

Minutes

LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD OF THE LINK PRIMARY SCHOOL

15TH November 2018 at 6.00 pm at The Link Primary School

Attendees:

**absent*

Stephen Lawes	Chair/ OHCAT Trustee
Lilly Nwosu	Parent Governor
Laura Roberts*	Parent Governor
Lesley Nicolas	Vice Chair
Rachael Watson*	Governor
Jan Loughborough	Governor
Sandy Turner	Headteacher
Anita Clay*	Staff Governor
John Reilly	Governor

Also present:

Sue Denman	Deputy Head Teacher
Sarah Farncombe	Clerk
Norman MacDonald	Schools Business Manager
Susanne Wicks	OHCAT Governance Manager
Nic Andrews	Assistant Head

Absent:

Anita Clay
Laura Roberts
Rachael Watson

	Item	Action
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies for absence were received from Anita Clay, Laura Roberts and Rachel Watson. The meeting was noted to be quorate.	
2	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	
	Governors were welcomed to the meeting and introduced to Stephen Lawes (Trustee) who had been invited to Chair the meeting.	
3	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
3.1	There were no declarations of interest in the agenda.	

3.2	<p>Governors were reminded that for compliance purposes they should complete and return their annual declarations to of interest (pecuniary or otherwise) as soon as possible.</p> <p>ACTION POINT: Annual declarations to of interest to be completed and returned asap</p>	All
4	SKILLS AUDIT ANALYSIS	
	<p>Governors were reminded to complete and return the annual skills audit analysis and return to the office as soon as possible.</p> <p>ACTION POINT: Forms to be recirculated for completion and return asap</p>	All
5	CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS	
	<p>Governors agreed that the election of the Chair and Vice Chair should be deferred until the next term.</p>	
6	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting of 13th June 2018 were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate record. A copy was signed by the chair for filing.</p>	
7	MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA	
	<p>The action to have a demonstration of the assessment system will be carried forward.</p> <p>The remaining actions have been discharged or superseded.</p> <p>ACTION POINT: Governors requested to be given a demonstration of the assessment system immediately before the start of the next meeting.</p>	HT
8	HEADTEACHER'S REPORT	
	<p>a) Report</p> <p>The Head Teacher explained that the report circulated in advance of the meeting was in a new format. The information shown in yellow was for the meeting and that shown in blue is background information which will be useful for Governors in understanding the school better and can be read over time.</p> <p>The HT drew attention to the challenges there had been this term with the new intake (of 13 children) which had culminated in one child going through the exclusion process and two pupils in the process of managed moves.</p> <p><i>Governors asked whether it was just the three children who had been exceptionally challenging. They were advised that there were others with challenging behaviours but not to the extent that they were putting the environment and learning of others at risk. For them strategies, could and were being developed, as the staff get to know them better. However, as safety is paramount the needs of the three particular children cannot be met in this setting.</i></p>	

	<p>Since there was a good degree of stability and the information being presented was largely similar to that presented before, the HT felt that the most productive use of the meeting would be an interactive activity to develop the Governing Body and its ability to hold the executive to account effectively.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that to fulfil their core functions and hold the executive to account they need to have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. And as identified in the 'Heath Check' by David Scott it was important there was evidence to demonstrate 'challenge'.</p> <p><i>Lesly Nicolas arrived at 6.15.</i></p>	
	<p>b) DASHBOARD Taken as read</p>	
	<p>c) Big Picture thinking activity – Articulating school strengths and development areas</p> <p>Governors split into teams and were invited to explore the 5 main strengths and 5 priority areas for development by assigning statements written on cards to a Venn diagram (with those they were not sure about being placed in the middle). In their deliberations governors were able to consult the SDP, SEF and parent survey. Governors were asked to consider how they could justify how they arrived at their conclusion and what evidence they could draw on to support their view.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">  </div> <p>Questions Governors identified and statements arising from their deliberations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governors recognised the importance of child centred values at the school. Evidence from parental survey is overwhelming positive and reinforce parent school collaboration. • Governors found evidence that vulnerable pupils made more progress last year than other groups by using the summary assessment document. It was felt this was as a result of the pupil premium interventions. • Governors found it difficult to identify any groups of pupils that were underachieving. They were directed to the summary assessment data where they found that the SLD/ASD cohort made significantly less progress than other groups last year. Governors asked why this was. 	

The explanation was that these groups were taken by less experienced teachers because of maternity leave cover and whilst the offer in these classes was good it had not reached a level where pupils were able to make outstanding progress. Governors asked what the school were doing to tackle this situation and were told about the movement of more experienced teachers to these classes this year now former teachers were back from maternity leave. This was purposeful in order to rectify this anomaly.

- There was a desire for more training on understanding data, evidencing progress and knowing how different groups of pupils are doing.
- Teaching and learning was identified as a strength by all groups. Teaching is consistently good or better across the school. Governors found the evidence for this through the TES schedule.

