

**Minutes of the Academy Committee Board Meeting
held on Wednesday 23 September at 5pm
via Microsoft Teams**

Membership	Initials	Governor category	Absence
Mr Michael Storey	MS	Appointed governor	A
Ms Morag Malcolm (Vice Chair of Governors)	MM	Parent governor	
Mrs Christina Wyles	CW	Appointed governor	
Miss Natalie Ward	NW	Staff governor	
Mr Richard Morton (Chair of Governors)	RM	Appointed governor	
Mrs Siobhan Willows	SW	Parent governor	
Mrs Rebecca Marshall	RMA	Appointed governor	A
Mrs Elizabeth Farrar	EF	Appointed governor	A
Mr David Perry	DP	Appointed governor	

In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Mrs Helen Cawkill	HC	Principal	
Mr Gareth Letton	GL	Senior Principal	
Mrs Tracy Blacknell	TB	Vice Principal	
Mrs Rhianne Chambers	RC	Clerk & Advisor	
Mrs Alison Elway	AKE	Head of Governance	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/when
AC/01/2021	<p>Training – Scheme of Delegation by Alison Elway Mrs Elway projected the Scheme of Delegation on to the screen and discussed the document with the governors.</p> <p>See appendix one for the full run through of what the governors were informed of.</p> <p><i>Mrs Elway was thanked for her attendance and she left the meeting at 17.31.</i></p>	
AC/02/2021	<p>Apologies for absence Retrospective apologies were received and approved for Mrs Marshall and Mrs Farrar due to family and work commitments. There were no apologies were sent for Mr Storey.</p>	
AC/03/2021	<p>Declaration of interest There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p>	
AC/04/2021	<p>Mr Morton started the meeting with a thank you to the staff at Bracken Lane. This year has been very difficult and therefore what the staff have been through and continue to go through whilst doing it so well is a credit to the team. There has been lots of positive comments which shows how well things are being done. On behalf of the whole committee, the staff were thanked.</p>	



	<p>Governor admin: <i>Re-elections</i> The Clerk advised the Governors that Ms Malcom’s term of office had expired. The governors voted unanimously to reappoint Ms Malcolm to the committee for a four-year term of office.</p> <p><i>Appointment of new governor</i> Governors had previously been advised that Mr David Perry was interested in becoming a governor. Mr Perry’s CV had been circulated prior to the meeting and all governors had voted unanimously to appoint Mr Perry to the Academy Committee for a four-year term of office. Mr Letton welcomed Mr Perry to the committee.</p> <p>Mr Letton then introduced Mrs Blacknell to the committee. Mrs Blacknell has recently been appointed the role of Vice Principal for the 3 northern primaries – Bracken Lane, Thrumpton and Tuxford primary.</p> <p><i>Code of conduct and declaration of interest</i> All governors were reminded to complete both the code of conduct and declaration of interest.</p> <p><i>Link governors</i> The link governors within the committee were confirmed as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding - Mrs Wyles • Educational Visit - Ms Morag • Health and Safety - Mrs Marshall • Admission Panel - Miss Ward, Mrs Willows and Mrs Farrar • Complaints - Mr Storey • SEND/PP/Sports Premium - Mrs Wyles 	
<p>AC/05/2021</p>	<p>Minutes of the last Academy committee meeting on 5th February 2020 The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>AC/06/2021</p>	<p>Matters arising AC/038/1920 – It was noted an update on the attendance policy was highlighted through the weekly academy newsletter</p> <p>AC/043/1920 – It was noted the admissions policy was returned to NCC and has since been approved. Mr Letton advised governors that he sent the policy direct to NCC after they had advised that certain phrases were against the admissions code. Ms Malcolm asked which elements they were uncomfortable with. Mr Letton confirmed it was the lines regarding staff being further up in terms of priority in the oversubscription as well as BLPA nursery children having a higher priority. These points were eventually agreed with the LA.</p> <p>AC/049/1920 -</p>	



