



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

**BLACK FIRS PRIMARY SCHOOL LGB**

**MINUTES – Part I**



**Date: Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 4.30pm**

**Present:**

Prof. P. Horrocks (PHo) (Chair)  
Mrs E. Perriman-Rabone (EPR) (Vice Chair), arrived at 5:07 pm  
Mrs R. Cam (RC)  
Mr J. Cammiss (JC)  
Mr P. Hanks (PHa)  
Mr R. Sigley (RS)  
Mrs A. Markin (AM)

**Apologies:**

Mrs S. Mahmood-Shakoor (SMS) (Vice Chair)  
Mrs K. Fowler (KF)

**In attendance:**

Mrs A. Jones (AJ)– Headteacher, arrived at 4:57 pm  
Mrs J. Harrison (JH)– Assistant Headteacher  
Mr A. Millington (AM) – Teacher  
Mrs J. Milne (JM)-SENCO  
Dr A. Howells (AH)-Director of Quality

**Clerk:** Mrs S. Pomeroy

**Governance and Administration**

1. Welcome

*The meeting commenced at 4:36 pm.*

The meeting was quorate. No additional declarations were made. Apologies were noted. The Headteacher had informed governors that she would be late arriving at the meeting.

Aileen Markin informed governors that she would resign from the LGB with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024. This would create a vacancy for an appointed governor. The Chair would work with Headteacher and Director of Quality to develop proposals to support governor succession. **ACTION**

The Chair thanked Aileen for her service to the school as a governor.

2. Minutes of Previous meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Governors reviewed the action log and the following matters arising were discussed:

**Item 3**-AH confirmed that he had raised the issues around capital projects with Trust senior staff. Governors requested that he obtain a response to the specific issues for the LGB.

**Item 9**-SMS was unable to attend this meeting, but she has worked on a governor visit programme with the Headteacher.

**Item 14**-AH would liaise with PHo to arrange a date for governor training on roles and responsibilities.

The remaining actions had been met and closed or would be addressed on this agenda.

**Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities**

3. Strategic Direction and Progress against School Improvement Priorities

*The Headteacher arrived at 4:57 pm.*

**Headteacher’s Report**

Slide 2-The Sioux animals in the Circle of Courage have been re-vamped into Superheroes. The school maintained its focus on the Circle of Courage; it is discussed and reinforced constantly. The children will be able to work towards badges.

Slide 3-SEF-The school was rated “good” in all areas by Ofsted in October 2022.

- Quality of Education-new Little Wandle Books purchased.
- Behaviour and Attitudes-Behaviour policy revised. Staff trained on Trauma informed school practice.
- Personal Development-well-being team expanded. Application submitted for bronze Rights Respecting School.
- Leadership and Management-strong SLT in place this year. Thanks to AM for his work on the IT strategy. He has worked well with Novus to ensure the school is safe and complaint. Thanks to JM for her SENCO work and the training and support she has provided to other staff.

Slide 4-Update on priorities against SIP priorities. The Headteacher provided a summary of what had been achieved against each priority:

#### Priority1

- New adaptive teaching TLR in place.
- Visits to other schools in the Trust to discuss curriculum development work and bring good practice back into school.
- Emphasis on upskilling staff, improving pedagogy and Quality First Teaching.
- Work on scaffolding and retrieval practice.
- Trialling units from Kapow which is a comprehensive scheme of work. It has a strong CPD offer and sets out skills progression and knowledge well. Staff enjoy using Kapow and it reduces teacher workload.

#### **Q. Staff from the school are visiting other schools but is anyone visiting Black Firs?**

R. The Trust want to share JM’s SENCO work and AM’s IT work. JH has shared early writing. The school is on a journey to excellence, and it is important to be externally recognised for its work. All the Headteachers from the Trust schools have visited. The Director of Education has fostered open collaboration between the schools. The school also has a good reputation amongst the Congleton Schools.

#### **Q. Did collaboration happen previously?**

R. It was limited before. The school is much more outward looking now.

AH explained that the formation of the TLP Trust has allowed for more opportunities for the schools to engage and collaborate. The number of Primary schools has increased, and the collaboration will enhance the schools, whilst respecting their individuality. The previous Headteacher left a positive legacy which also allows for collaboration with the wider group of Congleton schools. Governors commented that the school is now reaping the benefits of being part of a larger Trust.

