

**DRAFT MINUTES
LINK PRIMARY AND LINK SECONDARY SCHOOLS
JOINT LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING ON
10 MARCH 2021 AT 6 PM VIA GOTOMEETING**

Present: Julia James (Chair)
Jane Gibbs (Vice-Chair)
Sandy Turner (Executive Principal)
Anita Clay (Staff Governor)
Dilma de Araujo
Jan Loughborough
Lesley Nicolas
Sameera Saleem (Parent Governor)
Jenny Sutcliffe

In Attendance: Nic Andrews (Assistant Principal, Link Primary)
Sarah Brooks-Watson (OHCAT Management Accountant)
Sue Denman (Deputy Headteacher, Link Primary)
Amanda Griffiths (Deputy Headteacher, Link Secondary)
Hannah Wallwark (Deputy Headteacher, Link Secondary)
Susanne Wicks (Clerk)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Karen Hayward sent apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i JJ welcomed JG as Vice-Chair of the LGB, appointed by the Board of Trustees on 22 January 2021.
- ii Governors noted there remains a vacancy for a parent governor from the primary school. The clerk and Principal will continue efforts to recruit a new parent governor.

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- i The LGB approved the minutes of the meeting of Link Primary School's LGB held on 18 November 2020. A hard copy would be signed at the earliest opportunity.

6. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

The clerk confirmed she had contacted governors individually about their forms and updated GovernorHub appropriately.

ST confirmed she passed on thanks to the staff on behalf of the LGB.

7A. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

ST presented her report, highlighting any priority areas, and welcomed comments and questions. Matters discussed are detailed below.

Pupil Matters (Primary School)

There will be fifteen pupils moving on the secondary phase at the end of this academic year, but it will not be difficult to fill the spaces. Assessments are currently taking place remotely, with high levels of interest. LB Sutton have commissioned another eight reception places, leaving just five to fill. In the last two days there have been two places accepted with funding approved.

Places for the PDA cohort remain in high demand and the outreach service continues to do well with each child being supported at home and in school. Unfortunately, the support in the community has been paused due to the lockdown. Some children have been out of school for some time, so families have welcomed a provision that can meet their child's needs.

A pupil was subject to an FTE in November and a planned move is being considered, due to lack of space and the risk the child presents to staff, four of whom have been injured. The child currently has 2:1 support, the cost for which is shared between the school and the local authority.

During the lockdown, between 12 and 23 pupils have attended most days and the rest have accessed a bespoke learning package at home.

Pupil Matters (Secondary School)

The PAN has recently been renegotiated with Sutton LA and will move from 51 to 58 in September 2021. Two free placement funding spaces have been approved in order to agree this change. The increase in PAN has been achieved by rearranging the KS4 and sixth form structure. The school receives new consultations every week.

During the lockdown there have been, on average, 21 students on-site every day, with others accessing a remote learning package, the uptake of which has been enormously high with every child benefitting high quality provision either online, in-school or via learning packs.

Staffing (Primary Staff)

ST described the challenge facing the school due to high numbers of staff (24) testing positive for Covid-19 since December. Some of those affected have had a phased return and levels of staffing have also been impacted by some injuries and some incidents of long-term sickness.

There has been a focus on the recovery curriculum and staff and student mental health. Staff have been amazingly resilient and the opportunity to be vaccinated has proved to be a morale boost and has impacted positively on sickness absence.

Staffing (Secondary School)

The school was able to operate almost normally in the autumn term, with bubbles in place, and managed to carry out most of the TES monitoring. The average score has moved to a 2a for first time which is a fantastic achievement, especially in the context of the pandemic.

In December, nine staff were diagnosed with Covid-19, at which point more stringent safety measures were imposed. Students are taking lateral flow tests in-school, shortly to be done at home, and ST praised HW for the amazing job she has done in carrying

out testing. The students must be tested three times by the school before they start to test at home

LN asked what the rate of vaccine take-up has been among staff and ST responded that it has been high at both schools, although some Primary School staff have refused to have it, and some are unable to have it due to recently suffering from Covid-19.

JJ asked if all of the long-term sickness absences at the Primary School were Covid-19 related and ST confirmed that they were not, giving further detail where appropriate.

CPD

The training plan was disrupted due to the lockdown which necessitated a shift in focus to health & safety training and monitoring. It is now back on track and being delivered virtually at both schools. Some CDP is being delivered jointly across both schools. At the Secondary School ST, AG and HW are leading on the development of a coaching culture to support teachers' development as leaders of their curriculum areas.

Health & Safety & Safeguarding

ST reported that there was a continued effort to ensure safety measures were in place to enable both schools to stay open during the lockdown. Early support has increased for families in both schools, reflecting the additional stress they have been under since Christmas. Although the number of pupils deemed at risk has remained stable, there has been an increased number of families needing support, and ST commended the work of staff in giving targeted and bespoke support to children and parents which has meant they have been helped quickly. She particularly flagged the work of AG, NA and SD in this area.

School Site Works

Governors were pleased to hear that site works at both schools have progressed during the lockdown. ST gave an update on plans for the Primary School playground and reported that the works to the Secondary School playground are more complex than initially thought due to the need for topographical surveys to establish if specialist contractors may be needed. However, it is still hoped that the works will be completed over the summer.

