

Local Governing Board (LGB) to The Learning Partnership



Leighton Academy
Minutes – SUMMER 2



Date: 20th June 2024 at 5:30pm in school

Governors present:

Rachael Dean (RD) – Vice Chair
Helen Holland (HH) - Governor
Nicola Kay (NK) – Parent Governor
Michelle Noble (MN) - Governor

In attendance:

Samantha Thompson (ST) - Headteacher
Carl Lambert (CL) – Governor in approval process
Nicholas Jones (NJ) – Staff Representative
Marie Speake (MS) – Staff Representative

Apologies :

Diane Ridings (DR) – Chair
Dr Allan Howells (AH) – Director of Quality – TLP

Clerk: Sharon Dutton (SD) – TLP Clerk

Governance and Administration

DOCUMENTS SHARED ON GOVERNORHUB PRIOR TO THE MEETING:

- Item No 4 - Headteacher's Report 20.06.24
- Item No 4 – PD Report 07.05.24
- Item No 4 – Quality Assurance 07.05.24
- Item No 6 – Attendance Report
- Item No 10 – Safeguarding Visit 17.05.24
- Item No 10 – Safeguarding Audit Spring 2 17.05.24
- Item No 13 – Subject Monitoring Report – Humanities – 22.04.24
- Item No 13 – Subject Monitoring Report – Music – 24.05.2024
- Item No 13 – Report to Subject Lead – English – Summer 2024
- Item No 13 – Subject Monitoring Report – MFL – June 2024
- Item No 14 – LGB Skills Audit 04.06.2024

1. Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations

RD opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting at 5:32pm and confirmed it quorate. All present agreed to the meeting being recorded.

DR and AH were noted absent with apologies accepted.

MN was noted as absent but on her way. She joined the meeting at 5:38pm.

CL had indicated he would be arriving late. He joined the meeting at 5:52pm.

There were no updated declarations.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the LGB (Local Governing Board) meeting held on 25.04.2024 were approved.

3. Appointment of new LGB member

ST confirmed that the school had submitted CL's DBS check in the week before half-term but had not had any response.

ACTION: ST to chase up CL's DBS check

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 25.04.2024

Minute Ref	Action	By when	
Pg 1 Item 3	Amend the minutes removing RD as SenCo and repost on GovernorHub.	Clerk	After meeting
Pg 5 Item 10	Include updated Humanities report on next meeting agenda.	Clerk	Completed
Pg 6 Item 10	Include Link Governor reports on next meeting agenda.	Clerk	Completed
Pg 6 Item 13	Wellbeing questionnaire results to be included on next meeting agenda.	Clerk	Completed

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Minute Ref	Action	Status
4, pg 2	Prevent training	Completed
4, pg 2	LGB members to complete cyber and security training	MN ongoing. ST to share link

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities:

The Headteacher's report to the governors had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. ST brought the LGB's attention to the following:

4. School Improvement Plan (SIP) – update including:

- Personal Development – School review 07.05.2024
- Quality Assurance – 07.05.2024

Slide 6 – School Improvement

ST reported there had been a Quality Assurance visit to the school by Mike Cladingbowl and a Personal Development curriculum audit led by Alison Hooper, both carried out on 7th May. All participants had found it to be positive and useful and emerging actions highlighted were listed as:

- Staff CPD on effective questioning linked to development of coaching pairs
- Review of scheme of work adopted for PD
- Training for SEN TAs delivered by Julia Gawn throughout the Summer term
- Research and initial application for International Schools Award

She confirmed that most of these were now under way. Staff were engaging in effective questioning and adaptive language choices and using the teaching tool Walkthrus.co.uk with additional peer coaching and lesson observation sessions with each other, alongside additional coaching. She pointed governors to the website for a full understanding of what the teaching tool could achieve.

MS observed that this had proved to be very useful. One round of activities had been completed and the second round was currently ongoing. It was proving to be a safe space for help and support with staff working in pairs selected by the headteacher and self-reflection encouraged.

Due to the variety of experience within the staff body, valuable conversations and good strategies were evolving. It was envisaged that the pairs could change after the second round had been completed.

NK Governor challenge:

Are the staff happy with the new approach?

Response:

ST confirmed that overall the staff body were happy with a few citing time constraints. She confirmed they all had full access to the website, the three Teaching Walkthrus volumes. HH reiterated that this initiative was very beneficial particularly when trying to maintain consistency across the school.