#### **Q. What is a TLR 3?**

R. It is an additional payment for a fixed term linked to a specific project. It can pass to different members of staff.

#### Priority 2

- New scheme of work for Literacy purchased-Literacy Counts.
- NFER tests purchased.
- Comprehension tests in Key Stage 2.
- Termly pupil progress meetings have been introduced. These have a tight focus.

#### **Q. Is the school planning to maintain the study book model?**

R. The school is reviewing the use of the study books. They have significant benefits, and the children love them, but they are time consuming to produce and the presentation can become the most important factor. The school is considering producing one book for the year instead of three.

#### Priority 3

- DSL level 2 training.
- Review of online safety by AM and Novus. Filtering is in place and is effective. It works on any device connected to the school Wi-Fi.
- Installation of new fence planned for summer holidays 2024. Planning permission required.
- Pupils with attendance below 94% are tracked.

*EPR arrived at 5:07 pm*

#### **Q. Why is planning permission required for the fencing?**

R. It is due to the height of the fencing. Stage one will cost between £40-50k and is being funded by the Trust.

#### **Q. What is the school's policy on pupils' use of mobile phones in school?**

R. The children can bring a phone, but it is kept in their locker and cannot be used at school. There have been no issues with this arrangement.

The Headteacher noted that phones have been purchased for specific purposes in school such as for photographs for Tapestry, use by the Family Support worker and on school visits.

#### **Q. Do members of staff at the After School Club (ASC) receive Safeguarding training?**

R. There is a phased approach, and the staffing structure of the ASC is under review.

### **Education**

#### 4. Admissions and Pupil Numbers

- Nearly every year group is full.
- The school has received enquiries for places in Year 3. There are spaces in Year 4 so the school has capacity overall and this would provide extra funding, although the funding is lagged.
- The PAN for Nursery has been increased to 52 from January 2024. An additional teacher has been appointed on a fixed term contract to ensure that the required staff: pupil ratios are met. The post has been funded through the resignation of a teaching assistant and extra income from increased Nursery numbers.
- The school has received 56 first choice applications for September 2024 and may receive some appeals. The school is liaising with the Admissions team at Cheshire East.

Governors agreed to meet prior to the next LGB meeting to consider the future expansion of the school and space available. **ACTION**

#### **Q. Are the enquiries from local children?**

R. Yes, with siblings in school.

#### **Q. Is Reception over PAN?**

R. Yes, this is due to a child with an EHCP. The school cannot refuse to accept pupils with an EHCP unless it cannot meet need, and this is very difficult to evidence in Reception.

AH commented that most schools in the Trust will exceed their PAN by 1 or 2 children in Key Stage 2.

#### 5. Attendance

- Attendance target: 96%.

- Attendance Spring term 1-up to 16.02.23: 93.7%.
- Attendance has been significantly impacted by illness, both chicken pox and scarlet fever.
- Some absence is also due to holidays in term time. The school has never previously fined for taking holidays in term time but is now considering this as a deterrent.
- Holidays are authorised only in exceptional circumstances. The school is monitoring such requests.
- Attendance is reviewed weekly.
- Letters are sent to children with attendance below 94%.
- There are no issues to highlight with attendance by groups of pupils.

**Q. Who is responsible for deciding whether to issue a fine for attendance? Fining could lead to a breakdown in relationships with parents.**

R. This has been discussed at the Cheshire East Association of Headteacher (E-CAPH) as there is inconsistency across schools. The school is working with The Local Authority Attendance Officer. Fining is last resort, and the school is working on pro-active, supportive approaches.

6. Behaviour

- 0 exclusions.
- 1 racist incident recorded due to the use of inappropriate racist terms.

**Q. Is this incident in addition to the previous one recorded?**

R. Yes, and it was in the same year group. It was due to the use of inappropriate language heard at home. This has been addressed through the PSHE curriculum and an individual meeting.

**Q. Was the language used to target a particular child?**

R. No.

The Headteacher referred to slides 10 and 11 from her Headteacher's report to address agenda items 7 and 8.

7. Curriculum- Progress

8. Curriculum -Attainment

- Targets-the greatest disparity is in Years 1 and 2. Staff illness has had an impact. English and Maths is being taught to single year groups as this is more effective than in mixed year groups.

**Q. Is there flexibility for high achieving pupils to move up to a higher year group for lessons?**

R. A Mastery approach is used, and higher achievers are catered for within their year group.

**Q. Is the school meeting the needs of children working at GD?**

R. GD is a focus within school. For example, GD in reading comprehension is addressed in the Literacy Counts scheme.

Slide 11 details the actions taken in the Autumn term 2023. The Headteacher explained there are many new initiatives in school and that some will need time to embed before the impact is seen. It would be good for governors to visit school.

