

## TOGETHER LEARNING TRUST CASTLE HILL SCHOOL

### LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 21 January 2025 at 15.30 at the school

### Minutes

<b>Governors Invited:</b>	Til Wright (TW)	Chair
	Jayne Askew (JA)	Staff Governor
	Kristy Dyson (KD)	(Vice Chair) Parent Governor
	Emma Firth (EF)	Co-opted Governor
	Joan Haines (JH)	Co-opted Governor
	Steve Perren (SP)	Principal
	Katrina Whale (KW)	Staff Governor
	Richard Instone (RI)	Co -opted Governor
<b>Invited Guests Present:</b>	Carol Carpenter (CC) (remotely)	Clerk (from 16:00)
	Allanna Hoyer (AH)	Business Manager (to 16:30)
	Dan Pearce (DP)	Deputy Principal from 16.07
<b>Meeting Started at:</b>	15:35	

Item No.	Agenda Item	Action
1	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b>  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.  Apologies had been received and were accepted from Kristy Dyson and Emma Firth. Richard Instone was absent from the meeting.	
2.1	<b>Declarations of interest</b>  There were no declarations of interest for this meeting's agenda items.	
2.2	<b>Minutes of the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024</b>  Governors agreed the minutes of the previous meeting. RESOLVED. That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2024 be approved and be signed by the Chair as a correct account.	
2.3	<b>Matters arising (not covered by agenda)</b>  3. Action. JH compiling report feedback for TLT is complete. TW to forward it to the rest of the GB.	TW

Agreed as an accurate record.

Signed: ..... Print Name: ..... Dated: .....

	<p>7. Action. KD to clarify viewing information rather than storing it with GF and advise at the January meeting. TW will ask Greg to forward to Governors.</p> <p>9. Action: Art policy, RI to review and advise SP and TW when complete. Policy has now been reviewed by TW.</p> <p>All other actions from the previous meeting not covered by the agenda have been completed.</p>	TW
3	<p><b>Finance Update</b></p> <p>AH advised the finance report includes the revised revenue budget for this year and a new three-year budget.</p> <p>Changes highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gag funding will increase by £56k in total.</li> <li>• The 5.5% teachers' pay award will be funded by £125k.</li> <li>• All banding appeals for students have been successful.</li> <li>• Kirklees have continued their free school meal funding.</li> <li>• School will receive a total of £246K more income but £85k more will be needed for additional staffing costs which include another teacher from April.</li> <li>• Support staff received an additional £1,290 pay rise last year (FTE, whole year).</li> <li>• A 5% contingency is in place to for staff absence cover.</li> <li>• Recruitment costs for DBS has increased due to staffing numbers.</li> <li>• £5k will be spent on premises variation works and a replacement air conditioning unit.</li> <li>• Saving of £26k due to a reduction in the utilities unit price, small contingency kept in case prices go back up.</li> <li>• Other supplies and services, £3k for more IT hardware.</li> <li>• Top slice amount increased in line with additional GAG funding.</li> <li>• PFI costs will increase by 4% from April.</li> <li>• £206k surplus anticipated at the end of 24 / 25. Reserves will be above 5% to around 8%.</li> <li>• Three-year projection shows a surplus next year of £52k, £21k the following year and £6k in 27 / 28.</li> <li>• Future SEN funding amounts remains unclear.</li> <li>• DFC, £10k will be used on amending fire alarm zones and some new IT equipment, also replacing the track chair.</li> <li>• AH has updated KPI's and completed a benchmarking exercise. Mainstream school staff costs are 70-80% of budget and around 85% in special schools. Castle hill is under on the KPIs for the next three years at 77%, 81% and 82% respectively.</li> </ul>	

Agreed as an accurate record.