	<p>It was noted a gathering between staff and governors was organised but had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. A future one to be rearranged when possible.</p>	
<p>AC/07/2021</p>	<p>Exam Update Mrs Cawkhill shared her screen so the governors could see the data being projected. The governors were informed that there were no national tests in 2020 and that all the results provided were from teacher assessments using evidence that was gathered prior to the schools being closed. The data has been submitted to the Local Authority, which was done voluntarily as it was a value to the academy. The F2 reception class (the year a child turns 5), at the end of the early years foundation stage also had a profile done by teacher assessment. The academy has a target of 70% and 73% was the achieved score. As well as this, one child received the exceeding status which is a big deal as this is only 2.5% nationally. To get exceeding you need to get 17 points in all the 6 areas of learning.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkhill proceed to explain that the phonics assessments in year 1 are usually tested one on one and are assessed at an 80% pass rate. 6 children didn't pass; however, it is believed the marks were done fairly and if there was any doubt then the mark wasn't given. The children do have the opportunity to sit this test again next year. With the children in year 2 who were retested, none met the criteria again. It was confirmed that those 5 children are not likely to pass phonics in the near future so the staff at Bracken Lane are currently looking at other ways to teach these children. Mr Letton confirmed to the governors that if a child hasn't grasped phonics by the time, they are aged 7 then it is unlikely they will so therefore they need a different learning pattern to see if that works.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm stated that it does not mean they will not be able to read though. Mrs Cawkhill agreed it does not, the academy is just looking at other ways to teach those 5 children. Their language development, speech, and listening are also below where it should be at this point, so there is a need to improve the overall language acquisition for these children. It was also confirmed that all the children are registered SEND which makes a big difference.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkhill moved on to the SATS results which are normally completed at end of year 2, they are marked by teachers and done in school. Although the tests were not completed this year, the academy was planning towards them. The academy received 77% as the combined score as not all the children got all reading, writing and maths with the greater depth score being at 17%. The year 6 SATS have had a tricky couple of years however with Mrs Blacknell giving them a boost in support, the academy is pleased with the results. Again, these were teacher assessed and were done completely fair. The combined result is at 66% which is an increase on the 2019 score. The greater depth score is slightly lower than national average however at the year 2 assessments none of the children received greater depth, so this is a good improvement. The governors were also informed that 5 of the children probably wouldn't have been able to sit the age</p>	



	<p>appropriate SATS, however the academy is in line with national and now the team are ready to further improve next year.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm questioned if the tests will be audited. Mrs Cawkhill informed the governors that the academy has kept the books just in case however the academy has had books moderated within the trust prior to lock down and then also with other schools in Bassetlaw so they know the marks are accurate and fair. Mr Letton then added that the DfE have not taken the information and as it is essential internal data, Ofsted are not allowed to ask for it. You can give it to Ofsted if you think it will help your case.</p>	
AC/08/2021	<p>Safeguarding Mrs Cawkhill informed the governors that there are currently 2 children at Bracken Lane with child protection cases. Because of this the meetings with social workers and families are still taking place as safeguarding takes precedence.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm queried if there were any extra concerns during lockdown. Mrs Cawkhill responded by informing the governors that lockdown did provide big challenges and although they were not necessarily new cases, they were ones that escalated quickly. The governors were told that in the past 18-24 months there has been roughly 200 reports on My Concern (the system which is used to track safeguarding issues) whereas since lockdown there is currently 420 reported cases. There is not a national average with safeguarding issues, but there is a lot of children who rely on the routine of going to school and the school day. The recording of reports is very clear and now the academy is seeing people face to face they are now being picked up much quicker. Mr Letton further added that there was never a time where it was out of control and has been managed wonderfully the whole way through. It is always going to be difficult as the knowledge the academy has of the children is from seeing the children every day.</p>	
AC/09/2021	<p>Admission policy The committee agreed for the admission policy to remain the same for 22/23 academic year.</p>	
AC/10/2021	<p>Risk Register The governors were informed that due to staff shortages the risk register has not been updated officially for this term. Mr Letton highlighted that there is a lot of work going on within the academy completing all the risk assessments due to COVID.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm informed the committee that as a parent, she has not seen or heard anything negative. There is lots of praise from the parents especially around the smooth drop off and collection of children.</p>	
AC/11/2021	<p>Academy Review Meeting report Mrs Cawkhill informed the governors that at the start of term, Bracken Lane had their educational review meeting with Mr Letton, Cat Thornton, Neil Holmes and Gary Corban from the executive team. This meeting was to discuss the outcomes following the grades in the summer, how that has then driven the school evaluation and then in turn how that is then informing the improvement priorities for the current academic year.</p>	



