

Local Governing Board to The Learning Partnership
KNUTSFORD ACADEMY LGB
MINUTES – Part I

Date: Monday 16th September 2024 at 4:00pm

Present:

Mrs D. Nicholl-Timmins Chair (DNT)
Mr D. Baxendale (DB)
Dr R. Taylor (RT)
Mr D. Walton (DW)

Apologies:

Mrs D. Baines (DMB)
Mr G. Kelly (GK)
Mrs A Sennett (AS)

In attendance:

Mrs K. Key (KKY) - Headteacher
Mr J Lawes (JLA)-Deputy Headteacher
Mrs A. Thatcher - (ATR) Deputy Headteacher
Mr C Leigh (CLH) - Assistant Headteacher
Mr C. Parr - (CPR) - Assistant Headteacher
Mrs H. Weigh-Williams (HWH) - Assistant Headteacher
Dr A. Howells (AH)-Director of Quality TLP

Clerk: Mrs S. Pomeroy

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy - The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed it was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from DMB, GK and AS. There were no additional Declarations of Interest made with the business of the meeting.

All papers and policies referred to had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, unless otherwise stated.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

Governors approved the minutes of the LGB held on 24th June 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising:

- Governors had previously requested that the Trust work with the Local Authority to ensure better outcomes for students who are permanently excluded from school. AH explained that this is beyond the remit of the Trust. However, regular meetings are held with the chair and CEO of the Trust and Cheshire East where the issue of support and provision for such pupils is discussed. Managed moves within the Trust's schools are being explored to minimise permanent exclusions. The Trust is also working with the Local Authority to increase the capacity of specialist places. For example, a SEND unit would be opened at Leighton Academy.
- It was confirmed that Trust Board minutes are now being uploaded to the Trust website.

3. Confirmation of Chair of LGB

AH explained that expressions of interest for the role of Chair of the LGB had been requested on Governor Hub and one expression had been received from DNT. All governors had been happy with the nomination and AH confirmed that she had been appointed as Chair for a period of one year, or until the first meeting of the LGB in the autumn term 2025. He further explained that it is not mandatory in the Terms of Reference for the LGB to appoint a Vice Chair. He would discuss the role of Vice Chair with KKY and DNT and circulate a message on Governor Hub. **ACTION**

4. Membership Update

There are currently two vacancies on the LGB and AH is in discussion with a potential candidate. The second vacancy would be highlighted at upcoming school events.

5. Declarations and Confirmations

The clerk thanked those who had already updated their declarations and confirmations and requested that the remaining governors complete theirs. **ACTION**

The clerk offered to help anyone who needed assistance to do this.

6. Governor Link Roles

Governor link roles were confirmed as:

Link role	Governor
Careers	TBC
Safeguarding	David Walton
SEND	Bob Taylor
Sixth form	David Baxendale
Behaviour	Davinia Baines
Most Able	Andrea Sennett
Quality of Education	Deborah Nicholl-Timmins

DNT would contact AS to ascertain if she was willing to take on the Careers link role. **ACTION**

7. Governor Monitoring Schedule 2024-25

KKY would arrange for the staff lead to contact the relevant link governor to arrange monitoring visits. **ACTION**

It was suggested that governors provide verbal feedback on monitoring visits at each LGB meeting.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

• Exam Result summary-sixth form and GCSE summer 2024 -KKY

The Headteacher shared photographs of students on results day and stated that it had been a wonderful day. **GCSE**

The Headteacher referred to the table, “*Core subjects: ‘Knutsford all’ comparison with 2023 and with national data set 2024*” and highlighted the following:

- The biggest gains were in Maths.
- The school’s results were significantly above national.
- Increasing the percentage of students achieving top grades had been the focus last year.
- The school had been at the top of the leader board in Cheshire East last year for % 9-7. This is slightly down this year but still represents outstanding results.
- Science had been an area of focus in 2023-24 and the department had been following an improvement plan. Results improved this year, particularly at the top end.

Q. Are the results for combined Science?

R. Yes, most students take combined science.

Q. Nationally, the Maths results has declined this year, so the school’s results were even better. What does the school attribute this to?

R. There has been a very strong focus on teaching and learning and on embedding the “Knutsford Way”. The Maths team is very strong with an excellent Head of Department, and they believe in the students.

