



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

**KNUTSFORD ACADEMY LGB
Blended Meeting
MINUTES – Part I**



Date: Monday 7th March 2022 at 4:00pm

Present:

Mrs C. Millson (Chair)
Mr D. McGarvey (Vice Chair) (DM)
Mr D. Baxendale
Mr P. Woodhouse (Items 1-9)
Mrs V. Young
Mrs J. Padget (Items 1-12)

Absent: Mr R. Taylor (RT)

In attendance:

Mr J. Whittaker – Headteacher (HT)
Mrs K. Key – Deputy Headteacher (KKY)
Mr C Leigh – Assistant Headteacher (CL) (item 9)
Mrs N. Phillips – Director of Operations & Finance (NP)
Mr D. Twambley – TLA COO (the COO)

Clerk: Dr. A . Howells (AH)

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy - The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting, apologies were received and accepted from RT and quoracy was confirmed.
2. Declarations of Interest - There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.
3. The Minutes of the meeting of the KA LGB held on 23rd November 2021 uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting, were **approved**. Matters Arising – The Action Log was updated as noted thereon.
4. LGB Appointments - The Chair reported that three individuals had been identified as a potential LGB candidates. The recent skills’ audit had highlighted SEND as a priority skills’ set need, and this would be used to determine the selection of the preferred candidate. **ACTION:** Chair to follow up.
5. Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB – The COO reported the appointment of AH as the Director of Quality. The appointment would help provide additional senior capacity at Trust level and support governance development.

6. Admissions and Staffing Update

6. Admissions update - Paper 6.0 – 9.1 KA LGB Papers uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting, was **received**. The HT provided a chart that summarised the current student population by year group. **It was reported that** Current Y7 numbers were 218. Applications for Yr 7 entry in 22/23 remained strong, with the 220 intake target expected to be met. The admissions process was still ongoing, with the latest position indicating 600+ applications of which more than 260 were placed as first choice. This was the largest number seen in recent years. 243 applications had already been removed/declined and 25 “intention to appeal” had already been lodged.

- **Governors queried the impact of this on local communities (in particular Wincham and Bowden), as well as school subsidised transport arrangements. It was reported that** the detailed breakdown of applicants by location was not yet available from the process, although assurance was provided by the HT that all applications would be treated fairly..

It was reported that Admissions for 22/23 entry into Yr12 (6th Form) was expected to deliver 120-130 students. More than 100 applicants had been received from current students in Yr11 and external interest remained comparable to high levels of the last couple of years. 6th Form entry in 23/24 was expected to increase further, fuelled by a larger Yr11 cohort (the School’s current Yr10 is the cohort leading school growth), and this highlighted the need to consider estate development and investment in 6th form facilities. **Governors noted and supported these ambitions.**

7. School Performance

7.1 Year 11 and Year 13 - Pupil performance. **The Committee received and noted the report on pupil performance in Paper 6.0 – 9.1 KA LGB Papers.** Projections, based on current tracking data, for the Yr11 cohort progress outcomes was provided.

- **Governors sought clarity on the underlying assumptions and modelling upon which the outcomes were built.** This was provided and assurance was achieved through an in-depth analysis of 5 years of historic cohort performance data. Key points that were highlighted during the discussion included: the unknown impact from Covid; the pattern and trajectory of progress mirrored that of previous cohorts; the current Yr11 cohort was demonstrating a higher profile at this time than previous cohorts; that final progress and attainment still had margins of error due to external examination board practices regarding standards and the application of grade boundaries. Nevertheless, current performance remained strong, although there was natural variation between subject cohorts.
- **The differences between Mathematics and English was challenged by Governors. Clarity was sought on an apparent under-performance of Maths at the December data collection.** The HT shared an analysis which highlighted that historical performance trajectories followed similar subject patterns to previous years. This gave leadership confidence that the current teaching approach and tracking methodology would deliver the expected end of year projections
- **Governors also challenged the breakdown between Pupil Premium (PP) and non-PP students. It was reported that** the school's gap of -0.18 was much closer than the typical national gap in the region of -0.46. The HT also reminded Governors of the school's overall Progress-8 PP attainment outcomes standing at +0.09.

7.1.1 Yr13 progress data was presented at the meeting. **It was reported that** the data would be updated after the next round of pupil assessments that would take place during March. Based on the progress measured during the autumn term, the current cohort projection was for A-Level students was 36.47 points which equated to a B-grade (B=35pts). This compared favourably with a national average of C+. Non A-level qualification cohort projection was 37.22 or Distinction+.

- **Governors queried the impact of Covid on this data.** It was noted that this was difficult to predict with any certainty, and the sector was still awaiting external guidance from exam boards as to how they would set grade boundaries in the formal summer examinations.

7.2 Staffing and Curriculum Update - Governors received the staffing and curriculum update report in Paper 6.0 – 9.1 KA LGB Papers. It was noted that 7 teaching posts were in the process of being recruited and that interviews were taking place for some roles this week. Candidate pools appeared strong. In parallel, some existing teaching roles had resulted in reduced hours.

- **Governors queried whether the reduction in hours still provided sufficient teaching/teacher capacity.** This was confirmed.

It was reported that the school had found recruitment and retention of domestic cleaners challenging, although a strategy of offering part-time work opportunities to 6th form students had resolved this. Governors supported this approach, as it offered additional skills and career development opportunities for the students involved. Appropriate employment arrangements were in place to underpin this approach.

8. Action Plans and Student Welfare

8.1 Behaviour - Governors received a detailed graphical breakdown of behaviour within the school, which was distinguishable by year group. It demonstrated that overall behaviour within the school was good, and that monitoring data suggested it was 1.5 points above the target. **It was reported that** the variation between cohorts followed the typical pattern, as did the data provided on merit/demerits awarded, with Y9 offering the poorest rates. Senior leadership had enhanced its monitoring of this group. One aspect being closely monitored was any impact that Covid may have had, resulting in delayed social and behavioural maturity. Governors were updated on SEND arrangements with a new SENCO recently appointed which would result in increased capacity.

- **Governors sought assurance that work was being undertaken to support mental health and wellbeing, for both staff and students. It was reported that** the SENCO role would contribute to the work undertaken for students, whereas additional for support arrangements had also been put in place for staff through the Trust and access to external resources.

8.2 Attendance - Governors received the latest attendance data. It was reported that absence continued to follow historical patterns between year groups. Although attendance had been suppressed due to the pandemic, the school's attendance rates at 90.4% compared very favourably (+2.8%) to national data. The

data for PP and Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) students was lower than the school average (at 82.0% and 81%). Leadership was mindful that unapproved absences might rise due to family holidays being taken, and therefore was monitoring this closely and issuing penalty notices. A focus was being placed on poor and persistent attendance students, with additional tracking arrangements introduced, to identify earlier intervention opportunities to prevent further declines in attendance of these vulnerable groups.

8.3 School Improvement - The papers published on Governor Hub provided an update on the School improvement priorities. This was noted. The Chair asked for a more detailed presentation on each of the priority areas, including the impact of the actions taken and listed in the papers, to be provided at the next meeting by the respective SLT leader responsible. **ACTION: HT/SLT.**

9. Safeguarding

9. Governors received in Paper 6.0 – 9.1 KA LGB Papers, a summary of actions that had been taken on safeguarding and a statistical update on safeguarding numbers. Governors were advised that numbers had not changed. Actions were ongoing although a particular focus had been on wellbeing and mental health. This included a draft updated antibullying policy for Yr22-23 which was currently undergoing consultation with parent and student focus groups. Leadership training and capacity had strengthened, with 3 staff trained at L3 standard (which was ahead of the 2025 requirement for 2 SLT members to be trained). The promotion of good mental health was a strategic priority currently being taken forward. Leadership would continue to work with the Link Governor between meetings on the actions being taken forward.

10. Future Meeting Administration – A report by AH

10. Paper 10.0 Future Meeting Administration uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, was **received. It was noted that** this work would be ongoing and its purpose was to ensure that Governor time and resources were maximised and deployed to greatest effect to underpin effective governance. Governors remarked that current arrangements worked well and the principle of sharing good practice across the trust was welcomed. Enhancements proposed would be supported and the Chair welcomed the continued collaboration work with the governance team for agenda setting and support in ensuring LGBs fulfil their responsibilities as laid out in the scheme of delegation. The Chair was very mindful of meeting times and its impact on staff wellbeing. Governors were invited to provide further comment directly to the Clerk or via the Chair.

11. Policies

11. No policies were considered at the meeting. **It was noted that** work was taking place at Trust level to manage more actively policy version control and approvals.

12. Finance Update

12. Paper 12.0 – KA – P12 Management Accounts 2021, Paper 21.1 KA Income and Expenditure Reports P5(1), and Paper 12.2 Capital Spend KA March 2022 uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting, were **received.** The reports indicated a favourable expected outturn surplus of approximately £220k. **It was reported that** the performance was due in part to additional funds to support Covid recovery activities. **The COO reported that** the current position enabled some upfront investment in staffing, and also supported the longer-term strategy to strengthen reserves in order to fund forthcoming estate development.

- **Governors asked if, following the audit and Board ratification, if the final outturn figures for 2020/2021 were now available .** COO reported reserves' levels were currently of the order of £1m.

Governors were provided with details on capital allocations, noting that the CIF allocation was awarded to support the ongoing work on roof upgrades. The School's outturn for AY20-21 was reported in the Trust's Annual accounts and was £1,044k. A link would be shared via Governor Hub.

It was reported that budget planning for 22/23 was about to commence, although the HT had already undertaken preliminary work on staffing costs. Governors, mindful of energy inflation and the impact that the Leisure Centre might have on this, were keen to ensure costs could be recharged or recovered in a timely fashion.

13. Trust Support

13. The COO summarised the support provided in the areas of Finance, Human Resources, Estate Planning and School Improvement. School improvement include core elements for all Schools (e.g. SEND reviews) and other support linked to operational need. Service Level Agreements were being developed by the Trust and would be shared with schools in due course.

14. Matters to Share with the Trust Board and 15. AOB

14. Nothing to report.

15. Nothing to report.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Monday 20th June at 4:00pm **Meeting Closed 6:00pm**

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

Action Log – Post March 2022 Meeting		
Action and Item Number	By Whom	By When/Complete
4. The Chair will follow up on the three individuals who had been identified as a potential LGB candidates. The recent skills’ audit had highlighted SEND as a priority skills’ set need, and this would be used to determine the selection of new governors	Chair	As soon as appropriate
8.3 The HT/SLT will provide a more detailed presentation on each of the priority areas, including the impact of the actions taken and listed in the papers.	HT/SLT	June LGB Meeting
12.0 Link to TLA financial accounts to be placed on governor hub	DT	As soon as appropriate
November 2021 Meeting		
6. The COO to prepare a supplemental capital spend report.	COO	Complete March 2022
8.1 Exploration into whether the questions set for the Retrieval section of lessons can be provided to parents to assist them in supporting their children.	SLT	Complete March 2022
11.1 NP will send out a note to Governors to ascertain interests in joining the Admissions’ Appeals’ Panel.	NPS	As soon as appropriate
14.3 Work placement and career development videos will be shared online with parents and JP will provide ICT information to the school.	SLT/JP	As soon as appropriate
From Part 2 – Work will be undertaken with parents and the school community to raise awareness of the schools’ success and achievements	SLT/LGB	June LGB Meeting