	<p>Governors had all received the report in advance, but Mrs Cawkhill confirmed that the executive team were pleased with what the school have planned for this academic year.</p> <p>The key points from the meeting were that the pupils had settled in well and any initial niggles have all been resolved. The children’s behaviour is amazing and all of them have responded well to change as well as taking the new routines in their stride.</p> <p>There has been a couple of challenges since starting the new term. The first one is the lack of space, there is little space to hang coats and bags as well as the classrooms themselves being too small for the number of children. The second struggle is the absences of staff, although to this point the academy have been able to cover successfully.</p> <p>Governors were updated on the transition of the students. During lockdown there was lots of work done using DOJO which all the children could access. There has been lots of positive feedback about the transition. Mrs Wyles supported this as her granddaughter has started at the academy this year and the support prior to starting has been fantastic. Miss Ward further supported by informing the governors that it has been amazing working in nursery as she has witnessed how well the little ones came in, especially when the children are only 4 years old and hadn’t been to nursery before and this is down to interaction with the teachers on DOJO in advance.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkhill discussed with governors the impact of COVID and lockdown. There are some issues around the language development in the academy which is natural when being at home for so long. There is a plan being developed to help that. There is also some content in maths for both year 5 and year 6 which PIXL is supporting with to ensure that gap is closed. In terms of the absence, governors receive the academy newsletter on a weekly basis which shows the attendance percentage, overall, there are no concerns regarding this.</p> <p>The governors all expressed concern about the space of the classrooms especially with the winter coming. It was agreed that this would be added to the report for Trustees so that they would be made aware.</p>	
<p>AC/12/2021</p>	<p>AIP for 2019/2020 and draft AIP for 2020/2021</p> <p>For the new governors, it was confirmed that AIP stands for the Academy Improvement Plan. The AIP had been sent out to governors in advance. Mrs Cawkhill informed the governors that the first section is a review from the year before, due to lockdown this cut short the progress but some of the work around the curriculum was continued. The team have managed to achieve the main goal of getting the new curriculum ready for September 2020. The plans for in school were not completed but they have been rolled over into this year’s plan due to lockdown putting a stop to the completion. The governors were also informed that everything within the document is either based on either data collected or academy</p>	



improvement review but ultimately it is all about making things better for the children.

Within the AIP there are 3 objectives.

1. Improve the quality of teaching reading so that more children attain the greater depth standard. The academy currently feels like they are lacking in getting children from good to the greater depth. They have looked into ways to improve this so that is a key focus for this year, not just in year 6 as by this point it is too late as the children need to be test ready in year 5 so that year 6 is a case of polishing everything up.
2. Secure improvements in the outcome for all children through the standardisation of assessment for learning processes with emphasis on b1 and a2 children. PIXL is the learning platform that helps to gather data, work out the gaps in children's learning and help inform the academy what they need to do to fill those gaps. By using this system, it helps staff to be robust in their assessments and to also find out how can help in the best way. B1 children are working below standard but have the potential with the right support to reach age related success. A2 children are working above the national standard and again, with the right support they can be accelerated to higher standards. Bracken Lane are also using another system called "Be Squared" which is a tool to help assess the children who make smaller steps in their learning.