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	<p>Comment. The surplus reduces as we move forward and we are hampered by funding uncertainty. We continue to search out grants and will continue to address the shortfall as we progress. The budget includes an additional teacher from April but we have not appointed one yet so there will be further savings up to the summer.</p> <p>Comment. It is good that the SLT budgeted for a worst-case scenario rather than best case. It is also positive that pupil premium and sports premium funding means the additionality can be spread throughout the school.</p> <p>A. The special schools funding review will have a large impact in the future, we are completing an exercise to see how much it costs to run the school per year so we can ensure we are meeting the amount we need.</p> <p>Action - JH advised she had met with AH and will provide a governor monitoring report.</p> <p>AH left the meeting 16:30</p>	JH
4.	<p><b>Headteachers Report</b></p> <p><b>Attendance</b> – Attendance dropped in November and December which will affect cumulative attendance for the year however it continues to improve. School has tightened their absence monitoring procedures following the Ofsted inspection. It is trending upwards and in line with the national average. Dialogue continues with parents to ensure ill students do go home. Some pupils with persistent absence continue and school is working collaboratively with parents and outside agencies.</p> <p>One hundred and thirty pupils on roll, with five leavers and five new starters, awaiting feedback from SENDACT before confirming pupil numbers. Numbers remain quite static which will limit movements within the groups. Many Early Years students will stay in Early Years despite being Yrs 1,2 and 3 but it is valuable for them to be within that cohort and continue to access the early years curriculum and be assessed through that.</p> <p><b>Staff attendance</b> – Still no report data available, TLT's HR department is looking into it.</p> <p><b>Staffing Update</b> - Six new ETA's are successfully in place. The supply bank continues to grow however, some staff want more work than is available. They are on a zero hours contract which can make it hard to retain supply staff. We try to share work fairly but we also need consistent staffing in some key positions which can cause friction. We will further review the list and ensure work is distributed fairly.</p>	

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Lunchtime support staffing is currently stable. Fourteen teachers applied for the teacher post, three were interviewed, two withdrew before interview leaving one candidate who was unsuccessful. School will advertise again for them to start in September. Some staff are going on maternity leave so may be able to recruit for maternity cover as well.

**Q. Will the post be advertised as ECFT one?**

A. No, we previously had applications from some UPS3 teachers, but they would have to be able to lead whole school projects. It's also about ensuring they can fit in with the school's philosophy.

**Q. How many teachers are you short at present?**

A. Two, including a teacher who is off sick. We have a larger issue due to long term sickness and it's about how we manage staffing around that. We are still deciding the details.

**Comment – you also have SLT in classes teaching.**

A. Yes. there are always challenges with teacher staffing, but we have a model now that can cope despite an issue with Learning Facilitators and HLTAs and ensuring we have enough candidates who would be valid to progress to more HLTA work.

**Q. Will you be moving to more Teachers or Learning Facilitators.**

A. We won't be employing any more Learning Facilitators; the role has been priced out of the market going forward.

SALT contract has been drawn up now and the interview process will begin shortly and they will be talking to people within the service.

**Q. Will it be advertised externally?**

A. I'm not sure, the process has taken about a year which has been a frustrating and people not already employed by the service may not be able to apply.

**Q. Do we get a say in who is appointed?**

A. We will be involved in the interview process candidates must fit in with the philosophy of the school.

**School Improvement** – Kirklees Special School Heads met last week to arrange peer review visits with the cohort looking at triads and lesson study outcomes.

Jackie Nellis visited Early Years and provided a thorough report. There is a new teacher in Early Years and the report was reassuring. Her next visit on 27<sup>th</sup> January is focussing on how transitions within school are scaffolded.

Jayne has reviewed curriculum guides for the next three years. Need to ensure subject leaders are also checking and developing them. Outreach continues with two students in secondary.

Agreed as an accurate record.