ST also confirmed that the school's teaching and learning policy would be rewritten in the new academic year and this would be a whole school priority.

Another emerging action had been to review the scheme of work for Personal Development and the Jigsaw method had been recommended. After trialling it was felt by the SLT that it was not suitable due to the demographics of the school and that more variety increased adaptability and meant that learning was tailor made across all cohorts. The SCIEs review that had taken place today reinforced this decision as they highlighted the strength of the PD curriculum.

Education

Slide 7 – Admissions and Pupil Numbers

Item 5 of the agenda

There are currently 394 in main school and 76 in nursery. She confirmed that in-year weekly admissions and the smaller year groups were increasing and that Nursery was now completely full. We have 60 pupils starting in September so reception will be full. We have also had 2 appeals for KS1 places that have been declined.

NK Governor question:

Where are the joiners coming from?

Response:

ST stated there were a variety of reasons. She also observed that there were siblings waiting to join the school.

Slide 8 – Attendance

Item 6 of the agenda

ST had uploaded a document from the FFT (Fischer Family Trust) outlining the 360 Attendance Review from 04.09.2023 to 24.05.2024. This document covered weekly attendance figures for the school compared with the national average including persistent absenteeism.

RD Governor challenge:

On the whole school the school statistics are similar to those nationally except in Year 1 where the difference is quite marked? Do we have a reason for this?

Response:

ST confirmed this was due to a spike in term time holidays. She felt that the statutory guidance on persistent absenteeism was unclear and that there was generally little consistency which made it difficult to capture any meaningful data.

A discussion ensued regarding how to make parents understand the effect persistent absenteeism had on the school in terms of performance data. It was agreed to try and explore ways to increase awareness, possibly through the school newsletter.

Slide 9 – Behaviour

Item 7 of the agenda

There had been no additional incidents to report.

Item 8 and 9

Curriculum progress and attainment – no new data to share

Slide 10 – Safeguarding Caseload

ST had included an update of the school’s safeguarding caseload for Governors to consider.

She observed that since the last update, Cared for Children in the vulnerable student cohort had increased by 1 which is a rolling total through the year to date. However, Governors were pleased to note that despite this there had been no new cases and no repeats.

MN Governor challenge:

Do suspensions work?

Response:

ST stated that this varies between cases. Sometimes a suspension supports an EHCP or it proves to be a “wake-up call” for the pupil and/or their parents but generally just the engagement with a pupil’s family during the reintegration process can have a lasting positive effect. NJ added that relationships with families have been strengthened through the reintegration process.

Welfare

10. Safeguarding

Slide 11 – Safeguarding

Safeguarding Visit 17.05.2024

LGB safeguarding audit took place on 17th May 2024.

Attendance was looked at in detail in light of previous LGB discussions
Children’s Safeguarding Policy was being rolled out to all classes and was reviewed by the SCIEs team during the audit.

Refresher training for staff on 05.06.24 included:

- Wishes and Feelings Training
- Behaviour Update – why are pupils rude. Relational practice responses – more intense for Midday team and a refresher for the teaching staff
- Bruising – what is normal and when to be concerned, scenario planning
- Procedures for reporting concerns. This included challenging the decision of the DSL (designated safeguarding lead) and the social worker involved.

SCIEs safeguarding review had taken place on 20.06.24. Full report with emerging actions to be shared in Autumn term meeting. The verbal report had been very positive and the review thorough and comprehensive.

ACTION: To include SCIE’s report and emerging actions on Autumn LGB agenda.

11. Welfare & wellbeing – Students

No update

12. Welfare & wellbeing – Staff

The results from the staff wellbeing questionnaire had overall been very positive.

Emerging actions were:

- A review of lunchtimes (length and routines)

- Review space in staff room for adequate break out space
- Review procedures for feeding back on concerns raised (linked to safeguarding)

MN observed that often it was important not to automatically react to a staff concern by making changes but instead actively engage with staff to ensure they understand the reasons for a particular process which would not, in reality, be to their advantage to change.

