



An Active Learning Trust Academy

Neale-Wade Academy  
**Local Governing Board Minutes**  
 Wednesday 15 March 2023 at 5pm

*If for any reason you are unable to attend, please contact [ldearlove@neale-wade.org](mailto:ldearlove@neale-wade.org)*

<u>ITEM NO</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>Actions</u>
1	<p><b><u>Welcome / Apologies</u></b></p> <p>G Horn (GHO)            H Cassady (HC)            L Crosskill (LC)            A Daw (AD)            K Nightingale (KN)            A Betts (AB)            G Thomas (GT)            L Calow (LCA) – Via Teams            L Dearlove (LD)            N Enright (NE)</p>	
2	<p><b><u>Declaration of Business / Pecuniary Interests &amp; Conflicts of Interest</u></b></p> <p>None declared.</p>	
3	<p><b><u>Chair's Action</u></b></p> <p>None</p>	
4	<p><b><u>Membership of the Governing Board</u></b></p> <p>No changes</p>	
5	<p><b><u>Minutes of the Last Meeting</u></b></p> <p>All Governors where happy with the minutes from the last meeting.</p>	
6	<p><b><u>Trust Review</u></b></p> <p><b>LCA asked regarding behaviour accountability, on the Financial Benchmarking site it looks like we have a low number of teachers compared with other schools and a high number of TAs. Why is this? Is it recruitment? She said the reason she is asking is because teachers have accountability for behaviour whereas Tas don't.</b></p> <p>GHO said there are both financial and recruitment factors with this. The model for the number of teachers we should have is at the amount we currently have. In terms of teaching assistants, it is very difficult to recruit due to the salary the Trust pays. We also use Step into Teaching which has been very exciting and they have stayed with us as teachers.</p>	



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LCA said that is helpful for her to understand. LCA asked if it's in all contracts that they have accountability for behaviour.

The Trust have introduced a CPD programme for TAs, we are just looking at working hours and when they can look at CPD. There has been a lot of change regarding behaviour and this may not have always been communicated effectively. This needs to be more coherent.

HC said Lynsey wants to look at strengths and how we can improve and put the right help in the right places. What has come out of the review is that there are still significant improvements that need to take place. Inaccuracies in self evaluations which has prompted a streamlines SEF. The Trust is working with GHO to look at priorities, put those into projects and then set deadlines. Under leadership and management at every level there needs to be greater rigour. One of the key aspects regarding Governors is about moving to a transition board to closely monitor and track improvements. This will mean meeting monthly and having access to key documents. Quality Assurance will enable Governors to come into school and then take that back to the board to discuss.

GH introduced the new School Improvement Plan which at the moment is a work in progress but said this will be finalised next week. GH gave Governors an insight into the projects, objectives and actions it contains and explained that this is now time lined using a Gantt chart.

**LC asked if Governors should look at the different areas and decide who will support each area?**

HC explained once the Improvement plan is fully written we will look at that.

**AB asked if there was a reason why the governors were not included in the review?**

HC said there was. She said Lynsey wanted an external review which could test leadership at every level. She said she will take the question back to Lynsey and ask if there should be representation from the governors. Lynsey didn't include governors this time as she is aware that there is training needed for the governors and wanted this initial review to be totally objective. GH said he also didn't get an opportunity to be involved. GH said he was invited to the evaluation meeting at the end but was asked not to ask questions and just listen to the feedback.

**AB asked about communication coming from the school – we only get information before the meeting.**



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GH replied that this was being looked at and new software will allow governors to see the new improvement plan live.

HC explained that now meetings are monthly they will hopefully be shorter and more effective.



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7	<p><b><u>Safeguarding</u></b></p> <p>GHO spoke about the safeguarding review which formed part of the Trust Review. This was a review commissioned by an independent consultancy firm. Subsequently there was another review regarding alternative provision but it terms of that report we wont have the outcome until next week. A further review will take place in May as there was a feeling that the review could have been more robust especially around the culture of safeguarding.</p> <p>GHO explained how the review is graded and gave a brief synopsis of the findings.</p> <p>GHO explained that Shirly Young has been conducting weekly audits on My Concern, digging deeper where there is a low-level concern as the details of the actions could be better regarding level of detail.</p> <p><b>GT Asked if that is the person logging the complaint and not following up in detail?</b></p> <p>GHO answered yes.</p> <p><b>GT asked if this could be down to time constraints?</b></p> <p>GHO answered yes.</p>	



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HC said the review flagged that racism isn't followed up on quick enough. GHO explained that communication isn't great which now needs concentrating on now there is progress with reporting. Training and monitoring will be in place.

GHO explained that we have Billy Griffiths working with the children in care. GHO explained that Billy has been through the care system as a child so has empathy and understanding when mentoring students. GHO said previously this area would have been red but is now mostly green.