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	<p><b>Q. How many are on outreach all together?</b>  A. Mainly two, but one student is refusing and hasn't attended this week; we will address that next week to see if we can offer support.</p> <p>Lesson Observations have been completed, the process is embedded and HLTAs are also comfortable with it now.</p> <p><b>Q. Who wrote the observations document? Can author names and the dates when they are done be added to documents? Action</b>  A. Yes, we can do that.</p> <p><b>Q. Would you consider sharing how you structure the Headteacher Reports with other LGCs?</b>  A. If they wanted them, TLT have seen the format. There may be a perception that it contains too much information and could increase the workload for Headteachers.</p> <p><b>Comment. It was raised at the Chair's meeting, we also learned how different the structures are in bigger schools where more information comes from the Sub- Committee Chairs so it may be overload.</b>  A. It is contextual; we are different in some areas.</p> <p><b>Comment. When you prepare for Ofsted the Headteacher reports are really useful.</b></p> <p><b>Q. How did parent training go on 5<sup>th</sup> of December?</b>  A. There wasn't much uptake, more parents sign up than attend but it is important that we offer it and very useful for the parents who do attend.</p> <p><b>Pupil Premium</b> - Continues to evolve with some challenge to deliver Pupil Premium effectively due to capacity. An audit is due to assess need. Some is being delivered through dance therapy and sports therapy and a plan is in place for this.</p> <p><b>Comment. Progress reports show they make as good progress as their peers.</b></p> <p><b>Sports Premium</b> - Continues to go well, the distribution of the money is in the report.</p> <p><b>CPD / PD</b> – The teacher's timetable for meetings and triad focus areas are detailed in the report with this term's training offer. SP has also invited any of the TLT primary schools to access the training as well.</p> <p><b>Q. Is there a programme for the SLT?</b>  A. There are lesson studies and action research as well as the ongoing offer of NPQ. When I do SLT CPD I ask if they want to do a MPQH but there hasn't been take up yet.</p>	SP
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	<p><b>Q. Is there are part on the form which states, for my own training in need this?</b></p> <p>A. It is in the dialogue, but it can be hard to identify what they need to do from a strategic leadership point of view, an NPQH is the intuitive thing for the next stage of development but also developing their knowledge of our context. We have set up hubs with partners from other Kirklees Special Schools as well as working towards quality standard marks.</p> <p><b>Q. Does anyone want to do a Masters?</b></p> <p>A. Many staff are here from 07.30 to 18:00, I'm not sure when they would have the capacity to do it. I don't think it detracts from their expertise.</p> <p><b>Comment. There is a move when recruiting Deputy and Assistant Heads to appoint people who show the capacity to move straight into headship and it's also about having the appropriate culture in the schools to develop further.</b></p> <p>A. It's hard to do that with the wellbeing agenda, we want a happy community striving for the same goals and meeting the needs of the community; that is the most important thing rather than completing certain criteria. I'm not sure it is a necessity; more heads don't have them now (NPQH and / or Masters) than do. It's about finding the best person for the role.</p> <p><b>Comment. In reviewing the CPD offer that was the question that arose.</b></p> <p>A. It is a valid point and those opportunities are offered, but I can't make people do them and wouldn't want to.</p> <p><b>Q. Would it come out of the CPD Budget?</b></p> <p>A. Not necessarily, the training calendar uses a lot of in school training. Our budget is smaller than it used to be as we use fewer external providers. We have employee healthcare and physiotherapists coming in as part of the offer as well but it's about ensuring true value and utilising the expertise we have in house.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding - CPOMS case study has been completed with another safeguarding audit on 30<sup>th</sup> of January. Danny Armitage has visited from TLT and will do further audits on the SCR and CPOMS.</b></p> <p><b>Comment. I always find the safeguarding case study a revelation in what some children and families are dealing with.</b></p> <p>A. It is about being supportive and vigilant on an ongoing basis as many of the families face some real challenges.</p> <p><b>Comment. It's great to see you have adapted the interview questions with further safeguarding questions following feedback from Ofsted. Were they asked on Monday and did they know the answers?</b></p> <p>A. Yes, but the candidate didn't use the opportunity to expand on the questions asked-</p> <p><b>Comment. Following on from the Ofsted inspection, in a school like this if you tell a teacher you have safeguarding concerns about a</b></p>	
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	<p>student it can be appropriate to inform the teacher. The inspector said it must always be the DSL but, in this school, if you didn't report it to the teacher, you wouldn't necessarily be doing the right thing and it's about the inspector exploring it further so you know that it will get to the DSL.</p> <p>A. Dialogue about students goes on all the time, to withhold information from their teacher would be extra effort.</p> <p>Comment. Lessons from serious case review is that it only makes complete sense to the people who have experienced something like it. Unless they can identify with something they knew already, it doesn't always make complete sense. Lunchtime Supervisors can often identify when something is off with a child but don't always see the links as they don't always get the bigger picture and mentioning it to a teacher is appropriate.</p> <p><b>SEF / CHIP</b> – have been completed.</p> <p>SP and the SLT attended an event where the Head of the England Squash Team led a talk about inspirational leadership. Collaboration continues with SP developing a wide variety of links with the other TLT schools. School Direct is progressing as per the report. It is challenging getting people into the teacher training route, hope that improves. Teaching School Hub input continues.</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety / Premises</b> – SP met with architects and Pinnacle re the development of the meeting room area and the wheelchair storage area. Awaiting the outcome, the cost of development is the issue. The initial cost was £500k so now looking at smart solutions. SP has advised there are some non-negotiables with the music room, sensory room or six form common room not to be used. The group are due to come in and look around areas in school that may be suitable for the wheelchair store. Looking at various phases and whether they would work at the same time or separately. No conclusion yet, putting something on the roof area could be expensive so conversations continue. SP has advised that if the meeting room area is developed, they could offer an additional four or five pupil places. The LA has asked if this could be done at satellite provisions but that is not viable.</p> <p><b>Ofsted</b></p> <p>Q. With Ofsted reports, why are some schools getting a judgement while were ungraded?</p> <p>A. It depends on the type of inspection that you get. If they were coming in to ascertain if the school is still at its previous level, it would be light touch and ungraded. If the level had gone down, they would instigate a different inspection.</p>	
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	<p><b>Risk register</b> – Finance and the three-year budget covered earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>Parent survey has gone out, several positive responses received.  <b>Q. Could future ones have questions re governor awareness in line with the staff survey? - Action</b>  <b>A.</b> Yes, we could do that.</p> <p><b>Special school funding</b> - still waiting to see what the funding outcome will be. Each school has completed a matrix showing the school's needs. The LA are amalgamating this information, this will form the basis of further discussions regarding funding outcomes.</p> <p><b>Q. What are the timescales?</b>  <b>A.</b> We are working towards the next academic year, but it is a complex situation</p> <p><b>Governor Strategic Plan</b> - Reports will be uploaded to TLT SharePoint and a copy sent to TW who will update the strategic plan with the date and the focus. Issues with previous versions, so easier if sent directly to TW. – <b>Action - December one is missing to be re-sent to TW.</b></p> <p>Ninety-one parents attended Christmas assembly.</p> <p>Governors thanked SP and staff for all the updates and the comprehensive report.</p>	<p>SP</p> <p>SP</p>
5	<p><b>Policy review</b></p> <p>The policies had been distributed to Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective Worship – Complete.</li> <li>• Seclusion – Complete.</li> <li>• Art Policy (from previous meeting) – reviewed by TW</li> </ul> <p>Governors ratified all the above policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hydrotherapy – KD has reviewed it, but it needs further work, Alistar Macdonald will review it from a PE perspective. Will re-do.</li> <li>• CCTV – awaiting response from RI re this policy. <b>Action TW will meet with him on Thursday to discuss.</b></li> </ul>	<p>AM/SP</p> <p>RI / TW</p>
6	<p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governor Training</b></li> </ul>	

