

EASTGATE ACADEMY

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body

Thursday, 10th July 2014 at 5.15am, held at Eastgate Academy

Present: Melanie Wellard (Chair), Jeremy McManus (Vice Chair), Guy Pyle, Louise Gayton, Brian Elflett (Parent Governor), Wendy Darrell (Staff Governor).

In Attendance: Peter Howard (Upper KS2 Phase Team Leader), Mary Farr (Business Manager), Alan Evans (Director of Finance, CWA Academy Trust), Alan Fletcher (Director of Achievement, CWA Academy Trust), Deborah Hinks (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies from Linda Hothersall, Ann Higgins and Danielle Flores-Yallop were received and accepted.

The Chair announced that Danielle Flores-Yallop had been appointed as the new Parent Governor.

Alan Evans was delayed in arriving.

2. Declarations of Interest

Brian Elflett and Louise Gayton each completed a Register of Business and Personal Interests form for the academy's records.

DFY to complete Register of Business Interests Form.

There were no declarations of interests pertinent to the agenda items under discussion.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2014 and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2014 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

- (i) It was acknowledged that the request to cross-correlate outcomes by parental support had been superseded by the Assertive Mentoring scheme discussed under Agenda item 6.
- (ii) Danielle Flores-Yallop will be forwarding her DBS number in due course.
- (iii) Mel Wellard handed Mary Farr the Safeguarding File to forward to Ann Higgins.

DFY to forward DBS number to MF.

Alan Evans joined the meeting.

- (iv) Mary Farr circulated the proposed list of Link Governors to be discussed under Agenda item 8.

- (v) Mel Wellard had written to the Trust CEO regarding letters of appointment and awaits feedback.

The Chair ascertained that all the other action points had been satisfactorily completed or were being addressed under the agenda items to follow.

4. SATs Results

Upper KS2 Phase Team Leader, Peter Howard, tabled the recently-received SATs results (subject to confirmation), announcing that the academy had more than achieved its targets. The results disclosed were as follows:

2 Levels of Progress: **Reading** 100%; **Writing** 98%; **Maths** 100%

Reading **Level 4+** 97%; **Level 5** 72%

Writing **Level 4+** 93%; **Level 5** 7%

Maths **Level 4+** 97%; **Level 5** 9%; **Level 6** 27%

SPAG **Level 4+** 68%; **Level 5** 39%

He indicated that the academy expected this success to continue, predicting that at least 95% of the next cohort would achieve Level 4+ in each area - Reading, Writing and Maths.

Congratulating the academy on the excellent results, governors asked the Phase Team Leader to specify to what he attributed this success. Peter Howard posited that the improvements were the result of

- the introduction of Read, Write Inc.
- the simplified, streamlined approach to the teaching of Maths
- inculcation of the new approach to teaching & learning
- better, sharper analysis of data to pinpoint pupils for intervention
- focussed reflection on Ofsted findings.

Parent Governor, Brian Elflett suggested that it would be helpful for parents to be given an indication of their child's progression over the Year Groups, in order that they can see whether their child is moving in the right direction. Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell surmised this could be done. Peter Howard added that it would also be beneficial to outline not only where their child is but where he or she ought to be. Such a "flight path" would contextualize the information and, it was hoped, secure more parental engagement in the child's "journey".

PH/WD to consider informing parents of the 'progression' made by their children vis à vis targets.

It was agreed to bring Agenda item 6 forward at this point so that Peter Howard could present the Pupil Premium Update before leaving for another appointment.

5. Achievement Tracker/Narrowing the gaps

Achievement Director, Alan Fletcher presented governors with an overview

of the 'headline outcomes' in the latest Achievement Tracker, explaining that the dataset was a work-in-progress, still to be confirmed with staff.

He signalled a huge increase in the percentage of pupils at Eastgate achieving RWM 4+ (Expected Level) from 44% in 2013 to over 80% this year, compared to a National Average of 76%. The outline dataset indicated

	2013	2014	National Average (2013)
Re 4+	84%	98%	86%
Wr 4+	56%	96%	82%
Ma 4+	69%	98%	85%

Moving on to discuss the Level 5+ figures, the Achievement Director singled out the 'Writing' result, highlighting the need for governors to address the narrowing of the gap henceforth between Reading and Writing.

Wendy Darrell postulated that the impact of the writing element of the Read, Write Inc. scheme would manifest itself at a later stage because the first term and a half concentrated on the 'phonic' reading element, which the writing element then proceeded to build upon.

Governors expressed their delight that the academy was now above national average on key measures, suggesting it would be a good idea to publicise the academy's success both to parents and the wider community, particularly in light of the most recent 'official' publicity being the last Ofsted report.

MW to discuss publicising the Academy's success with LH & David Pomfret.

