

EASTGATE ACADEMY**Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body****Wednesday 14th January 2015 at 5.15pm, held at Eastgate Academy**

Present: Melanie Wellard (Chair), Jeremy McManus (Vice Chair), Guy Pyle, Louise Gayton, Ann Higgins, Brian Elflett (Parent Governor), Danielle Flores-Yallop (Parent Governor), Wendy Darrell (Staff Governor), Linda Hothersall (Principal).

In Attendance: Duncan Ramsey (Consultant Principal), Mary Farr (Business Manager), Alan Evans (Finance Director), Deborah Hinks (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

The Chair, Mel Wellard, thanked Vice Chair, Jerry McManus for chairing the previous meetings in her absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2014 and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2014 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

P2: The Safeguarding meeting dates have now been scheduled and will be forwarded to Link Governor for Safeguarding, Ann Higgins.

P4: Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell, provided the Clerk with the EYFS presentation.

4. Achievement Tracker/Progress to Targets Update

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, provided governors with a comprehensive report monitoring pupil progress in Years 2 and 6 against the academy's targets (*Achievement Tracker/Progress to Targets Report*, attached to the Minute Book).

She explained that pupils who had already achieved the target were coded green; yellow denoted pupils who had almost reached the target; red were those pupils not currently on track and white indicated pupils who had only joined the school in the last few weeks so hadn't yet been scored. In Year 2, the target level by May is 2b but the Principal reported that 48% of pupils are on track for a Level 3 in Maths. Those pupils still 'working towards the National Curriculum' were indicated with a letter 'W' and those 'pre-W' with the letter 'P'.

Discussing the data on Vulnerable Groups, governors were informed that the 'EAL' figures had been negatively affected by the fact that three pupils had

recently joined the academy with little or no English.

Governors discussed the need for attainment scores to be close to the national average, noting that the scores did comply with this and that the academy was on track to meet its targets. It was agreed that more work needed to be done on Writing. Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell, indicated that writing was a key focus and the Principal reported that more on the development of Writing was being added into the Academy Development Plan.

Governors enquired about the number of pupils working towards a Good Level of Development (GLD) in EYFS. It was reported that the figure was 60, which governors acknowledged was good because it was average. Governors requested that the EYFS data be provided to them by email following the meeting.

WD to provide the Clerk with the anonymised EYFS data to pass on to governors.

Scrutinising the Year 6 data, governors acknowledged that targets were likely to be met with 100% of pupils on track to make 2 Levels of Progress, with some already managing 3 Levels of Progress. The Principal, Linda Hothersall, informed governors that 14 pupils enthusiastically took part in additional Level 6 Maths classes after school.

Consultant Principal, Duncan Ramsey, presented governors with the Raise Online dataset (*Ofsted Raise Online 2014 Summary Report*, attached to the Minute Book), drawing attention to the key judgements. He pointed out the following:

- The challenge presented by the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check with last year's National Average being 74% compared to the Eastgate score of 59%.
- The fact that 7 pupils in last year's Year 2 left KS1 without achieving the expected standard in phonics.
- The attainment levels at Key Stage 1 being significantly below average, stressing the need to narrow the gap between the National Average of 15.9 APS and the academy's 12.9.

He underlined the need for governors to uncover what is being done to improve the situation in Key Stage 1. Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell, explained that Years 1 and 2 had been tested before Christmas and the team were putting in top-up teaching to boost phonics in order to achieve their target 80%.

The Consultant Principal went on to highlight the contrast with the Key Stage 2 data, indicating that for all subjects, pupils leave the academy significantly above the National Average and that on average the pupils leave the academy a term ahead of the National Average, for which he congratulated the staff. Furthermore, the proportion of children making expected progress between Key Stage 1 and 2 was reported to be in line with (indeed better than) the National Average across reading, writing and mathematics, including for disadvantaged pupils.

5. Narrowing the Gap/Pupil Premium (PP) Focus

Focusing on the Pupil Premium data (*Vulnerable Groups Progress Years 2 & 6*, attached to the Minute Book), governors noted that the Key Stage 1 data showed there was little difference between the scores for PP and non-PP pupils.

At Key Stage 2, it was acknowledged that the Year 6 data indicated that PP children were equal to non-PP pupils in Maths and Writing but behind in Reading.

It was acknowledged that one pupil in Year 6, who had been out of school for a year, had very low levels on entry and was therefore negatively affecting the overall figures as well as two SEN pupils who had also joined in September.

Consultant Principal, Duncan Ramsey reported that on average the PP children are only 1 term behind non-PP pupils, which was promising.

He argued the case for taking out the data for the 2 EAL children who had joined in September with no English, thereby skewing results, on the basis that it takes a year or two to learn the language adequately. The Chair, Mel Wellard, asked for those pupils who have been with the academy for less than a year to be taken out of the figures in order to compare results.

LH to provide this data minus those pupils who have been at the academy less than a year, for comparison purposes.

The Consultant Principal highlighted the fact that, according to the Raise Online data (*Closing the Gaps at Key Stage 2*, attached to the Minute Book), the disadvantaged pupils left the academy a mere fifth of a term behind non-disadvantaged pupils.

The Governors praised the good progress that the academy was making, the positive culture being developed and the enthusiastic staff response to wanting to achieve a grade of Outstanding going forward.

6. Data Dashboard

Consultant Principal, Duncan Ramsey, explained that it was in fact the Raise Online data that had been published on the date of the last meeting, rather than the Data Dashboard recorded in the Minutes. It was outlined that the DfE's Data Dashboard analysis of the academy would only be accessible in May.

7. Teacher Monitoring

Principal Linda Hothersall explained to governors that from September 2014, the government had introduced the 'teaching over time' method of teacher assessment, which had replaced the original grading system. She presented governors with examples of the documentation recorded when teacher observations or moderation took place.

Governors wanted to know what the strengths and weaknesses of the new system were, whether the system was linked to salary progression and how the teachers felt about the different approach.

Linda Hothersall informed governors that the monitoring system did link in to salary progression but that most of the academy's staff were at the top levels already. The Vice Chair, Jerry McManus, outlined the need to ensure teachers already at the top of the salary scale were motivated to continue to do well.

The Principal proffered that the system was better specifically because it looked at teaching over a longer time period and allowed triangulation of learning through teaching, assessment and book scrutiny. The Consultant Principal,

Duncan Ramsey added that the system also demonstrates the value of the quiet, meticulous, hard work of teachers who make a big effort to mark books productively. Staff Governor, Wendy Darrell warranted that the academy's staff felt that the observations were done in the spirit of support rather than outright judgement. The Principal reported that the staff very much appreciated the support and advice given by Duncan Ramsey in his role as Consultant Principal.

8. Academy Development Plan 2014/15 update on progress

The Principal, Linda Hothersall, presented governors with an update on progress towards the Academy Development Plan (*Review of SDP December 2014*, attached to the Minute Book), inviting questions from the governors.

The Chair enquired about the purchase of new resources for Speaking & Listening in EYFS and Year 1 but the Principal explained that these were subsequently deemed unnecessary and had therefore not been bought. Governors wanted to know how the teachers were managing in the setting of 'SMART' questions for the pupils. The Principal intimated that this was indeed difficult but that the staff were working hard on it.

The Chair requested a copy of the forms used for Performance Management to improve the effectiveness of Leadership and Management as outlined in Section 3.2 of the report.

LH to provide governors with a copy of the Performance Management Forms.

Consultant Principal, Duncan Ramsey, informed governors that a supportive system of peer review had recently been initiated between the two Trust primary academies, Eastgate and Nelson Academy. As a result, alongside Duncan Ramsey, the Phase Leader for Years 3/4 at Eastgate Academy had visited their Nelson equivalent on January 12th. A return visit had been scheduled for the Nelson Phase Leader to visit Eastgate Academy on January 19th. A series of peer review dates had been set up for Key Stage 1, the EYFS and SENDCO.

It was reported that the staff member involved had found the peer review a positive and nurturing experience and was keen to challenge herself. Duncan Ramsey explained that he had been eager to convey to staff that any 'critique' was solely aimed at being constructive, allowing the teachers to feel able to positively challenge themselves.

9. PE and Sport Premium

Business Manager, Mary Farr, outlined that the government's Sport Premium funding to support the delivery of PE and school sport had entered its second curriculum year. Eastgate Academy aimed to use the funding to extend the range of sport-related opportunities available to its pupils within the capabilities of the staff.