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	<p>All completed, TW will compile training requirements when she does the governor one to ones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Governor Visits</b></li> </ul> <p>Monitoring visits are being completed, Health and Safety visit coming up.</p>	
7.1	<p><b>7.1 Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Additional meeting will be held 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Action - TW will send agenda in the next few days. Action - governors to read Scheme of Delegation regarding committees and familiarise themselves with the training plans.</p> <p>Will be looking at the aims of TLT and Castle Hill ensuring they are in line. Discussing the self-review that has been completed and future ones. SLT will attend the meeting as well.</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>TW asked for governor feedback for a school who are considering joining TLT. TW will attend an online meeting to provide brief input regarding Castle Hill's experience of joining TLT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It had been a straightforward transition.</li> <li>Starting to see the central services implemented</li> <li>Easy to work with, they listen and are well organised.</li> <li>No significant interference from a governance point of view.</li> <li>Humane leadership style from TLT.</li> <li>Significant work was involved for auditing and due diligence, but their transition may be smoother.</li> <li>Understanding what you receive for the top slice is important.</li> <li>HR help received has been significant.</li> </ul> <p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional meeting Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025.</li> <li>Full Governors Meeting, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025.</li> </ul>	<p>TW</p> <p>LGC</p>
8	<p><b>Agenda, minutes and related papers - school copy</b></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>	
	<b>The meeting closed at 17:25.</b>	

MINUTE	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
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Agreed as an accurate record.

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2.3	3. Action JH compiling report feedback for TLT complete. TW to forward it to the rest of the GB.	TW	
2.3	7. Action. KD to clarify viewing information rather than storing it with GF and advise at the January meeting. TW will ask Greg to forward to Governors.	TW	
3	JH met with AH and will provide a governor monitoring report.	JH	
4	Author names and dates when they are done to be added to Lesson Observation documents.	SP	
4	Future Parent Surveys to have questions re governor awareness added	SP	
4	Governor Strategic Plan December report to be re-sent to TW.	SP	
5	Hydrotherapy Policy – Alistair Macdonald to review it.	AM/SP	
5	CCTV Policy - RI should have reviewed. TW to meet him on Thursday to discuss.	RI / TW	
7.1	Additional meeting 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2025. TW to send agenda in the next few days.	TW	
7.1	Governors to read Scheme of Delegation regarding committees and familiarise themselves with the training plans before meeting on 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2025.	LGC	

Agreed as an accurate record.

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