

**Minutes of the joint Academy Committee Board Meeting
held on Wednesday 25th January 2023 at 5.15pm at Thrumpton Primary Academy**

Membership	Initials	Governor category	Absence
Mr A Murray	AM	Appointed governor	
Mrs C Wyles	CW	Appointed governor	
Mrs E Farrar	EF	Appointed governor	A
Mrs F Simpson	FS	Appointed governor	
Mrs J Gawthorpe	JS	Appointed governor	
Ms M Malcolm – Chair of Governors	MM	Parent governor	A
Mrs R Marshall	RM	Appointed governor	A
Miss S Garnett – Vice Chair of Governors	SG	Parent governor	A
Mrs S Willows	SW	Parent governor	A
<i>1 x staff governor vacancy</i>			

In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Mr G Letton (via teams)	GL	Executive Principal	
Mrs H Cawkill	HC	Principal for Bracken Lane	
Mrs R Hurley	RH	Principal for Thrumpton	
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Governance Professional	
Mrs T Blacknell	TB	Vice Principal for BLPA&THPA	A
Mrs N Benson	NB	Governance Professional	

Quorum number	5	Governor's present	4
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Item No	Item	Action/ by who/when
AC/24/2223	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received from: Mrs Farrar due to work; Mrs Marshall is on maternity leave; Mrs Willows due to illness; and Miss Garnett due to personal circumstances. Governors were made aware that Ms Malcolm had requested a sabbatical from the committee due to a change in personal circumstances. This would be until September. This was approved. In Ms Malcolm's absence, Miss Garnett has agreed to be the Chair of the committee.</p> <p>Mrs Simpson was appointed as chair for the meeting in the absence of Miss Garnett.</p>	
AC/25/2223	<p>Declaration of interest and any changes to declarations made at the start of the year. All governors present confirmed their declarations for the 22/23 year are still accurate.</p>	
AC/26/2223	<p>Training</p> <p>Local response following central training: –</p>	

	<p>- SEND</p> <p>Mrs Gawthorpe attended the SEND training and felt that it was informative and worth attending.</p> <p><i>The governors asked</i> if the training sessions were online or in person and if the trust would consider changing the times of the sessions for those unable to attend. Mrs Chambers confirmed that all sessions were being held online and all of them are available to be reviewed. The governors were reminded to let the Governance Professional know when they have attended or reviewed governor training sessions to keep the training records up to date.</p> <p>Actions from governor link visit reports</p> <p>No visit reports have been submitted since the last meeting.</p>	governors
AC/27/2223	<p>Minutes of the last Academy committee meeting on 23rd November 2022</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the Chair.</p>	
AC/28/2223	<p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC/14/2223 – To note the link to all training videos has been shared with governors. • AC/17/2223 – To note the staff governor nomination process is ongoing. <p><i>The Governors asked</i> if anyone had applied to date. Mrs Chambers explained that the process was still ongoing but confirmed that the staff governor is not a statutory one in the scheme of delegation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC/19/2223 – To note the NCC safeguarding audits for both academies were sent in before the deadline. 	GP
AC/29/2223	<p>Principal's report / ERM reports.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill asked if there were any questions with regards to the ERM reports issued in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><i>The governors asked</i> why social services support has been reduced at Bracken Lane. Mrs Cawkill explained that this is because there is limited resource in terms of social workers. There is also a lack of consistency with the social worker support received but Mrs Cawkill is confident that from the schools' point of view everything is being recorded and logged within My Concern. <i>The governors also asked</i> what project play is at Thrumpton to which Mrs Hurley explained that the 'play project' is an in-school project around changing playtimes and enhancing play outside.</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance: to inc. Single Central Record, safer recruitment, policy, KCSIE • Culture: to inc. peer on peer, sexual harassment and violence, mental health, bullying and racism, online safety 	

Mrs Hurley shared that all the schools in the trust have recently taken part in the 'Edurio' national safeguarding survey. The results were pleasing for both schools in terms of the responses of the children. It was interesting to note that children reported that they feel safer online than they do at school, however the questions were perhaps incorrectly worded as children may have interpreted this as feeling safe in a physical sense as they tend to be at home when playing online.

Risk report

Mrs Cawkill said that the risks at Bracken Lane are reducing as actions are in place to mitigate them.

Mrs Hurley explained that a temporary risk has been added to the risk register for Thrumpton following a child being able to climb over the boundary fence. Measures have since been put in place to ensure that the risk is mitigated and Network Rail have agreed to come and speak to the children about rail safety and will be funding improvements to the fencing between the academy and the railway tracks.

Health & Safety, staff & pupil well-being, Data Protection (breaches/SARs/FOIA/Police requests), complaints, claims (no's/overview)

Mrs Cawkill explained that notes in the Bracken Lane report regarding potential future claims are to allow for ongoing focus even though they are unlikely to develop further.

