

EASTGATE ACADEMY

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body

Thursday, 22nd May 2014 at 5.15am, held at Eastgate Academy

Present: Melanie Wellard, Linda Hothersall (Principal), Jeremy McManus, Guy Pyle, Ann Higgins, Wendy Darrell (Staff Governor), Brian Elflett (Parent Governor).

In Attendance: Mary Farr (Business Manager), Deborah Hinks (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome & Apologies for absence.

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies from Louise Gayton, Alan Evans (Director of Finance, CWA Academy Trust) and Alan Fletcher (Director of Achievement, CWA Academy Trust) were received and accepted.

It was indicated that Brian Elflett would be late arriving due to work commitments.

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Clerk took the Chair for the election of a Chair, indicating that Melanie Wellard was the sole nominee for the role. Accepting the nomination, *Melanie Wellard left the room for the duration of the voting process.*

It was proposed by Linda Hothersall, seconded by Jeremy McManus, and unanimously agreed to elect Melanie Wellard as Chair of the Local Governing Body.

Melanie Wellard re-joined the meeting, was congratulated on her appointment and proceeded to chair the rest of the meeting.

The Clerk indicated that Jeremy McManus was the sole nominee for the role of Vice Chair. Accepting the nomination, *Jeremy McManus left the room for the duration of the voting process.*

It was proposed by Linda Hothersall, seconded by Ann Higgins, and unanimously agreed to elect Jeremy McManus as Vice-Chair.

Jeremy McManus re-joined the meeting and was congratulated on his appointment.

3. Declarations of Interest

Each Governor was invited to complete a Register of Business and

Personal Interests form, which was duly collated by the Clerk.
Governor Guy Pyle drew attention to his role in IT support and supply via Uptech Ltd.
There were no declarations of interest pertinent to the agenda items under discussion.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

This item was not applicable as this was the first meeting of the Eastgate Academy's Local Governing Body.

5. Matters Arising

This agenda item was not applicable.

6. Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

Principal Linda Hothersall presented governors with her report on Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance (*report attached to Minute Book: Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance*).

Explaining the recently-introduced Behaviour Zone system, she indicated that the system has been positively received by parents, pupils and staff and that the academy has no significant problem with behaviour.

The Vice-Chair, Jeremy McManus, indicated that there had been one Permanent Exclusion in December 2013. The inadvertent error in the report was duly noted by governors.

The Chair asked the Principal to contextualise the exclusion data in light of the perceived lack of behavioural problems. The Principal explained that any pupil laying hands on a teacher would be automatically excluded, and that any misbehaviour usually took place in the playground rather than in-class. Conflicts in the playground will be further avoided once the proposed new lunchtime rota system comes into play with the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meals in September 2014.

Moving onto matters of attendance, the Principal indicated that significant efforts had been made to improve attendance, which currently stands at 95.6%. In a bid to promote attendance, parents within the Cluster Group of schools have been informed that pupils will be taken off the register if they are away for more than 20 days.

Governors queried:

- the authorisation of holidays in term-time
- how persistent absentees are dealt with
- whether the culture surrounding attendance is improving
- which members of staff follow up on absentees
- how the academy compares with other schools
- government targets on attendance.

The Principal indicated that going forward, holidays will not be authorised in term time, except by Principal's special dispensation. Letters are sent home to parents encouraging attendance; a close eye is kept on non-attendance; parents know that it will be followed up; staff 'knock on doors' where necessary and insist on doctors' notes; awards are made to classes with the highest attendance. It was indicated that the culture has changed with parents largely supportive on this issue. Staff Governor Wendy Darrell intimated that getting to know the parents beforehand has helped.

Outlining government attendance targets of 96% and above, the Principal highlighted that Eastgate Academy has the highest attendance figures in the Cluster Group. Governors suggested the academy promotes this achievement either via the press or on the website.

LH & MF to promote attendance figures on website.

7. Ofsted Data Dashboard

Linda Hothersall presented governors with the Ofsted Data Dashboard, showing the school's performance against national levels for key areas (*Report attached: Ofsted Data Dashboard*). It was explained that the data appertain to 2013 results before the school became Eastgate Academy. The dashboard for 2014 will only be available around October 2014, at which point governors will be taken through the data in more detail. Governors were invited to peruse the list of questions included in the report with a view to holding the academy to account in future meetings.