- The top performing subjects were Further Maths, Dance, RS, Textiles, Design, Graphics, Physics, French, Business, and Art.
- The Areas for development are Biology, Computing, Construction, Geography, Music, GCSE PE and Spanish with Computing and Geography of most concern.
- ATH explained that data and development meetings are being held with Heads of Faculty. These meetings provide a clear picture around data, trends, interventions, and the impact for this academic year. Best practice is shared, and action plans produced. Detailed question level analysis also takes place and feeds into the lessons learned. The school is also working with other schools.
- The results in construction represent a “blip”. Smaller numbers of students take this course, and they would have found the examined written content the most challenging aspect.
- Progress 8 was +0.05 in 2023 and 0.03 in 2024.

Q. Is immediate action being taken to address concerns in Computing and Geography?

R. Yes, a very specific area in Computing has been identified. A thorough, expert review of the curriculum may be required, and the school will consider whether students are on the correct pathway.

Q. English is slightly negative on the subject progress index this year and it was green last year. Is the school concerned about this?

R. No, there were some staffing concerns last year, but new appointments have been made to strengthen the team and the school is confident that improvements will be made.

Year 13

- The school is very pleased with the outcomes.
- More students achieved higher grades: this had been a focus for the school in 2023-2024.
- The average grade increased from Merit to Merit + in Applied General and from C+ to B- at A Level.
- This was a weaker cohort than last year's, but the results are improved.
- The school is in the top 25% of all schools nationally for student progress at A Level.
- The school has made a significant improvement on the ALPS indicator from 7 last year to 3 this year. This is due to students achieving higher grades. (Alps receives the national DfE dataset and ranks providers based on the progress their students make from their prior attainment score.)
- Business Studies and Economics improved from 5 to 2 this year.
- The areas for development are Geography and Computer Science.
- KKY shared a table showing the top achieving students and their destinations.

Governors commented that a glossary of terms would be useful, and the school agreed to add this to the slides presented to governors going forward. **ACTION**

Strategic Priorities for 2024-25

KKY referred to page 12 of the Headteacher's Report which showed the strategic priorities for 2024-25. She highlighted the following:

- Consistency in teaching and learning is key.
- Addressing the attainment gap for PP and SEND students is a focus.
- The student development journey is a strong focus. The school day has been changed and this has allowed for more opportunities for students to support each other.
- Attendance is excellent.
- Parents had indicated that they want to come into school more often and so more in-person meetings and events have been planned. One event for each year group has been planned this year.
- Extra-curricular-the school will offer more activities in the extended lunch break, rather than after school.

Q. With regards to teaching and learning, have all the required changes been made to the structure of lessons?

R. Yes, a Teaching and Learning Handbook has been prepared and there are many resources available to support staff. The basics have been embedded and the school is now considering further enhancement.

Education

8. Admissions Year 7 and Pupil Numbers Year 8-11

- 226 pupils were admitted into Year 7.
- The school has worked with the Local Authority with an ad hoc plan to increase to 230 pupils. It is planned to formally increase the PAN to 230 in September 2025. Formal consultation is not required to increase the PAN.

Governors endorsed the plan to increase the PAN to 230.

- 12 in-year applications were received over the summer and 10 have been processed.
- KA-total number on roll stands at 1327.

9. Sixth form admissions-JLA

- A marketing plan had been put in place last year to increase numbers in the sixth form.
- The school was pleased to have admitted 160 students into Year 12 in September 2024. This represents a 72% increase in students in Year 12.
- There are 93 students in Year 13.
- 72% of eligible students from Year 11 joined the sixth form.

- 53 students did not meet the entry requirements.

10. Attendance-CLH

- There had been a positive start to the year in terms of attendance across all year groups.
- Parents had been informed of the changes in fines, as set out in the DfE document "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" (August 2024).