The governors asked if there had been any progress with regards the ongoing complaint at Thrumpton and Mrs Hurley explained that it is currently with the solicitors.

Governors were made aware that Mrs Hurley recently had a call on behalf of Ofsted with regards a complaint made directly to them from a parent after an incident that occurred outside of school. It was acknowledged that this is unlikely to be taken further.

The governors questioned if there was a reason why the parents did not raise the issue with the school initially and Mrs Hurley explained that the issue escalated over the Christmas holidays and perhaps had the school been open the parent may have contacted school rather than Ofsted. The parent did contact Mrs Hurley immediately after raising the complaint with Ofsted to inform her that this had been done.

Mr Letton added that nationally there has been an increase in the number of complaints coming into schools, some of which may be attributed to the level of additional stress that many families have been under recently with the cost-of-living crisis.

Mr Hurley confirmed that a child has recently fallen from the climbing frame and the accident resulted in a broken arm. The governors asked if the accident had to be reported to the relevant authorities to which Mrs

	<p>Hurley confirmed that all accidents such as this are reported to the local authority.</p> <p>Confirm determined admission arrangements & approval of local appendix Due to anticipated apologies, the committee agreed to determine the admissions policy for the 24/25 academic year and <i>Mrs Cawkill / Mrs Hurley will ensure they are sent to the LA for inclusion on their website.</i></p> <p><i>The governors pointed out</i> that the Admission Policy contains reference to a previous staff member by name and it was also noted that one of the links within the document (catchment area) was not available.</p> <p><i>Mrs Cawkill and Mrs Chambers agreed to review and amend the document.</i> And it was noted that the Thrumpton Admissions policy, reference to names should be amended to job title also.</p> <p>Mr Letton confirmed that it is correct procedure to use the position title rather than the name of the person holding the position in policy documents (with the caveat being safeguarding policies).</p> <p>In-year admissions – all year groups It was acknowledged that the number of child relocations at Bracken Lane are unusual and Mrs Cawkill provided details of the relocations: one child moved to Tuxford Primary to be closer to a sibling at Tuxford Academy; another family relocated due to a change in family workplace and a third was relocated due to a change in home address. The children that have arrived into Bracken Lane have travelled from other countries and are bilingual with at least one English speaking parent.</p> <p><i>The governors asked</i> why one child had arrived and subsequently left and Mrs Cawkill explained that the family had been rehoused into an area of Retford where there were no available school places nearby. The child had a considerable distance to walk in order to get to Bracken Lane as they had no other form of transport and as a result attendance was poor. Mrs Cawkill felt that there was a better school option for that child and was able to ascertain that a school place was available in a school much closer to the child's home, therefore it was deemed in the best interests of the child and their family for them to change schools.</p> <p><i>Mr Murray joined the meeting at 17.40.</i></p> <p>Mrs Hurley advised that there are spaces in several classes throughout Thrumpton and a couple of children have moved to another school locally, however there is nothing to indicate that there are concerns about the reputation of the school within the community.</p>	<p>HC / RH</p> <p>HC / RC</p>
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Behaviour and attendance/PD update inc. P/Ex, FPEs, persistent absence and alternative provision in place (number of days/pupils)

Mrs Cawkill said that the behaviours around Bracken Lane have slipped recently but that there is a connection between reduced social services support and spikes in negative behaviour.

The governors queried who deems that social services support is no longer necessary. Mrs Cawkill explained that social care will contact the school with regards to a specific case and Mrs Skelton (Inclusion Manager for Bracken Lane) will respond with a complete summary of all the evidence from school including where there have been improvements in behaviour. Social care will then decide as to whether the support should be maintained or withdrawn.

The governors asked if there are alternative strategies within school for addressing poor behaviour and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that the school access all of the outside agency support that they can before involving social services.

The governors went on to question if the increase in poor behaviour is noticeable among the SEND children and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that this is the case for some of the issues but not all of them. Mrs Cawkill went on to say that she and Mrs Hurley are currently looking at behaviours and policies across both schools. Utilising Mrs Read who is on secondment at Thrumpton for sharing knowledge and helping to build staff resilience.

The governors asked if there was a similar pattern emerging across most schools to which Mrs Cawkill agreed that the issue appears to be across the board, an element of which could be as a result of the pandemic whereby specific year groups / developmental stages in younger children have been affected.

The governors questioned how long it takes for a child to be referred back into social care and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that where the child is known to social services, it is generally very quick. The wider issue is for those children that sit just below the ‘threshold’ for support because the threshold is so high. Mrs Cawkill stated that the schools have staff that are committed to do the very best they can to meet the children’s needs and work with the families where necessary.

Mrs Hurley went on to note that Thrumpton are seeing a similar pattern to Bracken Lane with regards to challenging behaviour. The key individuals all have additional needs and support packages in place. Mrs Hurley acknowledged that the staff continue to show great resilience and relentless optimism in dealing with challenging behaviour.