The Business Manager informed governors of the funding received and due to the academy for the years 2013-14 and 2014-15, with a full breakdown of how the allocation was or would be spent, as attached to the Minute Book.

The Governors noted the report and approved it for website publication.

10. Academy Website Audit

The Clerk advised the governors of the legal requirement to publish certain information on the academy's website in line with the Trust's Funding Agreement.

Referring to the Website Audit Tool supplied (as attached to the Minute Book), she invited governors to ensure the academy was fully compliant with the requisite information. She also pointed out that the website served as an important marketing tool and a method of engaging key stakeholders such as parents and prospective parents. As such, she recommended that governors consider further ideas for inclusion on the website, examples of which are attached to the Minute Book.

Consultant Principal, Duncan Ramsey, reported that he had recently undertaken a review of the Trust academy websites and was in the process of writing to the Principals concerning any statutory areas which needed redress.

Business Manager, Mary Farr, reminded governors that she had requested a brief pen portrait from each of them for inclusion on the website.

11. Link Governor Monitoring Feedback

The Link Governor for Buildings and Health & Safety, Brian Elflett, gave feedback to the rest of the governors on his November visit to the academy.

He had met with the Site Manager, Sean Walker, to focus on Health and Safety at the academy. Governors were informed about the issues which had arisen and the subsequent actions taken, as detailed on the *Link Governor Visit Form* attached to the Minute Book.

Louise Gayton left the meeting at this juncture (7pm).

12. Financial Update/Management Accounts/Budget 2014-15

Business Manager, Mary Farr, presented governors with the updated Management Accounts to the end of October 2014 (*Income and Expenditure Account to Oct 2014* attached to the Minute Book). She indicated that the Management Accounts up to the end of December will be presented to the Trust Board's Finance and Resources Committee on the 23rd January.

The Business Manager highlighted that the lines where there is a current overspend such as Buildings & Maintenance, Learning Resources and Catering, will be monitored and budget lines adjusted to provide savings elsewhere.

The Vice Chair questioned the fall in income from Catering but the Business Manager explained that whilst the forecast figure was correct, the budget line was not because the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) income had been acknowledged under a different line.

The Finance Director reminded governors that UIFSM funding would be clawed back if the take up was less than 80%. He indicated that the take up of UIFSM was between 75-80% so recommended that more work was done on Catering. The Chair enquired whether expenditure on trips had had to be stopped but the

Business Manager posited that trips had not been stopped though a close eye would be kept on such expenditure.

13. Behaviour and Attendance

Governors were provided with an update on the latest behaviour and attendance figures (*Behaviour and Attendance Paper for Information*, attached to the Minute Book), which indicated that to the end of December, overall attendance stood at 96.6%.

Consultant Principal, Duncan Ramsey, congratulated the academy on their attendance figure, noting that the academy's target was 96% and the national average was 95.2%.

The Parent Governor, Danielle Flores-Yallop, sought further clarification regarding absences for known medical conditions, which the Principal, Linda Hothersall, explained were all treated the same way and included in the overall absence figures.

The Principal drew attention to the one racist incident recorded, which was duly noted by the governors.

14. Any Other Business

- i. The Chair, Mel Wellard, informed governors that she was setting up regular meetings for all the Safeguarding Link Governors across the Trust academies in order to exchange good practice.
- ii. The Principal, Linda Hothersall, alerted governors to a meeting she was having on January 29th where she hoped to discuss with Joanne Lamb the prospect of the academy providing a Nursery.
- iii. The Clerk advised governors that each of the Trust academies needed to develop an Academy Risk Register. She invited the Finance Director to explain the concept of a Risk Register to the governors.

Alan Evans duly explained that the Register would document the major risks facing the academy, the likelihood of each one happening and the level of impact it would have; the actions being taken by the academy to mitigate each risk would be recorded and, using sophisticated software, an updated assessment of the level of risk would be made, allowing management to consider further action as required.

The Clerk indicated that she was thus in the process of setting up a series of Academy Risk Workshops, run by the Trust auditors, at which governors and the SLT would be helped to develop their own Academy Risk Register. A date had yet to be finalised. Governors would be given further details in due course and were encouraged to attend.

15. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 11th March 2015 at 5.15pm.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.