

Local Governing Board (LGB) to
The Learning Partnership



Leighton Academy
Minutes



Date: 01.02.2024 at 6:30pm in school

Governors Present:

Diane Ridings (DR) – Chair
Rachael Dean (RD) – Vice Chair & SenCo
Nicholas Jones (NJ) – Staff Governor
Nicola Kay (NK) – Parent Governor
Marie Speake (MS) – Staff Governor

Apologies :

Helen Holland (HH) - Governor
Michelle Noble (MN) - Governor

In attendance:

Samantha Thompson (ST) – Headteacher
Dr Allan Howells – Director of Quality
(Governance, Risk and Compliance) – The
Learning Partnership (AH)

Clerk: Sharon Dutton (SD) – Entrust Clerk

Governance and Administration

DOCUMENTS SHARED ON GOVERNORHUB PRIOR TO THE MEETING:

Agenda item 3 - Headteachers Report Feb 2024
Agenda item 9 - Safeguarding Audit Autumn 2023
Agenda item 10 - Pupil Premium Update January 2024
Agenda item 10 - SEND data December 2023
Agenda item 11 - LGB Summary Report Autumn Term 2023
Agenda item 11 - LGB Member's visits & Training Autumn 2023
Agenda item 11 - Subject Reports for Art, Religious Education and Personal Development
Agenda item 12 - Policy: Child Safeguarding
Agenda item 12 - Policy: Home-School Agreement 2024
Agenda item 12 - Policy: Homework 2024
Agenda item 17 – TLP Chair's Forum 07.11.2023

1. Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations

The meeting opened at 6:30pm and was confirmed quorate.

MN and HH were noted as absent and their apologies were accepted.

DR welcomed everyone to the meeting. AH introduced himself to those LGB members who had not yet met him.

There were no declarations.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the LGB meeting held on 02.11.2023 were approved. The following actions carried over from previous minutes are still outstanding:

Agenda Item	What	Status
4, pg 2	Skills audit	MN outstanding
4, pg 2	Prevent training	MN has completed similar and needs to check compliance

4, pg 2

LAB members to complete cyber and security training

MN outstanding

Update on ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 02.11.2023

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	Status
Page 2 Item 3	Advertisement to go into the school newsletter for a parent and a community governor.	Headteacher	Ongoing
Page 2 Item 3	Approach possible candidate for governor	Headteacher	Ongoing
Page 2 Item 4	Complete the skills audit.	All	Ongoing
Page 3 Item 7	Personal Development, Art, Religious Education and Humanities reports to be submitted and added to the agenda of the Spring 2024 LGB meeting for ratification.	All/Clerk	Completed
Page 3 Item 7	Update board on Chairs Forum	Chair	Submitted
Page 3 Item 9	Review the Pupil Premium Strategy at the next LGB meeting.	All	Posted on website & GH

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities**3. School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Update**

The Headteachers report February 2024 had been shared on GovernorHub.

The School Improvement Priorities were outlined on slides 4, 5 and 6 of the report:

Priority 1:

To increase the percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) and ensure a smooth transition to Year 1.

- Drawing club had been implemented to engage reluctant writers in Early Years (EY).
- Staff had specific review targets linked to mark making and writing development.
- The Nursery area was complete and whilst there is a small drainage problem it was being used effectively.
- Quotes had been submitted for the Reception outdoor area and would be ready for the new school year in September 2024.
- Efforts to engage parents were being made with an open-door policy, encouraging them to come and read with their children.
- EY staff were visiting other EY settings to share development ideas.

Governor question:

Which settings were they visiting?

Headteacher response:

Daven Primary School, Shavington, Wistaston Church Lane Academy and Westminster Street was imminent.

Governor question:

When was the EY Lead expected to return to work?

Headteacher response:

She was due back in school after Easter on a phased return if her treatment goes to plan.

Priority 2:

Improve the implementation of the curriculum in KS1 including the transition from EYs into Year 1.

- There had been a rearrangement of the staffing structure to achieve this priority. This was ongoing.
- Staff had completed EY training.
- There was a focus on Y1 implementation during the monitoring cycle.
- KS1 staff visited other settings to share good practice.
- There had been leadership development of the interim KS Lead.
- There had been support from the EY team and Trust specialist in developing transition from EY to Y1

Governor question:

Had the KS Lead stepped in when another staff member had was off due to a bereavement?