The Achievement Director suggested that governors consider making a representation to bring the next Ofsted inspection forward. He also stated that he would be finalising the dataset, adding context and commentary, following his meeting with teaching staff on Monday 14th July.

LH & MW to consider requesting an early Ofsted inspection.

Drawing the governors' attention to additional datasets, Alan Fletcher indicated that there had been strong in-year progress in reading and that whilst progress in writing is good, attainment in general still needs focus, particularly as Pupil Premium (PP) children struggle in writing. The gaps between PP and non-PP children are slight rather than huge, but require attention, especially in view of the fact that any issues with writing are compounded by the number of PP pupils.

Challenging the Year 5 and Year 6 figures proffered by one of the datasets, governors queried how the projected outcomes for 2015 might reasonably be achieved. The Achievement Director outlined his intention to work with the Principal and Phase Leader to ensure that current projections are sound.

Whilst acknowledging all the advantages that data analysis provides, governors were keen to emphasise the fact that beneath the data lie real pupils who need to be identified and helped to succeed. To this end, it was agreed that it would be useful to have a report outlining what lies behind the data.

LH to consider producing a 'pupil-level' report outlining what lies behind the data.

Governors reiterated the immense credit and congratulations due to staff and pupils for the results and progress made and underlined the importance of sustaining the momentum by all involved.

6. Pupil Premium Update

The Phase Team Leader, Peter Howard, explained the background to Eastgate Academy's visit to Pakeman Primary School in London, winners of the national Pupil Premium Award 2013 (*Report attached: Eastgate Pupil Premium Case Study*). He explained that the Pakeman staff had demonstrated what had and had not worked for them regarding Pupil Premium strategy.

The Phase Team Leader went on to disclose the initiatives Eastgate Academy had decided to adopt, which included

Assertive Mentoring: whereby each child has a profile folder which incorporates the child's academic tests and targets, homework, attendance, attitude to learning, parental contact and so on. This information is used to support analysis of how the child is progressing and what next steps must be taken and is referred to at parents' meetings to demonstrate age-appropriate achievement.

Intervention TA's: placed in classrooms as a third teacher to help focus on particular pupils. TA's are being upskilled to encourage confidence and increased engagement with the process.

Work Streaming: a focus on making teachers more efficient by use of planning and assessment meetings, held on Fridays between 2pm-4pm to identify which pupils need intervention the following week and the result of measures taken.

Targeted Parents' Meetings: for parents whose children are not making good progress, in which agreements will be reached to promote the pupil's attainment.

The Chair, Mel Wellard, enquired about Pakeman initiatives not taken up by Eastgate, which Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell, explained were largely down to the fact that, with Deputies for each Phase, the Pakeman Leadership Team had more time to 'manage'. However, it was felt that success would come from the commitment to Assertive Mentoring together with effective use of available data.

Governors sought details of any feedback from parents on the new strategies. Peter Howard asserted that parents were very supportive and increasingly prepared to be engaged.

Business Manager, Mary Farr, drew attention to the *Pupil Premium Case Study* in the previously-circulated reports, and an additional tabled poster entitled "*An Optimistic School*" (*attached*), welcoming governors' comments. It was intended that copies of this poster would be laminated and displayed around the school.

Governors suggested that an additional bullet point "*Leading by example*" should be added to the poster.

LH/MF to add "Leading by example" to the "Optimistic School" poster.

Mary Farr informed governors that the Case Study report was a work-in-progress and that additions to the 'Actions Taken' would be made. She also pointed out that further details on Pupil Premium funding and its impact will be published on the website in due course.

The Chair suggested that further analysis of the Pupil Premium data would be addressed at the next meeting.

Clerk to add Analysis of PP Data to next agenda.

Peter Howard left the meeting at 5.55pm.

7. Behaviour and Attendance Report

Business Manager, Mary Farr introduced the Behaviour and Attendance Report (*attached to the Minute Book*), outlining the number of exclusions over the year and the level of attendance. She pointed out that the percentage of pupils with less than 80% attendance should read 1.1% rather than 0.74% but that this included a pupil 'not of compulsory school age'.

She highlighted that the academy had targeted the EAL parents who had previously been wont to taking their children out of school for periods of time to visit their country of origin. Parents had been informed that pupils will be taken off the roll if they are away for more than 20 days.

Acknowledging the overall attendance figure of 95.7%, governors requested comparative figures from similar or cluster schools in order to help assess impact of actions taken.

LH to investigate comparative attendance data within Cluster or similar schools.

8. Link Governor Monitoring Feedback

Brian Elflett, Link Governor for Buildings and Health & Safety, talked governors through his report following his June visit to the academy, in which he had met with Site Manager, Sean Walker and Principal, Linda Hothershall. A copy of his report is attached to the Minute Book.

