

Local Governing Board (LGB) to The Learning Partnership



Summer 2 Minutes



Wistaston Church Lane
Academy

Date: Thursday 17th July 2025 at 6:00pm

Governors Present:

Audrey Skidmore (AS) – Chair
Sheridan Barnes (SB)
Anthony Buckles (AB)
Mike Finnigan (MF)
David Hastie (DH)
Holly Hulett (HH)
Benjamin Leighton (BL)
Gillian Loudon (GL)

Apologies:

Dr Allan Howells (AH) – Director of Quality – TLP

In attendance:

Cathy Elsley (CE) – Headteacher

Clerk: Sharon Dutton (SD) TLP

Governance and Administration

The following documents had been shared on GovernorHub in support of the meeting:

- LGB meeting minutes – 15th May 2025 – item no 2
- Headteacher's Report – July 2025 – item no Various
- Record of Governor Visit – Safeguarding; The Children's Voice – item no 10
- Record of Governor Visit – Pastoral - items no 11/12/13
- Parent feedback July 2025 – written responses – item no 16
- Parent Feedback Summary July 2025 – item no 16
- TLP Safeguarding report to LGB July 2025
- LGB Skills Audit 2025

1. Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations

AS welcomed everyone to the meeting which opened at 6:02pm. CE confirmed that due to the Year 6 Leavers event happening at the same time she would be intermittently absent during the meeting. SD confirmed that the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from AH. There were no declarations.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

- a) To approve the minutes from the last LGB meeting (15.05.25).
AS had been unable to confirm the minutes and would do so with SD after the meeting. It was noted that the minutes had been posted onto GovernorHub very close to the date of this meeting giving governors a reduced window for reading them.
- b) To review the action log from the previous meeting (15.05.25):

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Pg 2 Item 2	Liaise and plan safeguarding monitoring visit.	MF/DH	Complete - reports included in meeting documents.
Pg 2 Item 2	Send details of a prospective new governor to AH.	HH	Complete – governor appointed
Pg 4 Item 5	Escalate Chimney House (dispersed children) issue to the Trust for further investigation.	CE	Complete – Trust confirmed all appropriate actions taken; no further escalation required.
Pg 4 Item 7	Investigate hub access issue.	CE	Resolved - initial confusion due to communication breakdown, not capacity.
Pg 7 Item 16	Action the policy schedule.	CE/Clerk	Ongoing
Pg 8 Item 21	Continue to liaise on school trips.	DH/SB	Ongoing
Pg 8 Item 21	Reissue school visits summary to include details of categories of trips	CE	Complete
Pg 8 Item 17	Draft LGB parent survey on GovernorHub.	ALL	Complete

3. Membership Update

- a) To confirm any changes to the membership of the LGB and consider current vacancies on the board.

SD confirmed that as of the beginning of the academic term 2025/26 there would be vacancies for two appointed governors. Governors thanked MF for his outstanding contribution and support to the LGB and the school. A small gift was presented. MF expressed how pleased he was to be leaving the school in such good hands.

Governors were invited to consider nominations for the Vice Chair role during the summer holiday.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

4. Headteachers Report & SIP including headline data.

Due to the timing of the meeting there was no headline data available for discussion. CE explained to the governors that the SLT was experiencing challenges due to staff absence. Governors discussed the recent spending freeze imposed by the Trust which was impacting staffing and resources, and staff morale had been affected. CE assured governors that this was being felt across the Trust as well as nationally.

Governor question:

Can Friends of WCLA assist with raising funds for some in-school activities?

CE response:

Fund raising for in-school consumables is not part of the organisation's remit.

Slides 9 – 11 outlined the School Improvement Visit's priorities, actions required and progress to date.

Education

5. Admissions and Pupil Numbers

See Page 5 of the headteachers report.

Number of pupils currently on roll is 437. Nursery intake is increasing with 21 children enrolled for September (maximum is 26) and recruitment for qualified staff ongoing. Extended hours demand is impacting nursery capacity due to staffing ratios. There have been no new joiners since the last report and two leavers; one leaving the country and one moving to another local school.

September 2025 numbers are high for Swan Stars and have been extended to accommodate demand for contracts.

6. Attendance

See Page 6 of the headteachers report.

Attendance remains above national average at 96.5% (national currently at 94.5%). Authorised absence is at 3.2% (national 3.9%) and unauthorised is at 0.95% (national 1.6%). There are 27 children under 90% attendance (3 less than last report to governors). There is one pupil on a part time timetable and one child dual registered.

7. Behaviour (including suspensions and exclusions)

See Page 7 of the headteachers report.

There were no updates on incidents. Governors discussed Behavioural support, and the pastoral lead was praised for creating calm spaces and supporting emotional regulation.

8. Curriculum – Progress and Attainment

See Page 8 of the headteachers report.

Governors praised the school for its Key Stage 2 outcomes confirming a strong academic performance despite challenges. This is particularly impressive considering 10% of graduates are going on to specialist schools. They also noted improvements in Key Stage 1 results and significant results in MTC (Multiplication Tables Check) in Year 4. The Nursery is contributing positively to early development and governors noted the importance of measuring whole-child development beyond academic metrics.

9. School trips feedback

CE clarified that the recent beach trip had been cancelled due to coach availability and not to lack of funding.

A detailed discussion took place around:

- Effective communication with parents regarding cancellations or rescheduling of trips.
- Equity in trip access, especially for non-pupil premium families.
- A proposal for a clearer trip schedule at the start of academic year.
- Agreement in principle to support a 50/50 funding model for residentials for pupil premium pupils with 50% of funding coming from the Pupil Premium school fund and 50% contribution from parents. Educational visits will remain funded 100% for pupil premium pupils. Contributions will start in 2026–2027 (to give parents adequate notification). Governors are willing to review this again if there is evidence of significant parental push-back.
- The need for transparency and early communication to parents about trip costs and expectations to assist with planning

Governor question:

Who makes the decision that a trip is too expensive?

