

EASTGATE ACADEMY

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body

Wednesday 30th September 2015 at 5.15pm, held at Eastgate Academy

Present: Melanie Wellard (Chair), Louise Gayton, Ann Higgins, Brian Elflett (Parent Governor), Wendy Darrell (Staff Governor), Linda Hothersall (Principal).

In Attendance: Linda Mahoney (Business Manager), Deborah Hinks (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2015/16

The Clerk indicated that Melanie Wellard was the sole nominee for the role of Chair and that she had accepted the nomination.

It was proposed by Louise Gayton, seconded by Brian Elflett and unanimously agreed to elect Melanie Wellard as Chair of the Local Governing Body for 2015-16.

It was decided to postpone the election of Vice Chair until the November meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies from Guy Pyle, Jeremy McManus, Duncan Ramsey and Alan Evans were received and accepted.

Apologies were also received from Danielle Flores-Yallop.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

4. Update of Register of Business & Pecuniary Interests

The Clerk reminded governors of the need to review their declarations in the Register of Business & Pecuniary Interests and update them where necessary. She advised governors to read the Guidance Documentation which she had supplied alongside their Declaration Form prior to the meeting to ensure that their entries were complete.

The Clerk received updated forms from Louise Gayton, Linda Hothersall, Ann Higgins, Brian Elflett, Wendy Darrell and Danielle Flores-Yallop. She confirmed that she had previously received an updated declaration form from Mel Wellard.

Governors to complete & return their Register of Business Interests Forms.

5. Annual Review of Terms of Reference and Forward Work Programme

The Clerk presented the revised Terms of Reference of the Local Governing Body (LGB), as attached to the Minute Book. She explained that the Terms had

recently been amended by the Board of Directors in order to address changing Ofsted criteria and focus. She drew attention to specific reference to PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) and citizenship as well as the promotion of modern British values and strategies to avoid radicalisation.

The Clerk then presented the Forward Work Programme she had drawn up for 2015/16, as attached to the Minute Book. She indicated that it reflected the key responsibilities of the LGB and would form the backbone of the Committee's agendas over the coming year, though refinements would be made, as appropriate.

Governors noted the revised Terms of Reference and the Forward Work Programme for 2015/16, for which the Clerk was thanked.

6. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2015 and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2015 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

P1: In Duncan Ramsey's absence, the Book Scrutiny training session would be incorporated into the November meeting.

P1: Governors were reminded to contribute to the Governor Fund as agreed in an earlier meeting.

P2: Linda Hothersall indicated that she would forward details of the presentations on writing interventions to the Clerk in due course.

P4: The Clerk reminded governors to complete their LGB self-evaluation forms.

P4: The Clerk reminded governors to update their Skills Audit forms. She informed governors that she had received forms from Brian Elflett, Guy Pyle, Linda Hothersall, Mel Wellard and Wendy Darrell.

P5: Brian Elflett reported that he had completed the online Prevent Duty training highlighted by Mel Wellard at the last meeting. The Clerk indicated that she had added the training reference to GovernorHub for ease of access. Governors were encouraged to complete the module. It was reported that Ann Higgins and Mel Wellard would be attending the Safeguarding (including Prevent Duty) training at CWA on November 4th.

Clerk to add Book Scrutiny training session to November agenda.

LH to forward details to Clerk of presentations to be given to LGB on writing interventions.

Governors to complete the LGB self-evaluation form and the Skills Audit.

7. Principal's Report to Governors

Principal, Linda Hothersall, presented her Principal's Report, as attached to the Minute Book, which included the 2014/15 performance results, KS2 SATs analysis, targets for 2015/16, a progress report on the Academy Development Plan, the academy's SEF Report and the Core Offering document. She agreed to upload the Core Offering document to GovernorHub to compensate for the two corrupted pages.

LH to upload the Core Offering document to GovernorHub.

Governors asked whether the introduction of the Mastery Curriculum was a threat to the academy's progress, however the Principal indicated that it was not and that its introduction simply required staff and pupils to become familiar

with the new terminology of the Mastery Curriculum.

The Trust's 'Challenge and Support' package (outlined in the Core Offering document) was noted by governors.

Governors challenged the Principal over how realistic the academy's targets were. The Principal responded that the targets were high but achievable. Governors raised concern over the fact that those achieving Level 5 or above in Reading at KS2 had declined since 2014. The Principal pointed out that whilst this was the case, the academy was still above the national average of 50% at this level. Governors agreed they would be monitoring the situation over the coming year to ensure the trend did not continue.

The Principal reported that the gaps between Disadvantaged and Non-disadvantaged pupils were minimal. She put forward that the figures for EAL were significantly affected by the circumstances of four pupils in particular, who had been in the UK for less than 12 months to date. She informed governors that the DfE did not require the academy to include these children in their results report so suggested she would provide figures minus these pupils forthwith.

LH to provide results minus the 4 EAL pupils who have been in the UK less than 12 months.

Governors asked for a future meeting to include a presentation on the evaluation of intervention measures at the academy. They were particularly concerned about writing and the steps being taken to ameliorate the situation.

LH to consider arranging a presentation to LGB on the evaluation of writing interventions.

Turning to the SEF document, The Principal outlined that the academy was self-evaluating as 'Outstanding' because a large majority of pupils started at the school with skills and abilities considerably below those typical for their age yet by the end of Year 6 almost all pupils reach the expected level, with a high proportion exceeding it. Governors concurred with this view.

Looking at the Academy Development Plan (ADP), governors noted that the original intention to introduce a nursery was no longer part of the overall plan and sought the reasons behind this. The Principal explained that the academy had thoroughly debated the prospect of an on-site nursery but had concluded that the project was not financially viable. The academy would be concentrating instead on improving outcomes at EYFS.

Governors briefly discussed the proposed building alterations and improvements in ICT provision at the school. Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell, offered to introduce governors to the new 'Tapestry' Application, which had been introduced for the Reception Class in a bid to further engage parents. She indicated the intention to roll the system out to other years in due course.

Referring to the ADP actions being taken to improve leadership and management, governors noted their own responsibility to carefully monitor overall effectiveness, including within the area of Health & Safety. The Principal informed governors that a new Trust-wide Health & Safety system had recently been put into place, which was very user-friendly and that she would ensure that Link Governor, Brian Elflett, had access to it.

LH to provide BE with access to the new Health & Safety system.

8. Staff Training

Principal, Linda Hothersall, drew attention to the Staff Training document, as attached to the Minute Book, indicating that this contained all the training

undertaken during 2014/15.

The Chair, Mel Wellard, asked whether the Trust's internal training run by Duncan Ramsey ought to be incorporated into the plan. The Principal explained that this training was not included in this particular document as the Consultant Principal's training was usually aimed only at the SLT and was considered more akin to coaching and mentoring than training. The Principal agreed to make a separate note of this.

9. Ratification of Selected Policies

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, presented the following policies to governors, explaining the Local Governing Body's role in localised policy ratification and how these localised policies fitted alongside the overall Trust policies:

- ❖ Anti-bullying Policy
- ❖ Equality Statement
- ❖ Equality Objectives (4 yearly).
- ❖ Behaviour for Learning Policy including Home-Academy Agreement
- ❖ Curriculum Policy
- ❖ Annex 1 of the Trust's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- ❖ Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- ❖ Learning Policy.

Referring to the Equality Statement, governors noted that 45% of the academy's pupils were Pupil Premium students and enquired as to how that compared with other schools in the area. The Principal indicated that it was similar in neighbouring schools. Governors sought further clarification over the percentage of the academy's population deemed to have Special Educational Needs (SEN). The Principal explained that the academy was currently working on their SEN list but would update governors as soon as the information was updated.

LH to forward % SEN details to governors once confirmed.

Governors wanted to know whether the promotion of modern British values was linked to the Code of Conduct. The Principal indicated that British values were embedded into all aspects of conduct.

Having reviewed the policies, it was proposed by Mel Wellard, seconded by Brian Elflett, and unanimously agreed to adopt the set of policies as presented.

10. Review of Annual Pupil Premium Impact Statement

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, drew governors' attention to the academy's Annual Pupil Premium Impact Statement, attached to the Minute Book. She pointed out that a one point difference in APS equated to one term's learning.

LH to arrange for the approved policies and Pupil Premium Impact Statement to be published on the academy website.

Governors reviewed and noted the Pupil Premium Impact Statement and recommended it for publication on the academy website.

11. Self-evaluation of the LGB

The Clerk reminded governors of the need to complete and return their self-evaluation forms in order for the Local Governing Body to review its performance over the past year.

She informed governors that she had received LGB self-evaluation forms from Brian Elflett, Louise Gayton, Ann Higgins and Mel Wellard.

12. Review of Link Governor Roles and Remit

Referring to the Link Governor listing, as attached to the Minute Book, Governors noted the areas assigned to them and how these connected to the Academy Development Plan. Governors asked whether the Principal felt there were any other areas for which she would like a Link Governor. The Principal indicated that there were none.

13. Finance Update/Management Accounts

Business Manager, Linda Mahoney, presented the Management Accounts to August 2015, as attached to the Minute Book, explaining that the accounts had recently been approved by the Trust's Finance & Resources Committee. She added that the academy was currently working on its 2014/15 'year-end' accounts process and that the first 'month-end' for 2015/16 had not yet been completed. Governors would however see the Management Accounts for 2015/16 at the November LGB meeting.

Governors queried the situation with regard to UIFSM. The Principal explained that there would be a government clawback of funds if take-up of the meals proved to be less than expected.

The Chair, Mel Wellard, congratulated the academy on behalf of the governors for its excellent leadership and management in keeping within budget.

14. Governor Training

The Clerk advised governors that the Trust had now subscribed to the Norfolk Governance & Leadership Service (NGLS) Training and Development Programme. Issuing the Training Programme booklet for 2015/16, she informed governors that they could book on to any of the included courses themselves via GovernorHub online. She pointed out that this NGLS training would run alongside the Trust's own internal training sessions.

15. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors/Consideration of items to be added to the Risk register

The Clerk explained that this standing agenda item offered governors the opportunity to raise any issues which they thought ought to be specifically brought to the attention of the Board of Directors, including any items needing to be added to the academy's Risk Register.

No matters were raised in this instance.

16. Any other business

Paperwork

Governors discussed the prospect of cutting down on the amount of paperwork issued to parents, particularly where they had more than one child at the school. It was suggested that more use could be made of email. However, the Principal explained the pitfalls of alternative approaches, stressing the need to ensure everyone had the opportunity to be kept informed.

Trips

Linda Hothersall updated governors on the planned trips for 2015/16.

Moderation

Linda Hothersall indicated that the academy was now being charged for NCC moderation.

The Meadow

Linda Hothersall updated governors on the use of the meadow donated by Dow Chemicals. Mel Wellard suggested that she could work with CWA Faculty Heads to arrange for CWA students to work on a project, if required.

Life Skills Groups

Linda Hothersall informed governors of the various activity groups undertaken at the academy including 'Cooking on a budget', the 'Gardening Group' and 'Computer Group'. She also stated that the prospect of working with St. Nicholas' Chapel was still on the horizon.

17. Date & time of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 18th November 2015 at 5.15pm.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.