The governors wanted to know if midday supervisors have been trained to help address behaviour at lunchtimes as it has been acknowledged that an improvement in behaviour at these times has been recognised. Mrs Hurley explained that the school had experienced issues with consistency and

	<p>retention of midday supervisors at the school so rather than continuing to recruit midday supervisors the TA's (Teaching Assistants) contracts have been extended to cover lunch and break times on a rota basis. This enables the TA's to implement their skills and training and has had a positive impact on behaviour at breaktimes. Mrs Cawkill added that additional 'creative training' has been arranged on 20th February for all Teaching Assistants and midday supervisors from both schools.</p> <p><u>The governors asked</u> if the child with 2 fixed term suspensions is now back in school to which Mrs Hurley confirmed that the child is back on a reduced timetable part time and that issues at home have resulted in the need for more intervention from school before the child is ready to be reintegrated into the classroom. <u>The governors further asked</u> if the child's parents are positive about the reintroduction plans and Mrs Hurley confirmed that the parents are very supportive.</p> <p><u>The governors went on to question</u> whether there is support from additional support services for this child and Mrs Hurley confirmed that this child is involved with the Bassetlaw Primary Behaviour partnership and is on their caseload, they provide support to the school in an advisory role.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill explained that persistent absence of 12% (excluding reception) and 13.3% including reception is higher than the academy would like it to be. This figure is expected to go down throughout the remainder of the year however DfE guidance prior to Christmas with regards keeping ill children at home has not helped.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley noted that the attendance figures at Thrumpton are not as strong as at Bracken Lane and this is mostly as a result of outbreaks of illnesses including strep A, hand foot and mouth, scarlet fever and tonsillitis before Christmas.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley stated that there are current challenges regarding late arrivals and <u>the governors asked</u> if there was any specific reason for this issue. Mrs Hurley suggested that the current situation around the area with roadworks are generally being quoted by parents as the reason for lateness. In order to tackle the issue, the school are requesting a signature from parents when they arrive after the gates have closed in order to make them feel more accountable.</p> <p><u>The governors queried</u> if the concern of missing a key part of the day is relayed to the parents by the schools and both Mrs Cawkill and Mrs Hurley confirmed that parents are communicated to at pertinent times throughout the year as a whole and the issue is also discussed in any attendance meetings. There is also a poster up at school explaining the importance of arriving to school on time. Furthermore, Mrs Cawkill has moved assembly to the start of the day (knowing that this is part of the school day that all the children really enjoy) to encourage arrival on time.</p>	
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	<p>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification, audits & any Cat C trip review.</p> <p>All upcoming trips have already been approved by the governors. The BLPA Year 5 trip to London has been changed to York as a result of the disruption to transport and significantly increased coach costs.</p> <p><i>The governors asked</i> if a new risk assessment would need to be carried out as a result of the change of plan and Mrs Cawkill explained that the assessment had not yet been produced but the report will reflect the relevant trip.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley explained that bus companies will not even quote for trips to London due to cost and insurance so the school are currently considering alternatives.</p> <p><i>The governors questioned</i> if the academy are considering the costs of any trips to ensure that they are accessible to all to which Mrs Cawkill stated that FOBL have provided £100 per class for trips which helps to keep the costs low.</p> <p><i>The governors queried</i> if there is potential to tap into local charities for help with funding trips such as the Retford Lions. Mrs Hurley confirmed that this has been considered however the cost is less of an issue than availability and practicality.</p> <p><i>The governors wanted to know</i> if there are any contingency plans in place for the upcoming strikes. Both Mrs Hurley and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that they are in the process of writing plans which will go to the trustees for approval. <i>The governors further asked</i> if there is an idea of the numbers of staff potentially involved within the schools and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that the school have a good idea of the numbers affected and reassured the governors that whilst there are numerous unions, it is currently only the NEU going on strike.</p>	
AC/30/2223	<p>Review of governor action plan from self-evaluation</p> <p>The new Governance Professional will review the action plan with Mrs Garnett prior to the next meeting.</p>	NB / SG
AC/31/2223	<p>How has the AC held senior leaders to account?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges from the governors have included; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Behaviour within the academy and the support in place. o The cost of trips to ensure all children can join if they wish o The upcoming strikes 	
AC/32/2223	<p>How have the VMV of Trust / Equality been upheld?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was agreed that the VMV of the Trust & Equality has been upheld. 	
AC/33/2223	<p>Complete report to Trustees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mrs Malcom is taking a sabbatical from chair of governors for a period of time and Mrs Garnett will be the chair going forward. 	

AC/34/2223	<p>Determination of Confidentiality Equalities Act consideration 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 	
	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Academy Committee meeting Wednesday 22nd March 2023 at 5.15pm at Bracken Lane Primary.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 18.27pm</p>	

Signed by Chair:

Date: