

EASTGATE ACADEMY**Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body (LGB)****Wednesday 8th March 2017 at 5.15pm, held at Eastgate Academy**

Governors Present: Louise Gayton (Acting Chair), Brian Elflett, Val Creasy, Elanor Westbury, Richard Brown, Ann Higgins, Claire Gosling, Linda Hothersall (Principal).

In Attendance: Duncan Ramsey (Chief Executive), Linda Mahoney (Business Manager), Deborah Hinks (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies from Melanie Wellard were received and accepted.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16.11.16 and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th November 2016 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Acting Chair. It was acknowledged that the intended January meeting had been cancelled due to the Ofsted inspection.

Matters Arising

Agenda item 5 (Page 2): Linda Hothersall stated that she had uploaded the Safeguarding Audit to Governor Hub.

Chief Executive, Duncan Ramsey, asked the Principal to review the current safeguarding procedures at the start of the day to ensure that all adults on the premises had a legitimate reason to be there. Linda Hothersall stated that a member of the SLT was always present on the gate and there was only the one entry gate available. The Chief Executive reiterated the need for the Principal to be confident in the academy's safeguarding procedures and for the staff member on the gate to have absolute confidence to stop and challenge anyone of which they were uncertain.

Agenda item 5 (Page 2): Ann Higgins stated that she had a meeting scheduled with Fiona Whyman on April 25th to discuss plans for informal approaches to pupils and staff about safeguarding.

Agenda item 6 (Page 3): It was agreed that performance targets would be discussed under agenda item 5.

Agenda item 8 (Page 4): Linda Hothersall suggested that Amy Weston could train governors on Pupil Asset at the next meeting or at a separate

training session, as required.

Agenda item 19 (Page 7): Linda Hothersall stated that she was still in discussion in relation to providing 'The Key for Governors'.

Agenda item 19 (Page 7): In the absence of the Chair Mel Wellard, it was agreed to carry forward the item on Raise Online training.

MW to consider offer of Pupil Asset training session by Amy Weston.

MW to arrange Raise Online Report training for governors.

It was agreed that all other matters arising had been satisfactorily addressed or were brought to the meeting under the following agenda items, as indicated in the Action Point Summary circulated prior to the meeting.

3. Ofsted Report and Post Inspection Action Plan

On behalf of the LGB, the Acting Chair, Louise Gayton, offered huge congratulations to the Principal, the staff and the pupils for the Outstanding Ofsted grading. On behalf of the Trust, the Chief Executive, Duncan Ramsey expressed his sincere appreciation of the efforts of the Principal, staff and governors which had resulted in such a fantastic achievement. He highlighted the fact that Eastgate Academy was one of only seven schools to have ever moved from Special Measures to Outstanding in one Ofsted cycle. Governor, Brian Elflett, highlighted the parents' contribution in ensuring their children attended school, to which the Principal responded that she had indeed acknowledged the role of parents in the ensuing newspaper articles.

The Acting Chair invited the Principal to outline the post-inspection action plan. The Principal highlighted the comment on page 2 of the Ofsted report, namely the fact that the academy needed to develop its reading curriculum for the most able pupils so that their attainment at key stage 2 was raised. She stated that this comment was reflected in the existing Academy Development Plan, which would continue in operation.

Governor, Richard Brown, asked which other key priorities the academy was working on. The Principal responded that higher-level attainers in Reading, Writing and Maths were a priority. She stated that attainment in reading had fallen last year because the academy was concentrating on writing but that steps were being taken to address this, including a great deal of work on oracy.

The Chief Executive, Duncan Ramsey, asked how confident the Principal was that the loss of Assistant Principal Peter Howard could be managed. The Principal stated that Amy Weston had taken over from Peter Howard as Assistant Principal and that Luke Smith had benefitted from being trained by Peter Howard so the departure was well-managed.

4. Behaviour & Attendance Report on progress against targets and the impact of the new inclusion & behaviour system

Referring to her brief report (attached to the Minute Book), the Principal, Linda Hothersall, stated that attendance was lower than desired but staff had asked the pupils for help with this. A new reward system was being discussed in association with House Captains and Deputies, who would in turn speak to the School Council.

The Acting Chair, Louise Gayton, asked what the figures were for authorised and unauthorised absence and how this compared to targets. The Principal stated that she did not know these figures but would ensure they formed part of the next behaviour and attendance report. Louise Gayton asked what could be done about the raised levels of absence. The Principal stated that much of it was down to illness and bugs and thus rigorous cleaning of the academy had been undertaken. Governor Ann Higgins asked how 'pressure times' were managed to ensure all children washed their hands before lunch. The Principal stated that this was well-managed by having separate times for batches of children to go in and out of the washing area.