CE response:

The school makes the final decision. Educational trips are always prioritised over any others.
MF went on to explain that all school trips are risk assessed and assured governors that this is outside of their remit.

ACTION: It was agreed to drop the discussion of schools' visits from the agenda as governors felt they had examined this area in depth and had little else to contribute

DH left the meeting at 6:40pm.

Welfare

10. Safeguarding

See Page 12 of the headteachers report.

It was confirmed that the school had submitted the Section 175 audit report to SCiES.

MF and DH had conducted a safeguarding visit on 19.06.25 and uploaded their report onto GovernorHub. They confirmed they had checked the single central record.

A discussion ensued around digital safety with particular emphasis on the use of mobile phones/ tablets and smart watches and their impact on both pupils and parents. Governors suggested that insider tips could be included in the school newsletter to promote awareness of risks to parents. It was agreed that all policies effecting this area must be kept up to date on a regular basis. HH pointed out that the mobile phone policy on the school website was out of date despite it being updated with governors recently.

ACTION: SD to check on the status of this policy and liaise with CE.

11. Welfare and wellbeing – students

See Page 13 of the headteachers report.

- Governor visit conducted on wellbeing (see below)
- Emotional Literary Support Assistant (ELSA) sessions
- Lunchtime hub in KS1 and KS2
- New Safe and Sound councilor recruited

SB was congratulated on her Wellbeing Report from a visit conducted with the pastoral lead 08.07.25. Her report on both staff and students highlighted the following:

- Committed pastoral lead
- Improved learning environment
- Use of data for early intervention
- Staff wellbeing resources – more emphasis on staff accessing “Education Mutual” as a resource
- Staff culture and morale
- Key Stage differences in well-being perception - concerns from KS2 staff regarding resources and communication.
- Lack of supplies (as discussed in agenda item 4)
- Time constraints are particularly due to shared TA support.

A discussion took place around the staffing issues between the two Key stages.

ACTION: CE to engage with KS2 staff regarding their concerns.

Governor question:

In light of the financial situation is the Pastoral lead a guaranteed position?

CE response:

Yes, that position is safe.

CE went on to explain that planned restructuring and timetabling will assist with staff concerns in the new term.

Governor question:

Why has the school discontinued the use of the Sports Coaching Group?

CE response:

The school has made a financial decision to amicably end the relationship with the company now that a full-time sports coach has been employed by the school.

12. Welfare and wellbeing – staff

See Wellbeing report in agenda item 11.

See Page 14 of the headteachers report.

- INSET day afternoon dedicated to transition – this usually takes place after school.
- Extra transition events have allowed staff to feel more prepared for their new classes.

Governor Links and Training**13. Link Governor Monitoring**

- See SB's report as part of items 11 and 12
- MF/DH's report of 19.06.25 had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. See agenda item 10.

14. Governor Training Update.

- Mandatory Prevent and Safeguarding training mostly completed. (GL outstanding on Safeguarding)
- Suspensions and Exclusions training completed.
- **Biannual SCiES Safeguarding training scheduled for 3rd September 2025 (3:30–5:30pm). Governors were encouraged to attend and confirm via GovernorHub.**

ACTION: AB to update SD on his training records.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement**15. List of school policies requiring review.**

Governors discussed policy renewal and approval and how to streamline the exercise as efficiently as possible.

ACTION: CE/Clerk to action the policy schedule.

16. Stakeholder Engagement – Parents/Carers

The completed parental guidance document is to be shared at the start of the Autumn term.

The school has held a sports day and family picnic as well as end of year assemblies.

Governors discussed the results of the recently issued parent survey:

- Positive feedback on staff and pastoral care.
- Mixed responses on trips and communication.
- Governors to analyse themes over summer and develop action plans.
- CE to share positive comments with staff to boost morale.

17. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community

- Wistaston Community Fair and fancy-dress parade
- WCLA is now a member of eCAPH and Shavington school cluster.

18. Communication to the Trust

Governors expressed their concerns around school funding which was affecting morale within the school.

19. Communication from the Trust

a) Equality and Diversity Survey

As discussed previously.

b) Skills Audit

Completed Skills Audit had been uploaded GovernorHub. A generally [positive audit with the main weakness centring around governor experience.

c) Governors' conference 2025 - feedback

AB reported that the conference was excellent, particularly as a new governor. He thought it was insightful and a great opportunity to meet other and senior employees of the Trust.

d) Confirmation of 2025/2026 LGB meeting dates:

02.10.25

29.01.26

21.05.26

09.07.26

AOB

The being no further items to discuss, the Chair and headteacher thanked the Governors for their attendance and commitment.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Thursday 10th October 2025 at 4:00pm

Meeting Closed at 7:46pm

ACTION LOG FOR MEETING 17.07.25

Minute Ref	Action	By whom	By when
Page 3 Item 9	Schools' visits discussions to be removed from the agenda	Clerk	10.10.25
Page 4 Item 10	Check on the status of the mobile phone policy and liaise with CE.	Clerk/CE	10.10.25
Page 4 Item 11	Engage with KS2 staff regarding their concerns on SB's report.	CE	After meeting
Page 5 Item 14	Update SD on AB's training records.	AB	After meeting
Page 5 Item 15	Action the policy schedule.	Clerk/CE/ AS	After meeting