



<p>Local Governing Board (LGB) to The Learning Partnership</p>  <p>Wistaston Church Lane Academy AUTUMN Minutes</p>	 <p>Wistaston Church Lane Academy</p>
<p>Date: Thursday 10th October 2024 at 4:00pm</p>	
<p>Governors Present: Audrey Skidmore (AS) – Chair Mike Finnigan (MF) – Vice-Chair Holly Hulett (HH) David Hastie (DH)</p>	<p>In attendance: Cathy Elsley (CE) – Headteacher Dr Allan Howells (AH) – Director of Quality – TLP</p> <p>Clerk: Sharon Dutton (SD) TLP</p>
<p>Governance and Administration</p>	
<p>The following documents had been shared on GovernorHub in support of the meeting:</p> <p>POLICIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Plan 2024 • Behaviour & Relationships Policy 2024 • Child protection & safeguarding Policy (Model) • Child Friendly Safeguarding Policy • Digital Safety Policy • Educational Visits Policy • Parent Code of Conduct • Uniform Policy <p>OTHER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCiES Review Report July 2024 - DRAFT • SCiES Governor schedule for monitoring Safeguarding in school – updated Sept 2024 • Headteacher's Report Oct 2024 • Link Governor Visit – MK-Safeguarding • Link Governor Training Sept 2024 (TLP) • TLP School's Safeguarding Report to LGB <p><u>1. Welcome.</u></p> <p>The meeting opened at 4:00pm AS welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year.</p> <p><u>2. Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations</u></p> <p>SD confirmed that the meeting was quorate. There were no apologies (see item 4(b). There were no conflicts of interest declared.</p> <p><u>3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising – 18.07.2024</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the minutes of the LGB were to be approved retrospectively prior to being uploaded onto GovernorHub.</p>	

ACTION LOG CARRIED OVER FROM MEETING 18.07.24

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	ONGOING
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	ONGOING
Page 6, item 13	Include link governor roles and monitoring schedule for 2024-2025 on next meeting agenda.	SD	COMPLETE
Page 6, item 15	Include School Visits and Residentials Policy on next LGB meeting agenda.	SD	COMPLETE

Governors observed that they were receiving unsolicited email notifications from Entrust. AH confirmed that they should only be receiving communications from GovernorHub (for WCLA only), NGA and The Key.

4. Compliance

SD confirmed that all LGB declarations of interest had been completed on GovernorHub and uploaded onto the TLP website.

- a) Membership & effectiveness update:
- b) New appointments/resignations:

SD confirmed that an email had been received from Rob Hodson submitting his resignation from the LGB with immediate effect and citing pressure of work. AH confirmed he had sent a thankyou email to RH.

- c) New vacancies:

AS confirmed that at least three potential governors were currently in the approval process.

- d) Terms of office.

SD informed the LGB that MF's term of office was due to expire in April 2025. MF observed that he had been intending not to renew but that in light of RH's resignation he was prepared to stay on until 31/08/2025. This was accepted by the LGB and AS extended her thanks to him for his consideration.

- e) Training updates

HH and DH confirmed they had uploaded their recent training onto GovernorHub.

AH reminded Governors to complete the Prevent and Safeguarding training, details of which have been published on GovernorHub and upload their training certificates.

In response to Governors questions regarding Suspensions and Exclusions training, AH outlined for them the process of Exclusions. Going forward the Trust would like at least two governors on each LGB to be trained to sit on Exclusion panels for the Trust and these names would be added to a pool of trained governors.

ACTION: Governors to report back to AH or SD on bespoke training that they would like to receive.

- f) Biographies heads-up

SD confirmed that this was going ahead, and that more information would be available at the next meeting. AH confirmed that he was the officer responsible for updating GIAS.

5. Annual Tasks

a) Election of Chair and Vice Chair

AS was confirmed as Chair for the next academic year with MF agreeing to stay on a Vice Chair until 31/08/25. AH discussed the role of the Chair and Vice Chair on the LGB which could take on a variety of approaches depending on the individuals involved. He described it as a “supportive critical friend” to the headteacher.