11. Behaviour-HWH

- There had been appositive start to the new academic year and there is a calm atmosphere in school.
- Standards and expectations had been reinforced with staff and students.
- The changes made to the structure of the school day had had a positive impact.
- The toilets had been refurbished and are open plan which discourages pupils from congregating there. Students appreciate the upgraded facilities.
- A Homework Club has been introduced with the aim of reducing the number of students on detention for non-completion of homework.
- Breakfast Club was trialled last year. It will be available on both sites and will provide a positive start to the day for students. Those entitled to PP funding receive a free breakfast.
- A new member of the Behaviour team has been appointed to provide support on corridors and to reinforce standards and expectations.
- There is a clear and consistent approach to the use of mobile phones.

12. Student destinations 16+ and 18+ JLA

Student destinations were detailed on pages 19-21 of the Headteacher's report.

- Year 13 destinations:
 - University-62%
 - Apprenticeship-2%
 - Employment/gap year-27%
- Year 11 destinations:
 - KA Academy Sixth form-62%
 - Other sixth from/college-33%
 - Employment-1%
 - Unknown-4%
- Of the 53 students not eligible for the sixth form, most went on to study vocational courses. The school provides coherent careers offers for these students.

Welfare

13. Safeguarding: CLH

CLH referred to the Safeguarding Report and highlighted the following:

- Five days of counselling would be available on both sites:
 - Swans 2 days at Westfield Drive (Yr7 & 8)
 - JDI 2 days at Bexton Road (predominantly Yr9-11)
 - MHST 1 day at Bexton Road (predominantly Sixth Form)
- Clare Storrow had resigned from her role as DDSL and had been replaced by Ashleigh Jones in the interim.

14. Welfare and Wellbeing- Students: CLH

See above for details of counselling services.

15. Welfare and Wellbeing- Staff: HWH

- Many of the initiatives from last year have been carried over into 2024 – 2025 but with a more strategic approach. A full year calendar of plans, events and opportunities has been prepared in advance and shared with staff.
- A half termly Staff Voice and Wellbeing meeting would be held, and all staff encouraged to attend.
- Behaviour Strategy Support Meetings would also be offered half termly to encourage staff to seek support and to provide opportunities to share behaviour management/improvement strategies. The aim is to reduce stress related to behaviour issues.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

16. Local Policy Approval

None for this meeting. The Trust is working on producing a policy schedule to ensure consistency between the schools.

17. Governor Training Update:

- Governors had been requested to complete the NGA Safeguarding course by 30.10.24 and the Prevent course by 30.12.24. Links to the training materials had been provided on Governor Hub.
- Governors were also encouraged to complete any further training linked to their personal interests or link governor role.
- AH reminded governors to update their training record on Governor Hub.
- The Trust Governance conference would take place on 14.06.25.

18. Stakeholder Engagement-Parents/Carers-JLA

See below.

19. Stakeholder Engagement-Wider Community-JLA

JLA shared a slide to address agenda items 18 and 19.

- There would be a parental, in person event for each year in 2024-25.
- Student Leadership – there would be community engagement opportunities and an emphasis on students modelling the school's values to each other.
- More use would be made of social media as a means of communication and sharing of good news stories.

20. Communication- to Trust:

None for this meeting.

21. Communication- from Trust:

Nothing further for this meeting.

AOB

- DNT highlighted issues with the school buses and some students being left behind outside school. CLH responded that he is working with Cheshire East and the bus companies to resolve the issues. The recent roadworks and road closures in the town had exacerbated the problem.
- DW and RT requested hard copies of the Governance Handbook. The school would provide these. **ACTION**
- Governors discussed developing a network of alumni.

The meeting closed 5:42 pm.

LGB meeting dates 2024-25:

Monday 13th January 2025

Monday 28th April 2025

Monday 30th June 2025

All meetings to take place in school at 4:00 pm

Apologies to the Clerk via Governor Hub or email to spomeroy@tlptrust.com

Minutes approved:

Date:

Summary of actions

Minute	Action	Action/Date
3	AH to discuss role of Vice Chair with KKY and DNT and issue a message on Governor Hub.	October 2024
5	Remaining governors to complete declarations and confirmations on Governor Hub.	October 2024
6	DNT to contact AS to ascertain if she was willing to take on the Careers link role.	October 2024
7	KKY to arrange for the staff lead to contact the relevant link governor to arrange monitoring visits.	October 2024
8	To add a glossary of terms to presentation slides for governors.	Ongoing
AOB	School to provide hard copies of the Governance Handbook to DW and RT.	September 2024.