JL asked about plans for the use of the outdoor space and ST described what is to be provided in both schools. DdA asked about budget and ST confirmed that funds have been set aside for both, but there may be a need for fundraising to supplement the budget for the Secondary School works. More will be known once the surveys have been undertaken and quotes submitted.

School Development Plan

For both schools, ST detailed the key areas of progress. For the Primary School these include the PDA outreach service, the Covid-19 recovery, the success of the new leadership model and the continued commitment and work of Governors during such a challenging time. For the Secondary School, she flagged the development of the Link priorities and student-centred learning, and in particular how staff are thinking about each child's personal as well as academic development.

ST explained that almost all areas flagged Red are due to the impact of the pandemic.

LN asked for further details about GDPR Sentry and ST explained this is the software introduced across the Trust to ensure schools and services are compliant with regard to storing, handling and managing data.

Impact of the Curriculum

ST reminded Governors that the Secondary School is due to be inspected by Ofsted, but this will not happen until at least the Autumn term. As a follow-on from the session delivered at the last LGB meeting, HW delivered a short presentation to Governors on how teachers at the Secondary School monitor and evaluate the impact of the curriculum

ST noted how positive it is to have a system in place to assess the impact of teaching. She asked for SS's view of her understanding of the system and SS reported that she found it very comprehensive and beneficial as she could see her daughter's progress which provided a good starting point for discussion with her teacher.

JJ thanked HW for the informative presentation.

Reports received.

7B DASHBOARDS

Governors noted that any matters arising from the Dashboards had been covered in ST's comprehensive report.

8. GOVERNOR VISITS

A Portfolio Management

Governors received the reports which had been circulated prior to the meeting. JJ thanked everyone for their reports and asked if there were any comments or questions.

SS advised that Children's Mental Health Week took place from 1-8 February and this year's theme was "Express Yourself". She described some of the excellent activities arranged by the Secondary School and noted how some of them could continue to be used, especially those for children with anxiety. She also noted that she was pleased to be able to participate herself as the activities were delivered remotely via Zoom. SS described how engaged children were and thanked staff for their hard work. JJ thanked SS for her feedback, noting how positive it was to hear that staff continue to deliver so much during a challenging time.

B Other Visit Reports

None.

9. FINANCE AND FUNDING

Primary School

SBW summarised the current financial position of the school and the year-end projections. She noted that agency staff costs across both schools have risen due to the need for cover for staff sickness absence, but this has been largely mitigated by reduced spending in other areas.

SBW reported that at this point in the year, work is beginning on next year's budget and there will be further scrutiny of assumptions made about expenditure, some of which varied, both over and below the assumed amounts. She reassured Governors that both schools supply good information to support the process.

SBW advised that the school's financial health grade is Outstanding in all areas so there are no concerns.

Secondary School

SBW explained that income is higher than budgeted due to higher pupil numbers and the salary expenditure is lower than budgeted due to staff vacancies which have been filled by agency staff. She and ST have been discussing expenditure of the surplus, and it intended for some to be spent on extra-curricular activities when they can resume.

SBW explained that the Covid grant will be spent on tutoring or mental health support. The school also received a grant to cover the increase in teachers' pensions was which not expected. She confirmed that the school's financial health rating is Outstanding.

SD confirmed that the Pupil Premium grant will be spent on the recovery curriculum and supporting wellbeing. The Sport and PE Premium will be largely spent on the works to the Primary School playground. Teachers are being asked for suggestions on how the Covid Catch-Up grant can be used to best effect. HW reported that at the Secondary School the Pupil Premium will be spent to provide bespoke support for those learners who qualify. For example, a laptop has been purchased for one and the school hopes to arrange swimming lessons for another.

Reports received.

10. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

No activities to report.

11A. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Governors noted the policies and procedures approved by the OHC&AT Board at their meeting on 22 January 2021 all of which are available on [GovernorHub](#).

11B Admissions Procedures

ST introduced the Admissions procedures for both schools and highlighted the key changes. She noted the need for the procedures to be more rigorous now as both schools receive so many consultations.

ST reported that for the Primary School, the following criterion has been added:

“A delay in cognition can be a part of a child’s learning need and presentation, although the child will be expected to have a level of understanding of language on entry of 12 months plus as set out in the EYFS foundation stage curriculum”.

ST sought the views of Governors on whether a similar criterion should be added for admissions to the Secondary School as well. She noted that in the face of so many consultations, a decision may need to be made about giving priority to children with needs similar to that of the current cohort, or if it should be altered to align with the needs of the Primary School cohort, many of whom cannot work independently. No change has been made for September 2021 admissions, which has led to 10 children from the Primary School being refused a place in the Secondary School which has been very difficult for parents, although the school is working alongside the local authority to find the appropriate place for them. Governors agreed to discuss this issue at their next meeting.

Action: Clerk to add to the agenda.

12. OHC&AT GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTATION

Governors noted the revised governance documentation approved by the OHC&AT Board and available to view on [GovernorHub](#).

13. OHCAT STATUTORY ACCOUNTS

Governors noted the 2019-20 Statutory Accounts were submitted by the deadline of 31.01.21 and are available to view on the [OHCAT website](#).

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No matters were raised.

15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 23 June 2021 at 6 pm.

16. CONFIDENTIALITY

No items were deemed confidential.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm

Signed: _____ **Julia James, Chair**

Date: _____

Summary of Actions

Clerk to add consideration of changes to secondary school admissions procedure to the agenda for the meeting on 23.06.21.	SW
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