ACTION: Governors to consider succession plans, including their own position on the LGB.

b) Confirmation of Link Governor roles:

These were confirmed as:

- Safeguarding – MF with DH working in conjunction.
- SEND – AS
- EYFS – HH
- Staff Wellbeing – to be deferred; in the meantime, all governors to cover this on their visits.

It was confirmed one visit per half term should take place. Templates for school visits can be found in the TLP Resources section on GovernorHub.

ACTION: Staff Wellbeing link governor to appointed at next meeting.

ACTION: SD to upload document covering the role of the link governor.

c) Monitoring schedule

ACTION: Link Monitoring schedule for 2025 to be included in agenda for next meeting.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

6. Headteachers Report & SIP

The Headteachers report to the governors for October 2024 had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. See Slide 4 of the Headteachers report. This had not uploaded correctly and was difficult to read. Areas in green indicate key priorities which link training/CPD, monitoring and staff development.

In summary:

Quality of Education:

- To develop the curriculum to incorporate climate change and sustainability
- To embed oracy skills to enable learners to successfully build the knowledge and skills they need for the future.

Behaviour & Attitudes:

- To ensure attendance, across all phases of the school, so that it is in line with the school aspiration of 97% and that persistent absence is no greater than the national average.

Personal Development:

- To consistently promote the personal development of pupils, allowing pupils to access a wide, rich set of experiences both through the curriculum and extracurricular activities.

Leadership & Management:

- To ensure high expectations for SEND pupils, with effective teaching, support, and tailored provision that allows them to make strong progress.

EYFS:

- To ensure high quality provision provides no limits or barriers to the children's achievements regardless of their backgrounds, circumstance and or needs.
- To embed effective transition between Nursery and Rec and Rec and Year 1

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

a) Ofsted preparedness – update

CE reported that the Ofsted inspection was imminent and positively anticipated by staff and pupils alike and she confirmed that the school was very well prepared for any visit.

b) Educational Trips and Residential (including PP) – report/feedback.

DH had outlined his research on GovernorHub conducted as best he could now that RH was no longer on the LGB. It was agreed that HH, AS and DH in consultation with the headteacher would meet to revisit this issue and report back to governors. This included consulting with the school's educational trips organiser as to the nature of trips involved, their cost and payment terms and plans.

ACTION: HH, AS & DH to discuss Educational Trips and Residentials (including PP).

Education

7. Admissions and Pupil Numbers

See slide 5 of the Headteachers report.

Governors noted that pupil numbers were now sitting at 432. No students had left, and all 9 joiners have come from overseas; this is their first UK school.

Governor challenge:

For those children joining from overseas, primarily where English is not their first language, how are they integrating and what provisions are in place to make the transition pastorally and academically as easy as possible?

Headteacher response:

Overseas children are initially baselined in reading, writing and maths. Where needed, interventions are put into place by support staff including an introduction to English. They are given a class buddy to look after them and the school supports with provisions where required. The "No Outsiders" initiative is also reinforced where refugee children have joined a class. They tend to be in school for a very short time before being "dispersed". (Cheshire East terminology).

A discussion took place around the term "dispersed". CE confirmed she had emailed Cheshire East and consulted SCiES regarding this dispersal as being a potential safeguarding issue. More clarification was being sought.

She confirmed that wherever possible teachers informed their classmates that the children had been "moved on".

ACTION: CE to report back to governors on "dispersed" children at the next meeting.

CE reported that 45 children had signed up for Reception and 26 for Cygnets. The environment has seen a massive improvement which will lead to increased numbers. This will increase in January with a new intake and two Reception tours have already taken place with positive feedback received.

8. Attendance

See slide 6 of the Headteachers report.

School attendance is once again up at 96.4% above the national average (NA) of 95.4%. Authorised absence is at 2.9% and unauthorised is at 0.23%.

There are 43 children under 90% attendance made up of 15 unauthorised term time holidays, 4 authorised term time holidays, 8 under 5's and the rest due to illness and medical appointments. None are on part time timetabling, and one pupil is dual registered.

Governor challenge:

Are the 8 under 5 children being included in the overall attendance despite not being legally bound to attend school 5 days a week?