Headteacher response:

Yes she had.

Priority 3:

To bring writing outcomes in line with reading outcomes in Y3-6.

- The implementation of daily sentence accuracy sessions undertaken by the whole school. These sessions were for approximately 10 to 20 minutes per day.
- Development of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) bank of training videos to support teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs).
- In school moderation for the whole school
- EY development of 'drawing club'
- Staff CPD at assessment and moderation training
- The introduction of a Y2/6 Trust moderation day
- Focused interventions planned for target children in progress review meetings.

Governor question:

Were the daily sentence accuracy sessions being implemented across the board?

Headteacher response:

Yes they were. MS was presenting training sessions which were being filmed in order to enhance the standard of teaching particularly for those more inexperienced staff.

Governor question:

Were these sessions forming part of the lesson or as interventions?

Headteacher response:

They were part of the lessons but in Year 3 were interventions.

The Headteacher went on to explain that the staff needed support in the area of moderating and that a consistency needed to be reached across the Trust. To encourage this, MS was running moderating sessions and inviting teachers from the same year groups from other schools to attend.

The focus next term will shift to editing and proof reading.

Education**4. Admissions and Pupil Numbers**

These were outlined on Slide 7 of the Headteacher's report and were accurate to the 25th of January 2024. Since loading onto GovernorHub two new pupils had joined Reception.

The Headteacher brought the governors attention to Year 4 numbers which showed the year as having been oversubscribed but stable as a child had been accepted only because another child had left.

Governor challenge:

Has this oversubscription impacted the other pupils?

Headteacher response:

There is less physical space in this year due to the children growing in size and therefore there is no possibility of the class being larger than 63.

She also announced that Year 6 was going to increase to 60 in the next week due to two new arrivals from outside the country. These would need to be accurately assessed.

Governor question:

Did the Headteacher know what the projected admissions for the New year 2024 were?

Headteacher response:

There have been 64 first place requests for Reception in September 2024. Therefore, in theory, admissions are full, but there were always a couple of outliers.

5. Attendance

This was outlined in Slide 8 of the Headteachers report. Attendance is currently sitting at 94% but since January the school had been hit by a variety of flu-like illnesses. Persistent absenteeism in Reception was particularly high at 34% which was mainly due to the recent holiday period at the start of the year and many of the children not having reached compulsory school age. The school continued to work with these families.

Governor question:

Do the repeat offenders have siblings in other classes within the school and at other schools in the area?

Headteacher response:

This would be interesting to know so a more in-depth analysis of the figures would be worth carrying out.

ACTION: The Headteacher to deepen the analysis of persistent absenteeism figures in the school including communicating with other schools in the area.

6. Behaviour

This was outlined in slide 9 of the Headteachers report. Exclusions are now called suspensions and the figure of 3 pupils in her report had now risen to 5.

Governor question:

What were the reasons behind the suspensions?

Headteacher response:

Incidents had not increased but the school had reviewed the criteria in the school policy which had resulted in the additional figures.

Governor challenge:

How was the school supporting the suspended pupils and their families?

Headteacher response:

Homework was being set for them to do whilst out of school. Parents were invited to attend a meeting where an action plan was discussed. The return to school was phased, incident reports taken, a reintegration meeting held and a risk assessment carried out.

Governor question:

What had been the response for the parents?

Headteacher answer:

Mixed. Generally supportive but requiring additional information and reassurance of the support available to them.

Governor challenge :

Were the suspensions all from the same year groups?

Headteacher response:

No. A mixture of years and demographics.

The Headteacher explained to the governors that the school was extending the staff's Team Teach training programme to concentrate on de-escalation, physical movement, discussions and preventative actions. Teaching Assistants (TAs) would be trained by the end of 2024 with 9 already undergoing training. This was deemed essential despite them being out of school whilst training. Feedback had generally been positive. Governors felt this was sending the right message to parents.

7. Curriculum – Progress

As noted in slide 14 of the Headteachers report.

8. Curriculum – Attainment

As noted in slide 14 of the Headteachers report.

The Headteacher confirmed this was data from October 2023. She reported that this week would see assessments for Year 6 and that the resulting parents evening would follow at half term. She was happy that the pupils were working hard with lots of interventions, Two tutors were coming into the school and she pointed the governors to additional detailed analysis documents uploaded onto GovernorHub within the folder Data Reports.