NK gave additional feedback to the LGB Safeguarding Audit conducted on the 17th May 2024. She confirmed that the knowledge of Philly Lockett, Pastoral and Welfare Lead and DDSL, was both wide and deep. She summarised her findings as follows:

- High quality leadership and management which makes safeguarding a priority across all aspects of the school's work including that of the wrap around care
- Rigorous safeguarding policies and procedures in place, written in plain English, compliant with statutory requirements and updated regularly; in particular, clear and coherent child protection policies including for wrap around care
- Child protection arrangements that are accessible to everyone, so that pupils and families, as well as adults in the school and at wrap around care, know who they can report an issue to.
- Excellent communication systems with up-to date information that can be accessed and shared by those who need it including wrap around care.
- High priority given to training in safeguarding, generally going beyond basic requirements, extending expertise widely and building internal capacity including wrap around care.

NK's only concern was that there should be training offered to additional staff to spread the load.

MN Governor question:

Are there many school refusers?

Response:

NK confirmed that there were a few, the numbers of which varied at different points of the year. She confirmed that the Pastoral & Welfare Lead was generally successful in her dealings with them and that often it was a parental issue which could be resolved. MS noted that the class teacher and TA play an important role in supporting school refusers and will make amendments to their school day etc.

She confirmed that she could include an observational visit to classrooms and teachers to accompany the audit in her next report.

Governor Links and Training

13. Links Governor monitoring feedback:

Updated Humanities Report – DR

DR sent a verbal update through RD and confirmed that she had met with the Humanities subject leads on 14th May 2024 as a follow-up to the INSET day in January.

January humanities INSET is clearly having an impact as evidenced through pupil voice which reflects much better coverage and knowledge. Moving forward, a learning walk is planned at the start of the Autumn term to check displays etc. Subject leads are on course to reapply for quality marks next academic year.

Governor question:

What has been the impact of the INSET on the general coverage of the subjects and evidence?

Response:

Staff have been encouraged to break down the overall Enquiry Question into sub-sections with a targeted question for each lesson. Lesson structure has been addressed starting with retrieval from the last lesson, targeted questions and evaluation which enables the pupils to build up their knowledge, remember and move forward. The enquiry question is clear in books and Pupil Voice is now much stronger. They are able to show what they know and breaking down the enquiry question has clearly helped to support this. They are able to talk more naturally about the two subjects as a whole, taking a “humanities” approach to their learning. Classes now display key questions, timelines and relevant maps – part of the non-negotiables- and clear photographic evidence is annotated. Monitoring by the Leads is on-going and further scrutiny of the books will take place later in the term. Digi maps are clearly a great tool to maintain enthusiasm for Geography. Currently it is free but will need to be purchased for the next academic year.

Music – NK

NK met with the subject lead on 24.05.2024. She discussed SingUp with which is a paid for service currently being used by the school to suggest song of the week used in assembly and throughout school. SingUp provides complete schemes of work, including lesson plans, with links to the curriculum & EYFS framework and she is confident that SingUp can support with monitoring and assessment. There has been a lot of engagement with the programme and aspires for it to be used more widely by teachers to choose their own schemes of work to support other areas of the curriculum being studied. She was able to observe SingUp being used by ST in an assembly and the positive reaction from the children.

The choir is still at very early stages with LS trialling various timings for practices with lunchtime sessions working well. Inconsistency of performance across classes is a challenge and the subject lead is discussing this with other Music leads within her network.

As the curriculum for music is in a transition period, the planning for assessment will be paused temporarily and resume next year once the curriculum is finalised. However, engagement with music is high (confirmed by pupil voice) with many children expressing an interest in experiencing more music than is currently available, including after school clubs. Investigations are being made into the possibility of school funded clubs and using Peter Wilson (a previous teacher at the school currently providing tuition).

NK confirmed the enthusiasm that the subject lead has for music, evidenced with the desire she shows for improving the subject despite the difficulties she’s faced.

English & Phonics – MN

DR met with MS (subject lead) on 17th June 2024. MN gave feedback in DR’s absence. She commented on the passion the subject lead has for her subject and the way in which she has driven the recently introduced new initiatives in particular Accelerated Reader, Reading Fluency, Read to Write and Sentence Accuracy. The positive impact of her work across the Trust has been considerable. The moderation sessions delivered this term have had an impact on our staff and staff across the trust.

This year writing has been a real focus as part of the school improvement plan and interim writing data shows good progress in Y6 with standards raised.

Data for reading for the Spring Term showed that 24% of pupils in years 1-5 had made above expected progress with just 6% below expected and the Accelerated Reader programme was confirmed as a big incentive. This was also facilitated by Read to Write which makes both reading and writing more meaningful.