LH to include authorised & unauthorised absence in the next behaviour & attendance report.

Governor Elanor Westbury asked whether there was a particular year group or pupil group that was responsible for a higher level of absence. The Principal stated that there was no specific pattern and that Pupil Premium children's attendance matched that of their non-Pupil Premium peers.

Governor Val Creasy requested that % Persistent Absence (P.A.) figures were included in future reports together with the actual number of P.A. pupils and an indication of P.A. by vulnerable group.

LH to include % Persistent Absence figures including actual number & by vulnerable group in the next behaviour & attendance report.

Looking at the exclusions data provided by the Principal, governors wanted to know whether those excluded were disadvantaged pupils and over what time period these exclusions had taken place. Linda Hothersall responded that the children had not been disadvantaged and that one exclusion was current, one had been pre-Christmas and one post-Christmas.

The Principal gave an overview of the academy's procedures in the light of exclusions including the plans and reviews in place to ensure the reintegration of the affected pupils.

Governors asked the Principal about the number of inclusions, to which she responded that the new booth had been used three times by two different pupils in Year 2 and one in Year 5. The Acting Chair asked what the impact of the inclusion process had been. The Principal stated that

the impact had been good initially but two weeks further on, behaviour had deteriorated again with pupils returning to inclusion so the matter was being reviewed. Governors asked what was being done after the initial inclusion to improve behaviour, to which the Principal replied that the class teacher discussed the offending behaviour with the pupil.

Referring to the cancelled meeting, Governor Richard Brown asked when the working party to discuss the inclusion room and new behaviour system was next meeting. The Principal stated the group would meet on March 13th. The Principal and the Link Governor, Val Creasy, gave feedback on their discussions about House Points and making the rewards system more transparent to parents.

5. Academic Performance Report on progress against targets

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, presented the *In-Year Progress Profile Report*, as attached to the Minute Book, highlighting the fact that 24% of pupils were working at depth in Reading in Year 6 and that the extra intervention sessions were working.

Governor Ann Higgins asked when the extra sessions were held, to which the Principal responded that Reading was twice a week and that one extra Maths sessions was in-school time and one was out of school.

The Chief Executive wanted to know when the updated figures would be available, to which the Principal replied it would be the end of term.

Governor Richard Brown noted that Year 5 appeared to be the highest-performing Year Group and asked whether any lessons could be learned from this Year Group and applied to other Year Groups. The Principal stated that the current Year 6s did not push themselves in the same way that the current Year 5s (or indeed Year 4s) did and the academy was looking at why this was so.

The Acting Chair, Louise Gayton, highlighted the 36% of Year 2 pupils who were well below age-related expectations in Reading. The Principal stated that she was confident current strategies would ameliorate the situation and that deployment of Years 1 and 2 Teaching Assistants (TAs) helped. Governor Elanor Westbury enquired as to how the Principal knew her deployment of TAs was enough. The Principal explained that she met with the TAs on a weekly basis to discuss the pupils needing to make better progress.

Referring to the *In-Year Progress Profile for Disadvantaged Pupils*, the Principal pointed out that there was no difference in achievement between them and their non-disadvantaged peers. Governor Val Creasy wanted to know what had made the biggest impact in terms of Pupil Premium expenditure. It was agreed that the Principal would bring this to

LH to bring to the next meeting details of the PP expenditure having the greatest impact.

the next meeting.

The report was noted.

6. Impact of initiatives for Most Able pupils in Year 6

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, was invited to expand upon the report circulated prior to the meeting (as attached to the Minute Book). The Acting Chair, Louise Gayton, asked what 'out of the box thinking' was, to which the Principal responded it was the photography group she ran which encouraged pupils to see things from a different perspective and look at things differently.

Governors wanted to know what other strategies were in place to help the Most Able. The Principal stated that the way in which questions were asked in the Reading SATs was being analysed and that staff were writing questions in the style of the SATs. She reported that the extra Maths classes were popular and that arithmetic and times tables were being pushed. The Chief Executive asked what was being done to address the issue of reading 'pace' as highlighted last year. The Principal stated that steps were being taken to address this matter.

The Acting Chair asked how many of the Most Able pupils were disadvantaged. The Principal stated that it was 50/50 with slightly less non-disadvantaged pupils in Writing.

7. Staff Focus

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, presented her *Staff Focus Report*, as attached to the Minute Book, explaining how she worked with the Trust HR Department to pick up on staff absences.

She highlighted that there were 8 members of staff on targets of '95% and above' who were being monitored. Governor Elanor Westbury asked what percentage of staff this was, to which the Principal responded that it was 8 staff out of 60. The Principal added that 4 of these 8 had now met their target and of the 4 who had not, 2 had good reasons. She would be meeting with the two members of staff remaining of concern later in the month.