9. Curriculum- Link Governor Monitoring

- A SEND monitoring report 31.01.24 by RS and RC had been shared prior to the meeting.
- The Headteacher confirmed that she had met with SMS regarding a schedule of governor monitoring visits. SMS had been unable to attend this meeting and the Headteacher would contact her to follow up. **ACTION**
- Link governor roles had previously been arranged.

## 10. Sports Premium

- Governors endorsed the Sports Premium Report.
- This school is moving from a two-day whole school sports day event to separate Infant and Junior one day events. An additional Key Stage 2 Quidditch Day has been planned to help engage pupils who may not traditionally enjoy sports to increase participation in physical literacy.

### **Q. Will the competitive element of sports day be retained in this new model?**

R. The new model will maintain a competitive model for half the morning and the other half will be sports stations that pupils will move around, ensuring more opportunities to be active during the day and the afternoon would be finals for the relevant Key Stage.

### **Q. What is the situation with Forest School?**

R. The forest area requires clearing out and new fencing is needed. The area cannot currently be used.

## **Welfare**

### 11. Safeguarding

A safeguarding update had been included in the Headteacher's report (Slide 12).

- The SCR is maintained by the Trust for the former TLA schools.
- The focus for the spring term is on upskilling staff in the use of CPOMS.
- There had been a review of Safeguarding in Out of School Club.

### 12. Welfare and Wellbeing- Students

- Four members of staff had completed Level 2 Team Teach training.
- "STOP" days are being implemented after a holiday to allow the children and staff to re-connect.

### 13. Welfare and Wellbeing- Staff

- A TLP staff well-being audit had been completed on 09.02.24 and a report would follow.
- The school is considering how to improve the staff room area to provide a quiet space for staff. The current staff room is a thoroughfare. Pho requested that governors meet informally to discuss how to make the most of the space available in the school. **ACTION**

### **Q. The SEND link governor report highlights that the SENCO is running a SEND lunch club. Does this have an impact on her well-being?**

R. It is beneficial for the children and the school is considering how to staff it going forward as the current arrangement is unsustainable. An additional MDA has been employed.

## **Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement**

### 14. School website

AM demonstrated the new school website to governors. He explained that the Trust want the websites to be consistent across all the schools. Governors noted that the revised website is easier to navigate, has a streamlined appearance and is compatible with use on a mobile phone. AH commented that the Trust wants to work with the schools to ensure that the content is refreshed regularly and looks professional.

### 15. Local Policy Approval

There were no policies for approval at this meeting.

### 16. Governor Training Update

- EPR had completed Health and Safety training.
- RC had completed training on "Trauma Informed Practice".

<p>17. Stakeholder Engagement – parents/carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was high attendance at the Parents Evening, week commencing 11.02.24. The feedback was that parents liked the one-to-one sessions and preferred these to the group meetings held in the Autumn term.</li> <li>• The school had taken account of parental views on the new school uniform.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q. Are there opportunities for parents to see the new uniform?</b> R. It would be displayed in the school entrance and at parental events.</p> <p><b>Q. Are there any children entitled to Pupil Premium funding who would need support with purchasing the Year 6 Leavers’ sweatshirts?</b> R. The Headteacher would check. <b>ACTION</b></p> <p>18. Stakeholder Engagement – wider community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is involved in a wide range of sporting activities.</li> <li>• The Family Support Worker is involved with all the schools in the CeCP.</li> </ul> <p>19. Communication to Trust Board. Governors requested a response to their previous request regarding lessons learned from capital projects.</p> <p>20. Communication from Trust: There were no items to receive at this meeting.</p>
<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 4:30pm.</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting Closed at 6:41 pm</b></p>

Minutes approved: .....

Date:.....

**Summary of Actions**

Agenda No.	Action	Who?	When?
1	To meet to discuss governor succession planning.	AH, Pho, HT	Summer term 2024
2	To contact SMS regarding the governor monitoring schedule.	HT	March 2024
2	To obtain a response from the Trust SLT regarding issues around capital projects.	AH	March 2024
2	To liaise with PHo to arrange a date for governor training on roles and responsibilities.	AH	March 2024
13	To arrange an informal meeting to discuss how to make the most of the space available in the school.	PHo	March 2024

18	To check whether any children in Year 6 are entitled to PP funding and require support to purchase Y6 leavers' sweatshirts.	HT	March 2024
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