Ms Malcolm suggested that this all sounds very workload heavy for the teachers. Mrs Cawhill confirmed it makes things easier as prior to using PIXL, the work would have been done on separate spreadsheets whereas now it is all in one place. Within the academy there is also a PIXL lead (Deborah) who helps getting the information out and processing. PIXL helps lead you towards therapies to fill the gaps in a child's learning however it doesn't take away from teacher expertise. This year will be the first year of using it in full capacity.

Mrs Wyles asked if the teachers have welcomed the system and will it make assessments easier. Mrs Cawhill highlighted that assessment by the teachers is still the same this will simply help them in doing so. She believes that Bracken Lane are good at assessment and good at filling the gaps, so this is simply a tool to support them. PIXL is an online platform where everyone within the academy can always access rather than relying on bits of paper. The teachers have taken it positively although there is an expectation of teething issues but on the whole Bracken Lane are ready and raring to go.

3. Ensure better than expected progress for maths in KS2 leads to better outcomes for children. There has been a downward trajectory, but this is only based on 1 or 2 children however some of it is cohort specific. This objective ensures progress can be tracked accurately throughout KS2 so that all children make better than expected.

Mrs Wyles enquired if this was both boys and girls. Mrs Cawhill confirmed it is everyone. The aim is to track it all now so that by the time the children are in year 6 then they aren't playing catch up. Governors



	<p>were informed that Year 6 maths is mostly learnt in years 3, 4 and 5 and that over 50% of questions in the exam papers is from what they have learnt in those three years.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkhill further explained the AIP document to the governors. There is a page called 'What?'. Each objective has a page for what they are going to do by the end of each term. By using this document with the milestones, it helps governors to keep the Principal to account, ensuring governors are fulfilling their role. The 'How?' section highlights any specific actions that needs to be done as well as who is leading on it, by when, and any costs relating to the task. The 'Impact?' page is a repeat of the 'What?' page however this will be used for RAG rating. Ultimately if anything is coloured in red then governors need to be challenging what is happening. If something is in red in term 3 then that would mean it hasn't been completed so therefore would be rolled forward into next year.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkhill is pleased with the 3 objectives as she knows they are challenging but achievable. The staff know what they are doing and what resources they need so looking forward to a good year.</p> <p>Mr Morton suggested that the documents were very acronym heavy and with having Mr Perry joining the committee, he wanted to check he was coping ok. Mrs Cawkhill apologised for any acronyms and said for any governor to ask if unsure. Mr Letton proceeded to inform governors that this issue had been raised at the Thrumpton academy committee meeting and therefore it had been agreed that moving forward when an acronym is going to be used in a document it must be written in full the first time so there is always a point of reference within each document.</p>	
<p>AC/13/2021</p>	<p>Policy appendices Mrs Cawkhill informed governors that there has been a slight adjustment to the behaviour policy due to COVID. Because of this update there is nothing more to update at the time and behaviour in the school at the minute is very good.</p>	
<p>AC/14/2021</p>	<p>Governor training Mrs Elway covered this under AC/01/2021</p>	
<p>AC/15/2021</p>	<p>Amalgamation of academy committees with Thrumpton Primary Mr Letton informed the governors on the reasons why an amalgamation of academy committees would be a good idea. There has always been an intention to merge the bodies however the need to do so has been moved on quite quickly due to the departure of the Chair & Vice-Chair at Thrumpton (ThPA). This is also purely about joining the board and not amalgamating the schools. Both schools are very successful and have a different offering to the families and children, so it is paramount they keep their separate identity. Mr Letton let the governors know that the G&P committee have already given consent as it does work well at other academies within the trust.</p>	