Governor Elanor Westbury wanted to know what support measures were put in place. The Principal stated that she was usually fully aware of each individual's personal circumstances and issues and so personalised support was put in place; this could be arranging pickup lifts, altering part-time hours to suit medical appointments or purchasing new chairs or keyboard supports to ameliorate medical conditions. She stated that once the academy had done all it could to encourage attendance, the HR Department was called into action.

The Acting Chair, Louise Gayton, enquired about staff turnover, to which the Principal responded it was very low. Governor Brian Ellett asked how the current student teachers were progressing; the Principal stated that they were doing very well. She added that Luke Smith had been recruited in this way and that as Eastgate Academy had no current vacancies, she had offered students to other Trust academies such as Nelson Academy. Brian Ellett asked whether the academy was still working with Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), to which the Principal replied that they were still working with BGU but plans to set up their own hub (and 'grow-out-own') were in motion in liaison with Jo Barkham of BGU and Chris Clayton of Hampton Highgate 'Schools Direct'. The Chief Executive, Duncan Ramsey, suggested the Principal involved the Trust's secondary academies to see how it would also impact on them.

8. Financial update

Business Manager, Linda Mahoney, presented the Management Accounts to the end of January 2017, as attached to the Minute Book.

The report was noted.

The Business Manager stated that there were no current CIF projects but that the new CIF allowance would be available from April 2017. Governors wanted to know what was on the academy's 'wish-list'. Principal Linda Hothersall reported that planning permission for the Meditation Suite had come back but was smaller than desired and would not allow for 15 pupils to lay on the floor; alternative plans were therefore in place.

The Principal raised the prospect of having a school dog. The Chief Executive stated that the Principal was free to present a researched proposal on having a school dog.

The Chief Executive congratulated the Business Manager, Linda Mahoney, and the academy on its financial management in terms of its reserves (securing its financial position) and the percentage of income spent on payroll, meeting Trust targets.

Governor Brian Ellett asked whether government budget funding cuts were affecting academy finances. The Business Manager stated that Pupil Premium funding was down because fewer Pupil Premium children attended the academy than had previously. Governors briefly discussed the changes in the admissions profile that may result from the recent Ofsted rating. The Chief Executive mentioned the Fair Funding proposals might present a challenge though the effect was likely to be minimal.

9. Website focus

Governors wanted confirmation that the academy's website was compliant with all relevant legislation. The Principal stated that the

website was fully compliant, adding that the Ofsted inspection team had visited the website first and the sections which needed updating had been completed. Governors asked whether parents used the academy's Facebook page to communicate with the school. The Principal stated that parents did communicate via the Facebook page and were responded to. She informed governors that staff were mindful of the fact that 40% of the parents did not have internet access and therefore there were no plans to move towards an e-based contact or payment system.

10. Feedback from Link Governor Visits/ Research Groups

Link Governor, Brian Ellett, reported on his Health & Safety visit pre-Christmas. The Business Manager, Linda Mahoney, informed governors that Gallagher's latest Health & Safety Report had now been received, details of which would be brought to the next meeting.

Clerk to add Health & Safety Report to next meeting.

Governor Richard Brown asked in what capacity he could serve as a Link Governor. The Principal stated that governors were usually assigned to an area within the Academy Development Plan and/or a Working Party (Research Group). She agreed to email him with several ideas for him to consider.

LH to email RB with Link Governor areas to consider.

The Chief Executive, Duncan Ramsey, asked whether there was a Working Party (Research Group) focusing on raising attainment for the most able pupils in reading. The Principal stated that one of the Assistant Principals was looking at this; she agreed to email governors with details of this Working Party's membership.

LH to email governors with details of the 'Raising attainment for the Most Able' Working Party membership.

Governor Claire Gosling enquired as to how often Link Governors were expected to visit the academy, to which the Principal responded once or twice a term.

Governor Elanor Westbury reported that she had met with Governor Ann Higgins to discuss how they could share responsibilities for the Safeguarding Link Governor role. It had been decided that Elanor Westbury would check the Single Central Record; they would share between them the proposed staff and student interviews mentioned under agenda item 2 and then meet to discuss any issues.

11. LGB self-evaluation arrangements

It was noted that no further comments had been forwarded to the Chair in relation to the Governor Development Plan and that the LGB's self-evaluation arrangements would be carried forward to the next meeting.

Clerk to add LGB self-evaluation arrangements to next meeting.

12. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors & Consideration of items to be added to the Risk Register

There were no items to be brought to the attention of the Board of

Directors.

There were no items to be added to the Risk Register.

13. Any other business

There was no other business.

14. Date & time of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 10th May 2017 at 5.15pm.

The meeting closed at 7:00pm.