

Local Governing Board (LGB) to The Learning Partnership



Wistaston Church Lane Academy

**Wistaston Church Lane Academy
Summer 2 Minutes**

Date: Thursday 18th July 2024 at 4:00pm (postponed from 13.06.2024)

Governors Present:
Audrey Skidmore (AS) – Chair
Mike Finnigan (MF) – Vice-Chair
Holly Hulett (HH)
Rob Hodson (RH)
David Hastie (DH)

In attendance:
Cathy Elsley (CE) - Headteacher

Clerk: Sharon Dutton (SD) TLP

Governance and Administration

The following documents had been shared on GovernorHub in support of the meeting:

- Headteachers report July 2024
- Pupil Attendance & Registration Policy
- SEND Policy May 2024 - TLP
- Section 175 Audit
- SEN flowchart September 2024-25
- SEND information report 2024-25
- LGB Skills Audit June 2024
- Record of Governor Visit EYFS
- Record of Governor Visit Oracy
- Record of Governor Visit PSHE

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy

The meeting opened at 4:05pm and was confirmed quorate.

AS welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the year. She welcomed DH who was now registered on GIAS as a Governor and for his benefit asked everyone to introduce themselves to the rest of the group.

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising – 08.02.2024

The minutes of the LGB meeting held on 08.02.2023 were approved. There were no outstanding actions carried over from this meeting.

ACTION LOG CARRIED OVER FROM MEETING 12.10.2023

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Pg 3 Item 4	To communicate with all subject leads	Governors	ONGOING

Pg 5 Item 16	Update school policies where necessary	CE	ONGOING
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ACTION LOG CARRIED OVER FROM MEETING 08.02.24

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Pg 7 Item 16	Clerk to include update on Local Policy approval in the agenda for next meeting.	CE	COMPLETED
Pg 7 Item 21	Arrange amendment of the school website where required. (Governors bio's)	TRUST	COMPLETED

SD reported that the Governance department would be working over the holidays to update all schools on the status of their policies in line with the new statutory requirements.

SD informed the governors that governor biographies would be captured during the 2024-25 academic year and posted onto the TLP website for each school. They would not be included on each school's website.

All actions on the Action Log of 18.04.2024 had been completed.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

3. School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Update

The Headteachers report to the governors for July 2024 had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. See Slide 4 of the Headteachers report.

This outlined the school's SIP plan which was being continuously updated and RAG rated for achievements.

CE reported that overall results in writing and oracy skills results were very positive and constantly improving.

4. Ofsted Preparedness

The school was still awaiting the Ofsted inspection and continues to feel prepared for it.

Education

5. Admissions and Pupil Numbers

See slide 5 of the Headteachers report.

Governors noted that pupil numbers had gone from 420 to 438 which is well over PAN, but concentrated in some classes and not others. This number would reduce again in the new academic year. All leavers had done so due to personal reasons unconnected to the school.

New staff had been recruited as additional early morning and evening staff were required in the Nursery.

The Open Day Session had been held at the end of April and considered a great success. CE was confident that the school would be up to PAN for the new academic year. Word of mouth was working and there was a great deal of interest in the school.

6. Attendance

See slide 6 of the Headteachers report.

School attendance is up at 94.9% against the national average (NA) of 94.2%. Authorised absence is at 2.9% (NA 4.1%) and unauthorised is at 2.2% (NA 1.7%). It has been quoted that 1 million school days are lost annually on absenteeism. This term the school had processed 182 leave of absence requests and had already received 7 for next term. 42 fixed penalty fines had been issued.

Governor challenge:

Why do parents apply for leave of absence requests if they know they will not be granted?

Response:

So that the absenteeism is registered. Otherwise, it could become a safeguarding issue. Requests have become a notification.

CE also clarified to governors that the attendance of children who are below the statutory school age is still captured on ARBOR but there are no fines issued and no statistics created; Arbor runs the figures and removes all pupils under the age of 5.

Governors observed that the word Nursery implied it was set apart from the main educational system and that in fact "Pre-school" would be a more accurate term to use as it was often considered as merely "free childcare". It was agreed to discuss this at a more appropriate time with the Trust.

There are currently 44 children under 90% attendance with 1 non-attender, 3 with significant medical conditions and 1 on a part-time timetable. The school is hoping the child on part time timetable will return to full-time soon as it is currently unsustainable. There is also an additional pupil in Cornerstones Academy who will be transitioning back to the school in the new term.