MN Governor Question:

What did the staff survey on reading fluency show?

Response:

The staff survey on Reading Fluency came from a Trust training session and the results showed that the current staff are confident in teaching fluency and use a range of strategies. Fluency training will be delivered in September to all staff including new members of staff who are less confident.

Governors congratulated MS on the progress made with the teaching staff. Mike Cladingbowl had also referenced the work of MS in his QA visit report.

Phonics results in Year 1 were on target at 82% with YR2 re-sits at 70% - a combined total of 80%. The monitoring feedback highlighted the application of Sentence Accuracy in sentence accuracy checklist.

MN Governor Question:

Why has the decision been made to purchase a new phonics scheme given that the data is just above national?

Response:

The new Phonics scheme is called Little Wandle and was purchased as the current scheme does not work for Nursery. The phonics units also link to the FFT Fluency Assessments which will form part of the Fluency training in September. They are clear and easy to do, recorded on a spreadsheet and inform where interventions need to be targeted for individual pupils.

MN Governor Question:

How have staff taken to the sentence accuracy sessions?

Response:

The introduction of Sentence Accuracy this year had been well embraced by the staff and was being embedded. It was done consistently every day and did not give the staff any additional workload. High quality modelling shows the process of becoming a writer and builds confidence. It is a good tool to prepare them to write academically when they move on to High School and links in with the teaching of phonics and development of reading skills.

Training is in place for SEND TAs and class teachers around planned activities and implementation including modelling.

MN Governor Question:

What are pupil attitudes towards writing now?

Response:

Pupil voice shows that more pupils now see writing as a pleasurable activity and although some SEND pupils do find it difficult, moving forward, alternative options will be looked at, eg. scribing.

MN Governor Question:

What are your priorities moving forward?

Response:

These include CPD on live modelling, introduction of Shakespeare units of work for Y3-6. Please refer to detailed LGB report.

Modern Foreign Languages – RD

RD met with the MFL subject lead on 13th June 2024.

For context for newer LGB members and as a reminder for older members, up until Dec 2021 German (MFL) lessons were taught by a specialist teacher who retired at the end of the Autumn Term 21/22. After his retirement the class teachers took on the mantle of German lessons and Ellie

Davies (ED) took on the role of Subject Lead along with Sophie Mitchell (SM) with whom she job shares as class teacher of one of the Reception classes.

It has been a steep learning curve for both ED as Subject Lead and class teachers alike. A revised scheme of works for German lessons was implemented in Sept 2022 based around the Primary Languages Network and replacing the “bespoke” curriculum that had previously been delivered and Linguascope (an online language learning platform no longer used due to spiralling cost implications). Feedback from class teachers is good, supports non-native speakers with their teaching of the subject and there are plentiful resources to assist in delivering lessons.

Year 5 trips to our partner school in Cologne have also recommenced – with visits taking place in Apr 2023 and Mar 2024. Pupil voice is strong – children enjoy their German lessons.

Discussion Points:-

- Consistency of how often German is taught and how this is being evidenced
ED would like to see an improvement in consistency of German lessons and in some areas of the school German needs to have more lesson time prioritized to it. At present incidental German takes place on most days in most classes i.e.. children answering the register or ordering their lunch choice in German but this is not always being captured/recorded as evidence. ED has encouraged teachers to capture this in video evidence form so it can be used as part of the monitoring and assessment of skills/knowledge across the year groups.

ED is also encouraging class teachers to watch prior video lessons for retrieval, supporting metacognition and assessing prior knowledge. She has advised all staff that a minimum of 2 video evidence and 2 pieces of class work are required per month.

- Class links with German school in Cologne

Discussions continue with Leighton’s partner school in Cologne to develop class links – it was hoped that regular zoom links between classes could be arranged but this has been delayed due to technical incompatibility. It is hoped that this can be revisited soon.

In the meantime all classes have started on creating exchange / pen pal letters addressed to the children at the Cologne school. Nursery through to Year 2 are working on a joint class letter and Yrs 3, 4 & 5 will be writing individual letters to a link child at the school and hopefully in Y5, if they go on the Cologne trip, they will then get to meet their link pupil. Matching classes has been tricky as children in Germany do not start primary school until age 6/7. These exchange letters are then to be used as part of the evidence for monitoring and assessment purposes.

RD Governor Challenge:

What is the rationale to keep German as our chosen MFL when most other schools teach French or Spanish?

