	LGC	

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