Headteacher response:

It is the school policy to include all pupils, even those of non-statutory age.

Governor question:

What does 'dual registered' signify?

Headteacher response:

Dual registered means registered at WCLA and Cornerstones – the school has responsibility for safeguarding and Cornerstones should report any concerns to WCLA in the same way a member of staff would do.

Governor challenge:

Is this system robust?

Headteacher response

CE confirmed that she receives a secure weekly report on any dual registered child.

MF confirmed that the Trust has made it a priority to improve attendance figures across all schools.

CE confirmed that the introduction of the Forest School had made a huge impact on children who were anxious about attending school.

Governor question:

How are plans for the Forest School developing?

Headteacher Response:

The environment is improving with more space cleared. Ideally the school would like to employ an appropriately trained Forest School teacher as the current teacher is not full-time. She suggested governors arrange for an EYFS visit to see the facilities.

9. Behaviour

See slide 7 of the Headteachers report.

There had been one racial incident and one sexual assault. All parents had been notified and supporting actions taken including monitoring by the pastoral lead. There had been no repeat occurrences. There had been no exclusions.

10. Curriculum – Progress and Attainment

See Slide 8 of the Headteachers report.

Welfare**11. Safeguarding**

See slide 9 of the Headteachers report.

CE reported that all staff have completed annual safeguarding update training including safety online.

All new staff have received induction training including how to use CPOMS.

Policies have been updated in line with KCSiE 2024 and child friendly policies created following suggestions from SCiES.

MK had uploaded a Link Governor visit report – Safeguarding with the following comment attached:

- A key message was that all governors should read Part 2 of the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 statutory guidance particularly pp 77 - 209 which sets out our responsibilities as governors. There have not been any major changes to the document for 2024 but it will be reviewed again in 2025.

DH raised a concern regarding an incident relating to the Sports Coaching Group who were using the school as a venue in September 2024. CE confirmed that she had met with the company and was reassured that their safeguarding measures had been greatly improved. DH was satisfied that CE had responded quickly and effectively to the issue.

DH left the meeting at 18:11pm.

12. Wellbeing and Welfare – Students

See Slide 10 of the Headteachers report. This covered:

- The appointment of class ambassadors
- Introduction of yellow positive noticing tags
- Creation of a lunchtime hub in KS1 and KS2
- A new counsellor recruited (safe and sound technique)
- Provision of music therapy (Live The Beat)

Governor challenge:

Are the children aware of when, why and how they can access time with the counsellor and the circumstances when it would or wouldn't be advisable to speak to them?

Headteacher Response:

There are timetabled slots for a set of named children. The time slots are allocated on Mondays. The children can only access the counsellor during their time slot.

13. Wellbeing and Welfare – Staff

See Slide 11 of the Headteacher's report.

- Presentation given by vice principal and upper phase lead – recognising the impact of staff absence.
- Implementation of a parental code of conduct – draft available on GovernorHub.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

14. Policy updates

- Accessibility Plan 2024
- Behaviour & Relationships Policy 2024
- Child protection & safeguarding Policy (Model)
- Child Friendly Safeguarding Policy
- Digital Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Parent Guidelines
- Uniform Policy

These policies had attracted a large number of queries from the governors and approval was carried over to the next meeting.

ACTION: Queries on policies to be cleared and added to the agenda for the next meeting.

A discussion took place as to the procedure when governors are asked to approve policies which have been uploaded onto GovernorHub. Governors were cautioned about spending too long on small details in policies at LGB meetings and posting long edits on GovernorHub. AH explained to Governors that statutory policies, particularly those originating from the Trust, did not require such close scrutiny. He suggested that school policies requiring review be distributed to governors aligned to their link roles who can liaise with CE to discuss modifications. He advised that in some cases, policies could be converted into procedures which would make them easier to manage as they would not require mandatory reviewing.

Approval of policies can be recorded through GovernorHub.

ACTION: CE & AS to meet and agree a process for the scrutiny and approval of school policies.

ACTION: Clerk to submit a list of policies to AS & CE to decide which should be kept and edited and which have become obsolete.