	<p>A number of questions had been brought up at the ThPA meeting, so Mr Letton ran through these with the committee first.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Would the governors be a governor of both bodies? It would be one body for both schools and the remit would be to cover both schools.2. Would there be a new chair and vice chair? There currently isn't a chair at ThPA so with a reconstituted committee there would need to be an election for a new chair and vice chair.3. Would there be shared responsibilities? There would be key roles within each school where it will need its own representatives. <p>Mr Letton informed the governors that in terms of the support structure, he is Executive Principal across both academies and Miss Blacknell is Vice-Principal across the two. Mrs Cawkhill and Mrs Hurley (ThPA Principal) also work very closely together.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm stated that she finds it strange that they are 2 unique schools, with 2 management structures so why is there a need for 1 body. Mr Letton responded by highlighting it is now a shared leadership structure. The Principal is more of a front of house role and is ultimately responsible for setting the culture within the academy. Governance within the trust is eyes on, hands off so anyone could switch boards as it is a set of skills.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm further queried that there is an element of being a parent governor for an academy because you have a child at that school so therefore her focus will be on BLPA. Moving forward would there be a struggle to fill the roles? Mr Letton responded by saying that with the parent governor positions they will still have a remit for their school. There would need to be 2 parent governors so there is an option for one from each school. Ms Malcolm feels that the amalgamation is being driven because of an inability to find people for the roles at ThPA rather than it being in the best interest for BLPA.</p> <p>Mrs Wyles asked if it is happening already with other schools, is it success and also if there could be a meeting set up with another successful body to discuss how they feel now, how it works and if they have any regrets. Mr Letton agreed this was a good suggestion and a meeting could be set up with the chair of another joint board within the trust. Mrs Wyles further added that the fact BLPA are already sharing teaching staff and sharing ideas with ThPA this could be another step in the right direction. However, whether it is the right step for BLPA she is unsure of and may become more apparent when they have the meeting with other governors from a joint board.</p> <p>Miss Ward agreed with Ms Malcolm and is not in favour of the joint board. She has previously been a parent governor at Retford Oaks and this was discussed and dismissed there. It is believed that BLPA are their own little community and it would be for the best to remain that way.</p> <p>Ms Malcolm highlighted a huge concern would be with Ofsted as being chair / vice chair there is so much data to know. To then have to learn enough information about the other school in enough detail prior to a potential Ofsted visit is a big ask when all volunteers. Mrs Wyles agreed with Ms Malcolm on this point.</p>	
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	<p>Mr Morton queried that when Mr Letton says it works well in other academies what would he say the benefits and successes are. Mr Letton explained that it allows the governors to become more specialist. It was also stated that an open mind is the best thing for everyone.</p> <p>Miss Ward added there is a lot of work with the other primaries and a lot of the information sent to governors is the same. Certain joint meetings could work however there are some things on the agenda that are specific just for BLPA. Could it work if some of the meetings could be held as an amalgamated board and then have separate meetings with specific items that only BLPA governors would be interested in? Mr Letton confirmed it would just be one board rather than a BLPA / ThPA divide.</p> <p>The governors asked what the timescales were in terms of the amalgamation. It was advised that all the comments from this academy committee meeting would be given to the trustees at the next board meeting on the 7th October where a final decision would be made. From there a meeting would be set up to run through how the joint board would work, appoint roles and answer any questions prior to the December academy meeting being the first one of the joint boards.</p>	
<p>AC/16/2021</p>	<p>Complete report to Trustees AC members discussed the report and agreed to add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight space of the classrooms. Rooms designed for 19 not 31. • Governors appreciation of staff efforts over the last months 	
<p>AC/17/2021</p>	<p>Determination of Confidentiality Equalities Act consideration 7 Nolan Principles AC members considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no confidential items discussed • There had been no Equalities Act implications • Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the 7 Nolan Principles. 	
	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Academy Committee meeting Wednesday 2 December 2020 5pm</p> <p>The meeting closed at 19.11</p>	

Signed by Chair:

Date: