

Local Governing Board (LGB) to
The Learning Partnership



**Wistaston Church Lane Academy
Minutes – Part I**



**Wistaston Church Lane
Academy**

Date: 12th October 2023 at 4:00pm

Governors Present:
Audrey Skidmore (AS) - Chair
Mike Finnigan (MF) – Vice-Chair
Holly Hulett (HH)

Apologies:
There were no apologies received and no absences noted.

In attendance:
Cathy Elsley (CE) - Headteacher
Dr Allan Howells (AH) – Director of Quality

Clerk: Sharon Dutton (SD) - Entrust

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy

The meeting opened at 4:15pm and was confirmed quorate.

AS welcomed all to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves to the rest of the group. Dr Allan Howells (AH), Director of Quality at The Learning Partnership (TLP) was in attendance to facilitate the recent transition of schools from the Learning for Life Partnership to TLP and to support governing boards within the Trust. He outlined the priorities each Local Governing Board (LGB) within the Trust should be looking at:

- Educational standards performance
- Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)
- Community engagement
- Accountability, performance and support
- Monitoring visits

He confirmed that finance and employment are no longer seen as part of the LGB's remit. It was hoped that whilst standardisation should be achieved across the Trust in terms of, for example, data and reports, each establishment would still retain their unique values.

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising – 06.07.2023

The following items from the action log from the minutes of the meeting on 06.07.2023 have been completed or superseded and will not be carried over to this meeting's action log:

Minute Ref	Action	Status
2	Governors to update their annual register of interests on GovernorHub.	Completed
4	LGB attendance of meetings	Superseded
4	The Chair to share links to TLP Governance Handbook	Completed
6	Exclusion panel training	Superseded
6	Section 175 - safeguarding	Superseded
6	Sharing sports premium statement with members	Superseded

6	Budgeting	Superseded
6	Trust estates management meeting	Superseded
10	MF schools visit report	Completed
16	Offer of fruit in Key Stage 2	Completed
18	Dates for 2023/2024 meetings	Completed

The minutes of the LGB meeting held on 6th July 2023 were approved.

3. Membership and Effectiveness Update

AS confirmed that Anna Bickerton (parent governor) and Lesley Meaney (community governor) had resigned from the LGB with effect 21.07.23 and 19.07.23 respectively. She thanked them for their contributions.

It was confirmed that the maximum LGB membership is 9 and the minimum is 3 and it was agreed that the recruitment of an additional parent governor and 2 governors from the community would be ideal. It was pointed out that a governor who was also a parent could be recruited as an appointed governor if required. AH confirmed he is currently investigating various leads and methods to identify and recruit governors from the community.

AH confirmed that elections for parent governor would only be needed should more than the required number be put forward.

All governors terms of office have been updated on Getting Information About Schools (GIAS) so that the end date of the term of office aligns with 31st August of the respective year.

Governors agreed to undertake a skills audit to help inform governor recruitment and training needs.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

There being no other candidates for election AS was unanimously voted in as Chair of Governors for a further 12-month term. In addition, AS agreed to the special educational needs & disabilities (SEND) link governor role.

There being no other candidates for election MF was unanimously voted in a Vice-Chair of Governors for a further 12-month term. In addition, MF agreed to take over the safeguarding governor role.

Self-review

A summary of school visits with priority areas had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. This needs to be updated to include MF's most recent reports. It was noted that there are large gaps in some areas and that reading, writing and phonics need prioritising.

CE assured the governors that it was not necessary to go into great depth for each of their lead subjects but should only investigate those areas which they felt may be a problem. She suggested they use the School Improvement Plan (SIP) guidelines outlined in slide 4 of the Headteachers report.

It was agreed that governors should focus on the following areas within lessons:

- HH - Oracy
- AS – Personal, social & health education (PHSE)
- MF – Writing

To this end CE shared the subject leads for each of the governors to liaise with.

ACTION: Governors to communicate with all leads before the end of the autumn term 2023.

HH asked if TLP could assist her with some training on how to assist the school as a governor in preparation for an impending Ofsted visit. There is an online course available on NGA entitled "Preparing for Ofsted – what governors and trustees need to know". AH encouraged governors to investigate the wide range of training resources freely available on the NGA, GovernorHub and Entrust platforms.

ACTION: Governors to update their training records on GovernorHub including any scheduled training.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

5. Vision, Values and Ethos

ACTION: Governors deferred this to next meeting.

6. Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Nothing to report.

7. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The Headteacher outlined the SIP in slide 4 of the Headteachers report. She had highlighted two focus areas within each of the following:

- Personal development
- Quality of education
- Leadership and management
- Behaviours and attitudes
- Effectiveness of early years foundation stage (EYFS) provision

Governors noted and endorsed the SIP priorities for 2023/2024.

Education

The Headteachers report to the governors was received in the form of a power point presentation. It was also shared on GovernorHub. CE apologised for the brevity of the report and explained that she had not been able to prepare anything more substantial as she was so new to the school. However, the Headteacher noted that she had been and continues to be supported well by the Trust throughout her induction.

It was reported that the completion of the new nursery building was on target and CE confirmed that she did not wish to rush the process of commissioning the new facility until it was completed fully, as the pop-up nursery was working very effectively. There was no intention of increasing nursery numbers to the pop-up nursery at this stage until the building was fully operational. She reported that the fire engine access issue had been resolved since the preparation of her report.

The Headteacher had attended one inset day at the beginning of term and was impressed with the commitment of the staff both to each other and to the pupils. She was encouraging more continuous personal development (CPD) and promoting increased collaboration and smoother transitioning between classes.

Governor challenge:

Who is the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) lead?

Answer:

The headteacher replied that Anne Willington is currently the school's SENCo lead.

Governor challenge:

How often is the staff handbook updated?

Answer:

The headteacher informed the governors that it was yearly and was currently out of date. It required quite a lot of attention and after discussion it was agreed the current one could be used as a guide but must be updated soon. CE would provide feedback for the next meeting.

ACTION: Headteacher to update governors on progress of staff handbook update.

Paper Data analysis summer 2023 and forecasts was received. Governors noted the pupil attainment outcomes for 2022-2023.

8. Admissions and Pupil Numbers

It was reported that there were 427 pupils currently on roll with 10 pupils having joined and 1 pupil having left since the summer 2023 term. The leaver had joined a faith school and the joiners were all pupils transferring from local schools. The added numbers were a challenge and the school was over published admission number (PAN).

9. Attendance

ACTION: Governors will review the pupil premium strategy at the next LGB meeting.

It was reported that unauthorised absence was very high due to term time holidays which parents were seemingly willingly paying fines for. The Headteacher and staff continued to work with families to reduce unauthorised absence and improve attendance. The use of fines would continue where appropriate.

10. Behaviour

It was reported that there had been a temporary exclusion due to a pupil vaping on site and a suitable presenter was due to visit the school this term to explain to the pupils the dangers of vaping. It was confirmed that exclusions should not involve the LGB with only a report submitted by the Headteacher as a recording of such.

It was also reported that 1 pupil was on a reduced timetable.

11. Curriculum – Progress

The Headteacher felt that there were generally many areas within the school that were working very successfully but that the school body lacked cohesion and she was very keen to achieve this. She observed that many of the pupils were somewhat introspective and her vision was to better prepare them for the outside world and for them to understand their role within it and their effect upon it.

12. Curriculum – Attainment

As noted in slide 9 of the Headteachers report.

Welfare

13. Safeguarding

As noted in slide 10 of the Headteachers report.

Governor challenge:

AS asked the Headteacher to clarify the relationship between the barred list and the single central record (SCR).

Answer:

The Headteacher confirmed she would seek advice from human resources (HR).

ACTION: Headteacher to seek clarification from HR.

14. Wellbeing and Welfare – Students

As noted in slide 11 of the Headteachers report.

15. Wellbeing and Welfare – Staff

As noted in slide 12 of the Headteachers report.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

16. The Headteacher announced that many of the school's policies were out of date. CE confirmed that she would look at updating these as a matter of priority but noted that there existed a 12-month window within which to work. They would be presented to the LGB for approval as and when they were ready.

ACTION: Headteacher to update school policies where necessary

16d. Mobile Phone Policy

The school has a mobile phone policy but it needs to be reviewed to ensure it reflects current practice. It was suggested that the pupils themselves could have some input into this. CE advised the governors that lessons were planned for on-line safety.

ACTION: Headteacher to update mobile phone policy.

17. Stakeholder Engagement - Parents/Carers

As noted in slide 13 of the Headteacher's report. CE informed members that 14 interested persons attended the Friends of WCLA meeting which she was very pleased with. She noted that the weekly learning posters had been very well received and were an excellent way for parents to understand what their children were experiencing.

18. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community

As noted in slide 14 of the Headteachers report.

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. AOB

Governors were encouraged to communicate as much as possible on GovernorHub both formally and informally as the previous platform Basecamp is to be phased out by TLP.

AS thanked the Headteacher and congratulated her on achieving so much in such a short time.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Thursday 25th January 2024 at 4:00pm Meeting Closed at 6:10pm

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 12.10.2023

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Pg 3 Item 4	To communicate with all subject leads	Governors	Autumn term 2023 end
Pg 3 Item 4	To update training records on GovernorHub including any scheduled training.	Governors	Autumn term 2023 end
Pg 3 Item 5	To include deferred vision, value and ethos discussion on agenda for next meeting.	Clerk	25.01.2024
Pg 4 Item 7	Update governors on progress of staff handbook update.	Headteacher	25.01.2024
Pg 4 Item 9	To review the pupil premium strategy at the next LGB meeting.	Governors	25.01.2024
Pg 5 Item 13	Seek clarification from HR of the relationship between the barred list and the single central record	Headteacher	Autumn term 2023 end
Pg 5 Item 16	Update school policies where necessary	Headteacher	Within 12 months
Pg 5 Item 16d)	Update mobile phone policy	Headteacher	25.01.2024

ACTION LOG CARRIED OVER FROM MEETING OF 06.07.2023

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
6	Consider how to disseminate new golden rules information.	ALL	25.01.2024
6	Skills audit	ALL	Ongoing
6	Share subject lead monitoring timetable with governors	Headteacher	After meeting