15. Stakeholder Engagement - Parents/Carers

See Slide 12 of the Headteacher's report.

The following events had taken place:

- Friends of WCLA AGM to be held on 23rd October 2024.

ACTION: CE to update the governors on the attendance numbers for this at the next meeting.

- Parents sessions for EYFS/KS1 and KS2
- Parent survey conducted re smartphone use.

16. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community

See Slide 13 of the Headteacher's report.

The school had been involved in the following events:

- Harvest collection for Chance changing lives.
- ELF run scheduled in support of St Luke's hospice.
- EYFS visit St Mary's Church in Nantwich.

17. Communication to Trust

CE explained to the governors that due to an extended staff leave of absence she was currently covering for the deputy headteacher as well as her own position. Staff are resilient and responding well and agency staff have been brought in where cover was required but leadership was stretched.

Governors question:

How can we assist the school during this period?

Response:

At present there is not much to be done. Staff have been reassigned in the short term, but the budget is tight and there is no money to appoint additional relief staff. CE is meeting with the Trust's Director of Primary Education and AH confirmed he would also report back to the Trust on this matter.

18. Communication from Trust

- a) Feedback – Governors conference 2024.

Those governors who had attended found the conference to be a constructive and positive experience.

- b) Governors' conference 2025

Governors were encouraged to save the date of the next conference which will be held on Saturday 14th June with an emphasis on workshops for governors and a guest speaker.

19. AOB

See Slide 14 of the Headteacher's report.

SCHOOL TRIPS

CE has recommended a change to the forthcoming scheduled school trips. Due to the fact that Year 5 did not go on a residential there are two residentials proposed in Year 6. This slide outlined the two Year 6 trips, one to be held in Shropshire at a cost of £330.00 and a second in France at a cost of £480.00. The first trip will offer opportunities linked to the school's golden rules such as assessing risk (be safe) and respect for others (be respectful). It is an outdoor adventure with different activities and has been selected to ensure all learners can access a residential whatever their individual needs.

In addition, day visits will continue aimed specifically at those pupils unable or unwilling to go on the residentials as well as Eden Camp and many in-school activities are also planned.

CE confirmed that dates for the second trip were Monday 20th to Friday 24th October (the dates on the slide are incorrect).

CE will seek feedback from parents regarding the uptake of these proposals.

ACTION: CE to report back on the parental response to the proposed 2025 residentials at next meeting.

Governor challenge:

Has a risk assessment been carried out for the proposed coach trip (Culmington Manor)?

Headteacher response:

The residential is supplied as one package by one organisation (a travel agency aimed specifically at schools) which arranges everything including the risk assessments.

Governor challenge:

Will there be any impact on the proposed residential interfering with the SATS?

Headteacher response:

Experience has shown that these residentials improve the pupils' attitude to SATS.

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

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Thursday 6th February 2025 at 4:00pm Meeting Closed at 6:30pm

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 10/10/24

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Page 2, Item 4	Governors to report back to AH or SD on bespoke training that they would like to receive.	ALL	06/02/25
Page 3, Item 5	Staff Wellbeing link governor to appointed at next meeting.	AS	06/02/25
Page 3, Item 5	Upload document covering the role of the link governor.	Clerk	06/02/25
Page 3, Item 5	Link Monitoring schedule for 2025 to be included in agenda for next meeting.	Clerk	06/02/25
Page 4, Item 6	Discuss Educational Trips and Residentials (including PP)	AS/HH/DH	After meeting
Page 4, Item 7	Report back to governors on "dispersed" children	CE	06/02/25
Page 6, Item 14	Queries on policies to be cleared and added to the agenda for the next meeting.	ALL/Clerk	06/02/25
Page 6, Item 14	Meet and agree a process for the scrutiny and approval of school policies.	CE/AS	After meeting
Page 6, Item 14	Submit a list of policies to AS & CE to decide which should be kept and edited and which have become obsolete.	Clerk/AS/CE	After meeting
Page 7, Item 15	Update governors on the attendance numbers at the Friends of WCLA AGM.	CE	06/02/25
Page 8, Item 19	Report back on the parental response to the proposed 2025 residentials.	CE	06/02/25