Year 6 do not have any Key Stage data available due to COVID and the limited data that is available is therefore not an accurate reflection of the cohort.

Governor challenge:

How can we show progress effectively without data?

Headteacher response:

By using the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) targets. AH pointed out that these were aspirational targets not actual ones.

Governors thanked the Headteacher for her comprehensive report.

Welfare

9. Safeguarding

This was outlined in slides 10-13 of the Headteachers report.

The Pastoral and Welfare Lead had undertaken an audit with NK and written a report which was shared on GovernorHub.

Governor challenge:

Seventeen mental health referrals seemed very high?

Headteacher response:

This number is accurate and increasing steadily. Counselling had also been increased to meet demand.

AH reconfirmed the Trust's commitment to addressing this issue particularly as Local Authorities were relying more and more on the schools to deal with the situation. The Headteacher confirmed that animal assisted therapy no longer happened and was replaced with a counsellor working with pupils on a 1:1 basis. This was proving very successful and had been increased to two days per week but at a significant cost.

Governor question:

What was the reason for the reduction in Looked After Children? (LAC)

Headteacher response:

The children had moved on. She confirmed the two on her report were from separate families.

The governors expressed their concern about the mention of online gaming in the Headteachers Safeguarding update. The headteacher confirmed there was a group in Year 2 pupils who were permitted this activity and their parents behaved defensively when challenged on the matter. She had brought it up in a recent school newsletter with little success.

MS confirmed she was seeing the influence of online gaming in physical play and that many pupils maintained their parents allowed them access. It was generally agreed that as almost all parents and children interacted online even for practical reasons it was very hard to control.

10. Wellbeing and Welfare – Students

NJ confirmed he had shared two documents on GovernorHub covering the Pupil Premium update – Jan 2024 and the SEND data December 2023.

11. Wellbeing and Welfare – Staff

Feedback on Trust wellbeing review

A Trust audit on staff wellbeing and welfare had been carried out during the Autumn term and a staff wellbeing group had been formed and was holding its first meeting this week. It was generally agreed that often resolving smaller practical issues went a long way to improving the staff's wellbeing such as repairing or replacing broken equipment. It was confirmed that a questionnaire was to be sent out to staff after the half term.

Governor links and training

Two documents highlight the work done by the LGB in the autumn term. The list of Governor Training and Visits was expanded on in more detail in the Chairs Summary Report Completed by DR and RD (see attached). DR highlighted the changes for 2023/4 including the transition to the TLP, use of Governor Hub and the change in meeting schedules. Feedback from the subject areas discussed at the last LGB meeting was also noted. DR thanked the Vice Chair for all the work she has done in organising PTA events and continuing to raise valuable funds for the school.

It was noted that as DR was likely to step down as Chair of Governors at the end of the academic year and RD would most likely replace her, RD may have to step away from the Parent Teachers Association (PTA).

It was noted that whilst succession planning was in place, there were three vacant Governor roles and filling these would assist RD in her new role as Chair. AH offered to present a Governor recruitment presentation to the PTA.

ACTION: AH & RD to plan Governor recruitment presentation to PTA.

The Chair confirmed that learning walks were a priority and more were planned to include specific areas of focus.

It was noted that the Summer term Chairs Forum to be held in person was on 4th July 2024 and a Teams version on 5th March, both of which DR and RD would attend.

Records of Visits:

Since the last LGB meeting subject monitoring has taken place in Art, RE and Personal Development (see reports attached):

Art (Report provided by MN)

MN makes it clear in the report that the Subject Lead (LP) has transformed the Art Curriculum and there is evidence that both staff and pupils are now enjoying Art more than they used to. Priorities for development were outlined. The Governors congratulated LP on her achievements

Governors challenge:

How had she achieved this?

Headteachers response:

With staff Continuous Personal Development (CPD), the use of sketchbooks, art therapy for staff and student well being alike, creative thinking, use of Big Books in YR 1, inter-Trust school visits and the updating of schemes of work. NJ confirmed that a display of artwork between Leighton and The Oaks Academy was planned.

RE (Report provided by MN)

It was noted that since CE only introduced the new SACRE curriculum in July 2023 and this has only been in place since September this report is more of an update rather than a full monitoring report. This year the emphasis is on embedding the curriculum and making assessment robust including the use of individual books (keeping the Class Book System at KS1) and looking at a new tracking system. The SL has clearly worked hard on the schemes of work and is pleased with the progress so far.