He reported that he had been impressed with arrangements for fire drills, in particular the ability to evacuate the building in under 4 minutes and the Class Name pictures being placed on the fences to facilitate registration. It was ascertained that funding had been sourced to replace the rotten playground equipment noted in the report.

The other governors enquired whether there is a programme-of-work over the Summer. Mary Farr indicated that such plans included decorating and replacing curtains with blinds.

The Business Manager circulated a list drafting proposals to fill vacancies for Link Governor roles. Further details were sought on a number of the roles. It was agreed that it would be useful (for governors now and for succession

Ann Higgins to report on Link Governor visit at next meeting.

planning) to work towards a 'job description' for each role, based on the Academy Development Plan and developed by the governors themselves as they fulfilled the role.

LH & MF to consider a draft job description for each Link Governor role.

Whilst acknowledging that the draft list needed to include a role for the new Parent Governor, all governors agreed in principle to accept the Link Governor roles assigned to them. A copy of the list is attached to the Minute Book.

9. Presentation on "Read, Write Inc."

Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell gave governors an illustrated presentation on the Read, Write Inc. scheme, which the whole school had introduced a year ago and which appeared to be having a significant impact across the academy.

Governors enquired about the on-going costs of the scheme and the impact it had had on particular groups of pupils and were keen to pinpoint where the success of the scheme lay. It was deduced that the fact that the whole academy (from the Principal down) had backed and adopted the scheme, was responsible for its impact and success.

10. Academy Development Plan (ADP)

Business Manager, Mary Farr circulated copies of the updated Academy Development Plan (*attached to the Minute Book*), explaining that Phase Leaders will be refining it in due course. Governors were invited to forward their feedback to the Principal by early next week.

Governors to forward feedback on ADP to LH by 15th July.

The Achievement Director suggested that the ADP was reconsidered in the light of targets being met and that he intended to discuss with the Principal the prospect of changing the headlines in order to encourage consistency across the Trust's primaries with regard to KPIs.

11. Finance Update Report

Business Manager, Mary Farr, presented governors with the Management Accounts to the end of May 2014, indicating a contribution to reserves of £35,069 and details of adjustments to be made (*Report attached: Management Accounts to end May 2014*).

The Management Accounts to the end of May 2014 were noted.

The Business Manager then drew attention to the 2014-15 budget, which had been approved by the Trust Board. She highlighted the final transfer balance of £50,661 from NCC following final payment of the loan (*Report attached: Eastgate Budget 2014-15*).

Details of the academy's priorities were discussed, including preparation for Universal Infant Free School Meals and the Assertive Mentoring Scheme (*Report attached: Notes on the 2014-15 Budget*).

Governors questioned the benchmark figures for expenditure on staff, noting that the academy's ratio of payroll costs to total income ran at 75%. It was outlined that this was considered a good performance based on a benchmark of 75-80%.

In response to a challenge about Pupil Premium spending, the Business Manager asserted that a detailed breakdown of PP spend had been completed for the current year to date and further work would be done on PP spend and impact going forward.

The budget for 1st September 2014 to 31st August 2015 was noted.

Finance Director, Alan Evans, introduced the outline budget figures for 2015-16 and 2016-17, based on forecasted pupil numbers, estimated funding rates and historic patterns of expenditure (*Report attached: Income and Expenditure Account*).

He announced the potential for additional funding due to NCC being part of the f40 group of local authorities (with historically low educational funding) due to receive an extra 3.6%, equivalent to £16m, from April 2015. However, the allocation of this extra money has not been clarified and would not take effect until September 2015.

The Finance Director highlighted the significant increases in National Insurance costs and pension contributions coming in over the next year, which would further impact on academy budgets.

Governors queried the benchmarking figures for contribution to reserves and the projected fall in income for the 2016-17 forecast. The Finance Director indicated that, in general, funding for 'extras' will decrease whilst expenditure will rise but that these figures remain estimates only.

12. Any other business

Business Manager, Mary Farr, presented the academy's Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) (*attached to the Minute Book*), pointing out that the Principal, Linda Hothersall, will be updating the attainment results before submission. It was explained that the Principal is scheduled to have a meeting with Eastgate's Education Challenge Partner on the 17th July 2014. The context of the visit was further clarified by the Achievement Director, Alan Fletcher, who will be in attendance at the meeting along with the Chair, Mel Wellard. Governors were invited to contribute to the report by Tuesday 15th July 2014.

Governors to forward feedback on SEF by 15th July.

The Chair reiterated her congratulations to the staff on the results to date and expressed her pride in being part of the academy's team.

13. Dates of next meetings

A full list of the meetings of the Local Governing Body during 2014-15 was provided by the Clerk.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 17th September 2014 at 5.15pm.