GHO said the Local Authority did a PEP review and James Crawley leads on this with Billy Griffiths.

GHO explained there is some work needed regarding consistency, clarity and coherence around the behaviour policy. Cathy Murphy from PSHE Services is coming to work with the school regarding the curriculum, assemblies and

AD explained that STEPS has worked well at Highfield but with his experience in mainstream he understands it doesn't always work. He said he spoke with a colleague, and she said they are working on a version of STEPS which may work in mainstream. GHO said NWA have had support with this but feels it's quite specialised. AD said he felt it would be a huge undertaking to get it to work in a mainstream school but feels the rewards would be good. GHO explained following the Trust Review the changes being put in place around therapeutic interventions include STEPS and Thrive. GHO feels putting this into the school now would be too great a leap and feels that there are some basic things that need to be put in place first. AD said he was excited to hear that they were developing a version of STEPS to work in mainstream schools.

**GHO asked LD to arrange a visit to Highfield Ely.**

GT asked how staff feel about behaviour? Do they feel it is their responsibility or SLTs responsibility? Before you introduce training, it seems like a culture issue.

GHO explained that one of the training packages includes support with policies, training etc.

AD explained that having a few members of staff who are really interested in behaviour can really help.

**GHO asked LCA what her views and knowledge were regarding STEPS and THRIVE?**

LCA said she agrees that the culture would need to shift. Regarding THRIVE she didn't think that the school were in a position to use it as a main vehicle. LC said



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there needs to be consistency with reasonable adjustments. LC feels STEPS would take a long time to implement and doesn't feel that the school has enough time for this.

GHO said he was disappointed with the areas around student voice. He said this was around a student's confidence in reporting both in and out of school and how serious they think we will take those reports. One area that came out of the review was when speaking to students regarding safety they felt issues on buses were a separate issue to school and didn't know who to report those issues to.

GHO explained that there are areas that need work.

**KN asked when the actions will be looked at?**

GHO said the response will be an updated improvement plan.

**KN asked will this be mapped across to the Safeguarding Review?**

GHO said he will show everyone how it looks.

**KN asked when that will be completed?**

GHO explained that Helen Cassidy and Lyndsey Holzer are in weekly at the moment and expects to show a finalised copy of the plan this Monday.

**KN asked if staff feel the Trusts support.**

GHO said they are supporting with new posts and cross school working particularly with Cromwell. Two new attendance officers have been recruited and are being supported by the Trust and Cromwell with training and support. The Local Authority have also said they will support.

KN said she felt this was good.

HC said once the plans are finalised GHO will communicate that to staff along with comprehensive CPD programme. HC said she is in the process of writing Quality Assurance procedures and expectations we expect to have in place.

KN said she feels there needs to be consistency with Supply Teachers.

GHO explained that this was also part of the actions on the plan.



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	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p>No policies to ratify.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p><b>AB asked about the protests?</b></p> <p>GH explained that Lynsey’s first day at the Academy was the day of the protests. GH said they were aware that it would probably happen and how other schools in the area had similar if not worse incidents of protesting. The first strategy was communication to parents explaining that the toilets were open. GH explained that £2000 worth of damage to the toilets happened on the Friday before. By 9.30on the day a few students stopped going to lessons – an hour later they were joined by a few more students. The community Police Office was in attendance but the advice was to keep it low key and not intervene or cause a fuss.</p> <p><b>AB asked if this was the Trust advice?</b></p> <p>GH replied that it was his advice. Sadly, I had to take the decision to set the fire alarm off to get students to line up. Most students did this incredibly well but the protesting students decided to sit in a group on the field.</p> <p><b>GT asked how many students?</b></p> <p>GH replied at its height they measured 67 students who we named. 15 of these were suspended, approximately 10 had parents come back and say they agreed with the protest. There is already word of another protest to do with a letter we are sending out regarding mobile phones.</p> <p><b>AB asked about the number of students who went home that day.</b></p> <p>GH aid that this was parental decisions. After the fire alarm we had a tutor time to stop student movement. Social media and students calling home prompted parents to collect their children. This is unauthorised and we haven’t authorised any of those</p>	



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	<p>absences. Police were in school throughout and they agreed that at no point were students at risk or unsafe. The CEO also agreed that it wasn't unsafe. Attendance was affected that week.</p> <p><b>AD said that it sounds like the situation was handled very well. Would you do anything different? Is there a plan for it possibly happening again?</b></p> <p>GH said they had police come in on the Friday when there were whispers of another protest but nothing happened and the police left by 10.30. The police said as it was a school matter they wouldn't intervene unless there was a crime committed.</p>	
9	<p><b><u>Dates of Future Meetings</u></b></p> <p>Future dates will be announced.</p>	LD to add dates