Governors challenge:

Were other faiths other than Christian ones being covered in religious education?

Headteacher response:

RE leads were working with other RE teachers across the Trust to ensure compliancy. She confirmed that separate sessions with different religious group were being carried out and this was proving a good way to establish wider links within the community.

- Personal Development (RD/HH)
- Personal Development (RD/HH)
- RD reported on the discussion with HH and the Subject Lead (LS) who is to be congratulated on her Certificate of Achievement for Mental Health Lead and the Bronze Rights Respecting Schools Award which was awarded to the school in September 2023. LS is now working towards the Silver Award. Work continues to be developed around British Values and New Beginnings and LS is dedicated to the on-going development of the PD curriculum and its effective and consistent delivery across the school. Key actions for the next meeting will be looking at the progress on the RSSA Silver award, the Staff Wellbeing group and the impact of the Worry Warriors programme at KS2.
- Q (RD,HH)
- What criteria needs to be met and in place to achieve the Silver Award and when do you expect to be able to go for this ?
- A (LS)
- LS has a training session booked for 20th March to look at the criteria and the timescale will be dependant on that.
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Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

12. Local Policy Approval

There were three policies uploaded onto GovernorHub to be considered:

- *Child's Safeguarding Policy*
Once approved, this is to be sent out to parents.
- *Home-School Agreement 2024*

It was agreed to amend this document to emphasise that parents who removed their children from school during term time due to holidays were breaking the Home School Agreement.

ACTION: The Headteacher to amend Home-School Agreement

- *Homework Policy 2024*
Once approved, this is to be sent out to parents.

RESOLVED: All three policies were approved by the Governors subject to amendment.

13. Stakeholder Engagement - Parents/Carers

The recently held Open Day was quite successful with 14 families attending and there were hopes that more would attend the next one. A high number of families included children with previously identified SEND needs, which confirmed the school's good reputation in this area.

The Christmas events were seen as very successful.

14. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community

In the wider community the school was collaborating with a woman's charity to provide self-defense classes on site for pupils' mothers which was being very well received and attended.

15. Communication to Trust Executive, Board, Education Standards and Performance (ESP) Committee

Nothing to report.

16. Communication from Executive, Board and ESP

AH reported to the governors that Dove Bank Primary School had recently joined the Trust. Primary head teachers were communicating with each other and there had been, and would continue to be, cross-school communication between staff.

He confirmed that whilst the Trusts priority was for growth, this growth should be internal with an emphasis on the Early Years with provision for 2 year olds.

17. Chair's feedback from Autumn Chair's Forum

DR had shared a document containing a summary of TLP's Chair's Forum held on 7th November 2023.

She reported that there were three main issues to come out of the Forum:

- a) *Staff governors – why can't they be on the LGB?*
AH clarified that should a vote be required, staff would find it very difficult to vote against the head teacher. Therefore, they would need to abstain which would make a situation requiring a vote possibly unresolvable. However, the Trust acknowledged that it was good to have staff members "in the room" and so ideally they would not be excluded but could be included "in attendance" where required. Nationally, the NGA was promoting this structure and the Trust was following its recommendations which it felt made governance clearer and more transparent.
- b) *Vision, Mission, Values across the Trust. Could each school maintain its own identity?*
AH confirmed that this was very much the case and welcomed any ideas or innovations from all the schools which could benefit some or all the schools within the Trust. He emphasised that each school must remain autonomous even if there was to be some conformity required in areas such as documentation, website layout etc.
- c) *Governor recruitment. How do we go about this?*
AH confirmed that this was a national problem facing many schools within and outside the Trust. It was suggested that big local companies (such as Bentley) be approached as many

were now encouraging their staff to undertake community work as part of their development. Social media was also suggested.

18. AOB

There was nothing to report.

Date and time of next meeting: Thursday April 25th 2024 at 18:30 Meeting closed at 8:08pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 01.02.2024

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Page 4 Item 5	Deepen the analysis of persistent absenteeism figures in the school including communicating with other schools in the area.	HT	25.04.24
Page 7 Item 11	Plan Governor recruitment presentation to PTA.	AH/RD	After meeting
Page 7 Item 12	Amend Home-School Agreement	HT	After meeting