The Principal outlined that the culture in the academy appears to be changing and that parents are getting on-side with the message that education is important.

Agenda item 9 Narrowing the Gap & item 10 Pupil Premium were discussed as one item at this juncture.

8. Achievement Tracker May 2014

Governors' attention was drawn to the Achievement Tracker dataset and commentary (*Report attached: Eastgate Achievement Tracker May 2014*). The Principal pointed out an error on page 4 *Reading Year 2* data.

LH to forward amended Achievement Tracker data to governors.

An amended version will be forwarded to governors.

Governors queried and discussed a number of areas:

- how realistic the projected 2015 outcomes are
- what is working well for the Year 3s who have a much higher APS
- the difference between girls and boys in Writing for Years 2-4
- what is being done to support boys in Writing
- the reason for the substantial leap in Year 1 'in-year progress'
- moderation and in-house action on ensuring consistency
- the fact there were no KS1 pupils capable of Level 3 in 2013
- the frequency with which the figures are updated.

Governors highlighted the importance of parental support as a factor in pupil outcomes. It was suggested that differences in achievement may be more closely correlated with level of parental support rather than gender per se. Governors requested that the Principal cross-correlates outcomes by parental support with a view to considering funding 'parental buy-in' activities to help promote better outcomes.

LH & MF to cross-correlate outcomes by parental support.

The difficulty in evidencing reading activity was discussed and the importance of ensuring pupils not only read but comprehended the material. Staff governor, Wendy Darrell pointed out the positive feedback from pupils on the 'Read Write Inc.' system used in the school. A presentation of the scheme was requested by governors.

WD to organise a presentation to governors on 'Read Write Inc.'

Enquiring about expected levels of progress, governors requested a summary sheet of expected points/progress across the year groups.

LH to forward to governors a summary sheet indicating expected levels of points/progress across year groups.

It was acknowledged that Year 6 performance is showing strong signs of improvement and that the fact that a number of pupils are doing Level 6 this year is a very positive step forward.

In a bid to ensure governors are well prepared to challenge the academy on progress and outcomes, the Chair invited all governors to attend a Data Training Workshop to be run by CWA Academy Trust Director of Achievement, Alan Fletcher, on Tuesday 10th June 2014 from 5.30pm-7pm. Invitations will be sent to governors via the Clerk in due course.

Governors to consider attending Data Training Workshop Tues June 10th 2014 5.30pm.

9. Narrowing the Gap

This item was combined with Agenda item 10 below.

10. Pupil Premium

The Principal indicated the importance of tracking the development and outcomes of those pupils who attract Pupil Premium (PP) funding. She

further explained how PP funding is used for such things as intervention staff, residential breaks and the Breakfast Club.

The Chair, Melanie Wellard outlined details of a Pupil Premium conference she had recently attended, welcoming other governors to attend similar events in the future. She highlighted a presentation on the role of governors in interrogating the PP audit trail, a copy of which will be forwarded to governors.

Clerk to forward PP presentation to governors.

Responding to further queries, Linda Hothersall informed governors that a representative from the West Norfolk Partnership would be coming to the academy to discuss the academy's use of PP funding. In addition, the Principal and several other members of staff plan to visit PP Award Winners, Pateman Primary School in Islington, to see how they utilise their PP funding to best effect.

Governors queried how the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meals will affect the monitoring of Free School Meal (FSM) datasets. It was agreed that it was important that those who can claim FSM do so.

11. Phase Monitoring

Staff Governor Wendy Darrell explained that Peer Mentoring had been introduced in the second half of the Spring Term 2014 (*Report attached: Phase Monitoring/Peer Mentoring*). She indicated that most staff have found the system very supportive and that this has resulted in renewed confidence in asking for help, which has in turn led to improved lessons. In addition, teachers were now viewing lesson observations as a mechanism of support rather than judgement.

The Chair highlighted the importance of good feedback and marking in helping pupils progress. She also indicated that programmes of coaching support via King's Lynn Academy are available to Eastgate Academy staff.

12. Safeguarding and DBS checks

Governors considered their responsibility for safeguarding and were asked to forward their DBS numbers to Business Manager, Mary Farr.

Governors to forward DBS check numbers to MF.

Linda Hothersall outlined the supportive role of the MASH team in dealing with a number of safeguarding cases at the academy.

Ann Higgins volunteered to become the Link Governor for Safeguarding.

Ann Higgins left the meeting at 6.40pm.

It was proposed by Jeremy McManus, seconded by Brian Elflett, and unanimously agreed to appoint Ann Higgins to be the academy Link Governor for Safeguarding. Melanie Wellard will forward further details on the Safeguarding role and how to undertake a Safeguarding Audit.

MW to forward safeguarding information onto AH.

13. Academy Development Plan

The Principal guided governors through the Academy Development Plan (*Report attached: The Eastgate Academy Development Plan*). Governors were invited to consider the various areas in detail and volunteer to become the Link Governor for one or more of the areas outlined.

Governors to consider volunteering for Link Governor vacancies.

It is expected that Link Governors will visit the school and report back to the Local Governing Body accordingly.

Melanie Wellard volunteered to be the Link Governor for Pupil Premium. Vice Chair, Jeremy Mc Manus, volunteered to become Link Governor for Buildings. Linda Hothersall referred governors to the work of consultant Nick Mellors in investigating building grants with a view to incorporating the EYFS into the main school.

14. Finance & Staffing

Business Manager Mary Farr guided governors through the financial reports (*Report attached: Eastgate Academy Budget 2013-14 and Budget update 2014-15*).

It was pointed out that funding figures are 'per pupil based on the number of pupils on roll'. Unfortunately the figures always suffer a time-lag as it is based on last September's census and numbers on roll have increased since then.

Governors queried:

- ❖ the terms of the NCC loan and the problems associated with it
- ❖ the good performance in the ratio of payroll costs to total income
- ❖ insurance to cover the need for cover staff
- ❖ the uncertainty over Pupil Premium funding

The 'Bought In Professional Services – Curriculum' figure was expanded upon by the Chair who explained the intention for Year 6 pupils to gain a certificate in Animal Care, linking up with the CWA land-based campus in Cambridge. The qualification will have an emphasis on the promotion of reading and writing.

The governors duly noted the budget for the period to 31st August 2014, the current indications for the 2014-15 budget and the priorities for the allocation of financial resources over the next academic year.

15. Governor Training & Norfolk Governor Toolkit

Melanie Wellard indicated that the CWA Academy Trust does not currently subscribe to Norfolk Governor Services and its training. However, she has been tasked by Chief Executive David Pomfret to investigate a range of governor training providers. It is expected that internal Trust training workshops will also take place from time to time e.g. safeguarding, data training.

It was agreed that records of training courses previously undertaken by the Eastgate governors will be noted and held by the academy.

16. Governing Matters magazine

It was agreed that governors found the *Governing Matters* magazine to be a useful publication and that the subscription will be renewed and the Clerk added to the list of recipients.

MF to add Clerk to *Governing Matters* recipient list.

17. Any Other Business

- (i) The Vice Chair requested that an official letter of appointment be sent to all Eastgate Academy Governors.
- (ii) The Vice Chair enquired about access to the new Instrument of Governance and appropriate policies. It was indicated that Trust and Academy policies would be accessible via the appropriate website. It is expected that all policies will be available by the end of the academic year.
- (iii) It was requested that contact details of all governors are circulated to ease communication.
- (iv) It was agreed to continue with the Governors' Fund.
- (v) Identity Badges are to be made available to all governors.
- (vi) Steps are to be taken to fill the vacancy for a second Parent Governor.
- (vii) Melanie Wellard outlined the plan to raise pupil aspirations and expand career horizons via a series of Year 6 Taster Days linked to a wide variety of Faculties at the CWA. The importance of Maths and English will be emphasised throughout.

MW to organise letter of appointment for governors.

Clerk to circulate governor contact details.

MF to organise identity badges for governors.

LH to initiate filling vacancy for Parent Governor.

18. Date of next meeting

The next LGB meeting will be on Thursday 3rd July 2014 at 5.15pm.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.