Response:

The SLT at Leighton felt that the extremely close links the school has with the German link school in Cologne, the immediate local area links with Bentley and the prior German knowledge already gained by children and staff alike were valid justification to remain with German as their chosen MFL. It was also considered a unique selling point for the school.

Staff have confirmed their total satisfaction with this rationale.

Design & technology – RD (Verbal update)

RD confirmed she had met with the DT subject lead and would upload a full report after the meeting. She confirmed there had been a delay in monitoring and that whilst some good work had been

achieved, pupils needed further support with processes to follow in order to be able to recall their learning. This will be done through a class display and prompt sheets.

ACTION: RD to load subject monitoring report for DT onto GovernorHub for first meeting in Autumn term.

ACTION: SD to include link governor reports for the Autumn term agenda in the following areas:

- **MATHS**
- **SCIENCE**
- **COMPUTING**
- **DESIGN TECHNOLOGY**

RD thanked all the Governors for their comprehensive and detailed reports.

14. Skills Audit/Training Requirements

SD confirmed that the results of the skills audit had been uploaded onto GovernorHub and that full feedback on Governors training requirements would be issued at the first LGB meeting of the 2024/2025 academic year. CL needs to complete basic awareness training, Prevent and Cyber Security training.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

15. SEN Unit Update

ST reported that the consultation was complete. There had been 56 responses from parents with only one negative response. The completed application to the Regional Director of Education was to be heard in August 2024 with the final result on the service level agreement expected in early November. In the meantime, minor building works were going ahead and we are waiting to obtain the funding agreement from the local authority

Staffing for September 2024.

One staff member had been identified to lead the SEN unit and more would need to be recruited as the unit grew.

ST reported that 10% of the work force were pregnant or on maternity leave but all covering and additional staff had been appointed with some support staff still to be recruited.

Subject leads have been given the opportunity to make a change to their subject to support their career development and SLT were currently working on this.

RD Governor question:

How many pregnant staff members are subject Leads?

Response:

Three and all subjects will be covered by other staff in their absence. We will also review KS Lead roles due to the absences.

The plans for the transitioning of classes and “meet the teacher” sessions would run in the same manner as last year which had proved to be successful.

16. Local Policy Approval

Nothing to report.

17. Stakeholder Engagement - Parents/Carers

Nothing to report.

18. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community

RD reminded Governors of the Summer Fayre on 5th July which was now in the school diary.

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

Nothing to report.

20. Communication from Executive, Board and ESP

Nothing to report.

21. Meeting Dates (and times) for 2024/2025 academic year

The following dates had been suggested:

26.09.2024

23.01.2025

08.05.2025

03.07.2025

These were agreed subject to the dates of the data drops which will be decided imminently following the appointment of the new director of primary

A new starting time of 5:30 for LGB meetings was agreed.

22. AOB

RD thanked the Governors and the staff for their support during the SATS, the results of which would be available on the 9th of July. The atmosphere around these had been relaxed and most pupils had been calm and well prepared.

All involved were to be congratulated on the interim writing data which showed a 72% pass rate with 13% at greater depth.

KS1 SATs are no longer statutory but the school have chosen to still complete the tests in line with other year groups.

RD reported that she had taken a group of Reception children to Tatton Park which had been very successful.

Governors were reminded of the TLP Governors conference on Saturday 13th July and to respond to the invitation if they had not already done so.

HH has visited NJ to review SEND and Pupil Premium. A full report will be shared with governors.

ACTION: SD to include Pupil Premium and SEND data updates on next meeting agenda.

The meeting closed at 07:24pm.

Date and time of next meeting: Thursday September 26th 2024 at 05:30pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 20.06.24

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Pg 2, Item 3	Chase up CL's DBS check	ST	After meeting
Pg 4, Item 10	Include SCIE's report and emerging actions on Autumn LGB agenda.	ST/Clerk	26.09.24
Pg 9, Item 13	Load subject monitoring report for DT onto GovernorHub for first LGB meeting in Autumn term.	RD	26.09.24
Pg 9, Item 13	Include link governor reports for the Autumn term agenda in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MATHS• SCIENCE• COMPUTING• DESIGN TECHNOLOGY	Clerk	26.09.24
Pg 11, Item 22	Include Pupil Premium and SEND data updates on Autumn LGB agenda.	Clerk	26.09.24