A discussion took place around pupils at Cornerstones Academy and their reintegration into the mainstream. It was observed that in response to the local authority's challenges, the Trust had assisted Leighton Academy in opening a special provision. WCLA is also considering building SEN capacity by increasing staff training, SEN apprenticeships and emphasising adaptive practice.

Governor question:

How can governors support staff with these additional challenges? Is there need for a wellbeing lead?

Response:

CE explained that the Trust was rising to the challenge of this with additional support, encouraging collaboration between SENCo's and the standardisation of policies across the schools within the Trust.

7. Behaviour

See slide 7 of the Headteachers report.

There have been no exclusions. However there had been some parental concerns around one year group on the mixing of classes which CE had addressed individually and all issues were now resolved. In addition, an open letter had been received from 9 families of pupils in Year 2 and once again, these issues had been addressed and resolved.

Governor question:

How does the school monitor the well-being of students in such cases?

Response:

Pupil voice is monitored closely.

CE remarked that CPOMS data has not been easy to extract but acknowledged that the Trust was looking at making the data more purposeful. Governors observed that the categories were too large and that specific incidents e.g. bullying and racial abuse should be itemised.

8. Curriculum – Progress

See Slide 9 of the Headteachers report.

9. Curriculum – Attainment by Key Stage

See Slides 10 to 13 of the Headteachers report.

The slides showed the key results for 2023-2024. 90% of KS2 pupils had achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (significantly above national figures) and 21% had achieved the higher standard (in line with national figures). Multiplication tables and phonics were in line with the national average, but EYFS was significantly below, due to the effect of poor performance within a relatively small cohort of children.

Slide 11 contained comparative data since 2018 which showed significant progress in all areas. CE reported that there was a long-term staff absence in Reception which was being covered by agency staff. This was to be resolved in the new academic year as the school had taken on two additional permanent teachers for Reception and Year 1.

Governor challenge:

How can we be sure of the accuracy of the data?

Response:

There is a lot of external moderation as well as comparisons to the other primary schools within the Trust.

Governor challenge:

How are those improved results being celebrated?

Response:

The KS2 data had gone into the latest newsletter and shared with the Trust.

RH reported that he had conducted a SATS visit the report for which would be uploaded onto GovernorHub. He had found the staff to be very positive and readily giving reassurance when required. Anxieties were professionally managed and children with additional needs were well catered for.

Welfare

10. Safeguarding

See slide 14 of the Headteachers report.

CE reported that the Safeguarding team which meets to discuss children and incidents has now moved to a set weekly meeting. There are currently no child protection or child in need cases. The SCiES annual audit is due on the 8th of July 2024 and the report will follow.

MF observed that there was a requirement for identifying young carers as they are often unregistered. The criteria for registration is vague but statistics show that in some areas one in 6 young people are filling this role. CE reported that Cheshire East would be attending an assembly at the school around this issue.

Governors were reminded to upload any Safeguarding training they undertook onto GovernorHub.

The **Section 175 Audit** document had been uploaded onto GovernorHub and governors had made the following observations:

- Who in terms of staff attends staff meetings? Are there some barriers to attendance preventing some staff to attend? (e.g. Swan Stars staff attending after school staff meeting)
- How do we ensure that there is clear accountability?

11. Wellbeing and Welfare – Students

See Slide 15 of the Headteachers report. This covered:

Pastoral support:

- 8 children were receiving counselling from an external counsellor.
- Emotional literacy support was being offered by trained staff.
- The friendship hub was available every playtime.
- 4 families were receiving targeted assistance.
- There were no families currently in need of extra help.

Governor question:

How do we measure the well-being of our children?

Response:

By carrying out pupil surveys (there is one to be activated in September 2024), link governor and Trust visits, SCiES.

As part of her report, CE had included a slide (16) focussing on the policy of pupil premium pupils receiving support for educational trips and residential.

She explained that, as with free school meals, applicants were means tested for eligibility. A discussion took place around the structure of that assistance. Historically the school had fully funded all trips and extra-curricular activities for pupil premium to ensure inclusion. However, costs were increasing and many families not categorised as pupil premium were finding it hard to come up with the money required. Should residential still be fully supported by the school for some or could a contribution be required and if so, how would that be structured?

Governors also commented on the purpose and focus of such trips.

ACTION: The school's educational trips organiser to submit a report for the governors to read before the next LGB meeting for discussion at that meeting. This would cover the nature of the trips involved, their cost and payment terms and plans.