There was some difference in thinking in groups about the impact of parent support. Some felt the parent survey suggested that parent support was outstanding. However some realised that a number of parents hadn't responded to the survey and wondered how the school ensured they had a knowledge of their views. Governors were guided to the school development plan that showed that there is a parent support plan to help develop stronger home school links with harder to reach parents. There was some debate in the different groups about the quality of the curriculum. Governors were guided to the SEF where they identified that the curriculum was broad and balanced but had missing elements or elements where the impact was not as clear. This area was then placed in the developments category. Governors asked who would be leading on this role. They were told that Nic the assistant head is developing a spiral curriculum to cover the health and safeguarding aspects of the curriculum and this fits in with the new Government health and relationship education strategy. It is a Governor responsibility to hold the school to account for this area of the curriculum in line with the National PREVENT strategy. Governors will be kept abreast through portfolio visits and future Governor meetings.

Governors questioned whether flat leadership was a strength. Some thought it was because the senior leadership have a cohesive vision and all have clear roles and responsibilities. Some governors wondered how the teacher role fits into leadership of the school. Governors were directed to the teacher action plans in the additional materials sent out. They were told that all teachers now have a responsibility to lead a whole school project or development area. They have received training on strategic leadership. The impact of their plans will be seen over the coming year. The consensus was to place this area of development in the middle of the circle, as evidence showed a mixture of strengths and areas to develop.

Governors were then talked through a pictorial version of the SDP which is used in staff briefings identifying the key priorities and areas for development. In the light of the presentation Governors then re-evaluated their Venn diagrams and discussed their questions with the HT.



The exercise was judged to be a success in meeting its objective in giving Governors a greater understanding of the 'bigger picture' and more clarity on the areas of strength and areas for development to enable robust challenge. Governors felt their increased knowledge will impact on their portfolio visits and ability to challenge more effectively.

9 GOVERNOR VISITS, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

9.1 Portfolio Reports

The portfolio reports for Safeguarding and Teaching and Learning had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

In discussing the reports Governors noted how for example the issue with the children with complex needs not making above expected levels of progress had been identified, addressed and evidence of impact recorded.

The remaining portfolio reports will be circulated by email and any questions answered.

9.2 Other visit reports

Governors were pleased to hear about the visits a Governor was making with her therapy dog. He is proving to be popular and helping a number of children gain confidence and be less frightened around dogs.

9.3 Governor training and development

None to report

10. FINANCE AND FUNDING

	<p>The Business Manager talked governors through the accounts summary, the notes to the accounts and balance sheet which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Points of note included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target of a £5k surplus had been exceeded with an outturn of £64k • A previous pension miscalculation had been managed with savings being made elsewhere • There had been an increase in income of £100k over budget which was offset by increased staff costs • The reserves of £930k at the end of the year exceed the target of having 90 days expenditure in reserve • The challenge this year will be managing the reduction in income due to the three students leaving • Agency costs have been unavoidable to support the new intake and will be managed 	
11.	PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS	
	<p>Governors received a verbal update from the Pay Committee. They heard how the Committee had been briefed on how the local and OHCAT policies had been applied to arrive at the pay recommendations and how the process was supported by a robust internal appraisal procedure.</p> <p>The Committee had been satisfied the system in place has been thorough and applied in a transparent and fair way. Accordingly they had been able to agree the recommendations. The awards will be paid this month.</p> <p>Governors commended the HT on the robustness of the process this year.</p>	
12	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
12.1	<p>Governors noted the following policies and procedures approved by the OHC&AT Board which they are able to access through the Governor portal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Administration of Medication and Prescribed Substances in College II. Admissions Policy III. Charging and Remissions Policy IV. Data Protection Policy V. Disciplinary Procedure VI. Equality & Diversity Policy VII. Grievance Resolution Procedure and Guidance VIII. Health & Safety Policy IX. Pay Policy X. Positive Behaviour Policy ACADEMIES XI. Positive Behaviour Policy OHC XII. SEND Policy XIII. Supporting Pupils in Schools with Medical Conditions Policy XIV. 16-19 Bursary Policy XV. Anti-Radicalisation Policy XVI. Assessment and Examinations Policy XVII. Asthma Policy 	

	<p>VIII. Critical Incident Business Continuity Plan XIX. Delegation of Duty Policy XX. Information and Records Retention Policy XXI. Safeguarding Supervision Policy</p> <p>There were no questions arising from the policy review.</p>	
12.2	<p>Local Procedures to approve Governors considered the 'Behaviour Procedure Appendix – Use of Safe Room' which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Governors appreciated the policy was needed so the room could be used appropriately in the light of the changing needs of the children (with high anxiety or aggression issues). Governors were also invited to take the opportunity look at the safe room at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>Governors discussed with the HT how in practice the room was being used and how successful it had been.</p> <p>Governors enquired as to whether the equalities statement and policies were working effectively in relation to one particular child with a protected characteristic. They were advised they were and the child was being actively supported.</p> <p>RESOLUTION: Governors approve the Use of Safe Room appendix to the Behaviour procedure</p>	
13	KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION- CHANGES FROM SEPTEMBER 2018	
	<p>Governors were given a comprehensive verbal briefing on the key changes to KCSIE by the Deputy Head Teacher. They were reminded the HT and Deputy HTs are DSLs and any concern, however small should be reported.</p> <p>Governors noted that all the relevant OHCAT policies have been updated to reflect the changes.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that further resources are available on the Governors portal.</p>	
14	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	None	
15	DATES OF NEXT MEETING	
	7 th March 2019	
16	CONFIDENTIALITY	
	None	

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Signed by me.....Chair on this 7th March 2019