Any decision made by the Governors would affect the pupil premium statement and policies written around school trips, charges, and remissions. Governors agreed that whatever trips were arranged they should always be related to the curriculum or designed to assist with providing life skills. There should also be some consistency from similar schools within the Trust.

Governor question:

What is the average cost of a residential?

Response:

Between £250 and £300.

ACTION: The forming of a working group on educational trips made up of DH and RH, CE and the educational trips organiser

RH excused himself from the meeting at 5:55pm

12. Wellbeing and Welfare – Staff

- Nothing to report.

Governor Links and Training

13. Link Governor Monitoring visits.

- RH had conducted an EYFS monitoring visit on 17/06/24 and uploaded his report onto GovernorHub. He was very impressed with all he had observed and there were no issues arising for the LGB to address.
- HH had conducted a Reception/KS1 Oracy monitoring visit on 16/07/24. She was happy with what she saw but asked if the school's ambition is to become an accredited Voice 21 school after 3 years, is there a clear plan from Voice 21/SLT on what milestones are needed to get there and how has this been communicated to the school? CE confirmed that this was in place. In addition, she had ambitions that the school would ultimately be able to support other schools in the Trust in gaining accreditation.
- AS had conducted a PSHE curriculum visit and implementation of Jigsaw. In terms of workload, she was concerned that the size of the SLT team was appropriate for the size of the school. CE was aware of this and there were provisions in place to deal with it.

ACTION: SD to Include link governor roles and monitoring schedule for 2024-2025 on next meeting agenda.

14. Skill Audit/Training Requirements

Governors were encouraged to read the newly issued safeguarding guidelines and to undergo basic safeguarding training if not already completed. Governor were also expected to undergo Prevent training and more information from the Trust would shortly be forthcoming.

A report back on the skills audit would be presented in the new academic year.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

15. Local Policy Approval

- Pupil Attendance and Registration Policy
This policy was ratified by the LGB.
- School Visits and Residentials
This policy to be discussed further after the working party has met with the educational trips organiser.

ACTION: Include School Visits and Residentials Policy on next LGB meeting agenda.

- SEND policy
This policy was ratified by the LGB.

16. Stakeholder Engagement - Parents/Carers

See Slide 17 of the Headteachers report.

The following events had taken place:

- Parent consultation re RSE curriculum
- Friends events – Wistaston Community Fair
- Parents attending school events – reading morning, maths morning (each key stage held on different dates)
- Parents invited to 150-year celebratory events – picnic and colour run.
- New Nursery and Reception parent meetings held.
- Year group assemblies and Year 6 end of year play.

CE confirmed that parental engagement was currently very strong.

17. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community

See Slide 18 of the Headteacher’s report.

The school was involved in the following events:

- Wistaston Community Fair
- Included in an article in Roundabout magazine.
- St Mary’s Church in Nantwich to ring a 150-year celebratory peal.
- Town sports
- Running of a parent course “Helping children deal with loss”.

18. Communication to Trust

Governors asked that in order to support the school further could provision decisions be made a little quicker.

19. Communication from Trust

Nothing to report.

20. AOB

CE outlined the following **Premises Plans**:

- The adaptation of the space for EYFS was due to start in the first week of the holidays.
- The school field had been reseeded following the Nursery build.
- There had been an installation of outside electrics in preparation for the swimming pool hire.

Swan Stars Provision

DH commented that this provision seemed over subscribed and asked if the school was planning on taking on any additional staff. CE confirmed that she was in consultation with the Trust on this matter and that further development was driven by space, availability of staff and monetary resources.

The Chair and Headteacher thanked the Governors for their attendance and commitment.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Thursday 10th October 2024 at 4:00pm Meeting Closed at 6:18pm

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 18.07.2024

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Page 5, item 11	The school's educational trips organiser to submit a report for the governors to read before the next LGB meeting for discussion at that meeting. This would cover the nature of trips and residentials planned, their cost and payment terms and plans.	CE	10/10/24
Page 6, item 11	The forming of a working group on educational trips made up of DH and RH, CE and the educational trips organiser.	DH/RH/CE	10/10/24
Page 6, item 13	Include link governor roles and monitoring schedule for 2024-2025 on next meeting agenda.	SD	10/10/24
Page 6, item 15	Include School Visits and Residentials Policy on next LGB meeting agenda.	SD	10/10/24

DRAFT