

**Minutes of the joint Academy Committee Board Meeting  
held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 5.00pm at Bracken Lane Primary Academy**

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

<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Absence</b>
Mr G Letton (via teams)	GL	Executive Principal - Thrumpton	A
Mrs Lucy Spacey	LS	Executive Principal – Bracken Lane	
Mrs H Cawkill	HC	Principal for Bracken Lane	
Mrs R Hurley	RH	Principal for Thrumpton	
Mrs N Benson	NB	Governance Professional	

Quorum number	4	Governor's present	

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action/ by who/when</b>
<b>AC/12/2324</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received from Mrs Willows and these were accepted. No apologies were received from Mr Murray and it was noted that Mr Murray had not sent apologies for the previous meeting in September. The governance professional will contact Mr Murray regarding non-attendance <b>[AP-NB]</b>.</p> <p>Mr Letton sent his apologies, a recent change in responsibilities has resulted in a scheduling clash with another academy committee within the trust.</p> <p>Mrs Spacey introduced herself to the committee. Mrs Spacey is the new executive principal for Bracken Lane, Mr Letton remains the executive principal for Thrumpton.</p>	<b>NB</b>
<b>AC/13/2324</b>	<p><b>Declaration of interest and any changes to declarations made at the start of the year.</b> Mrs Garnett stated that she has recently changed employment and will complete a new declaration of interests form <b>[AP-SG]</b>. The remaining governors present confirmed their declarations for the 23/24 year are still accurate.</p>	<b>SG</b>

<b>AC/14/2324</b>	<p><b>Governance Housekeeping</b></p> <p>The committee discussed the recent changes to the committee membership and agreed unanimously to Appoint Mrs Simpson to Vice-Chair for 2023/24. Review and assign link roles for 2023/24.</p> <p>Link roles were discussed and agreed. Mrs Simpson agreed to be the GDPR Link governor working with Mrs Chambers (staff member) and Mrs Malcolm will be Link governor for Early Years and Personal Development.</p> <p>The governance professional will share the revised link governor list and access to support and guidance for governors to enable them to fulfil their roles <b>[AP-NB]</b>.</p>	<b>NB</b>
<b>AC/15/2324</b>	<p><b>Trust Training</b></p> <p>Attendance Training – A webinar produced by Patrick Knight was shown to all attendees. Mrs Spacey, Mrs Cawkill and Mrs Hurley followed this with an academy specific overview of what is happening with regards attendance at Bracken Lane and Thrumpton.</p> <p>Mrs Spacey explained that mental health in primary age children appears to be linked to and impacted by parental mental health issues. She added that following covid many more parents are working from home and are therefore more easily able to keep their children at home when they are mildly unwell as opposed to sending them to school. <i>The governors asked</i> if family support advisors were supplied by school or the Local Authority. Mrs Cawkill confirmed that all diverse academies schools have family support advisors either part time or full time, Thrumpton’s is full time and at Bracken Lane they work 3 days a week.</p>	
<b>AC/15/2324</b>	<p><b>Training</b></p> <p><i>The governors asked</i> what the 10% figure relates to regarding persistent absence and Mrs Cawkill explained that it is for the whole year. However, as it is measured cumulatively, many of the children categorised as persistently absent children at start the year will not be in this category by the end of the year. <i>The governors wanted to know</i> what the national attendance target is and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that the national target is 96% but that both Thrumpton and Bracken Lane are aiming for 97%.</p> <p><i>The governors wondered</i> how the academies can encourage parents to ensure their children attend. Mrs Cawkill explained that the number of children showing as permanently absent appears high, however many have been on holidays in the Autumn term and are unlikely to have any further absence, they will therefore eventually disappear from the list. At Bracken Lane, Mrs Cawkill has identified around 6 families that the family support advisor will need to be involved with. The Attend Framework is being used to help identify barriers and put a plan in place and this is a supportive approach. <i>The governors acknowledged</i> that a supportive approach is vital.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill added that it is very important to be honest with parents when they explain that consistently missing school means that their children miss</p>	

	<p>out on such things as exciting trips and fun assemblies as well as it affecting their academic progress and parents need to understand that they are disadvantaging their children. <i>The governors wondered</i> if parents appreciate that education as a gateway to their children's future. Mrs Hurley added that at Thrumpton many of the cases are similar although there is often a more complex background to the issue. Mental health issues and communication barriers are very difficult to overcome. She added that both academies have good relationships with parents however using the framework can sometimes reveal additional barriers that had not been considered and provide more focus on potential solutions. Mrs Spacey added that whilst attendance figures are good at our academies, there still needs to be a change to the culture and understanding of parents to appreciate the impact of lost learning on children. Similar work has been ongoing around non-statutory attendance and the schools have been showing parents what children are missing by not being full time.</p>	
<b>AC/16/2324</b>	<p><b>Actions / Feedback from link governor visits</b> There had been no recent link governor visits, all governors will look to schedule their visits over the coming months.</p>	
<b>AC/17/2324</b>	<p><b>Governor Housekeeping</b> All governors were reminded to review the governance action plan and consider activities that can be completed before next meeting <b>[AP-Govs]</b>.</p>	<b>Govs</b>
<b>AC/18/2324</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the last Academy committee meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b> The minutes of the last meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the vice chair.</p>	
<b>AC/19/2324</b>	<p><b>Matters arising</b> <b>AC/01/2324</b> – To note agenda item carried forward - Appoint committee vice-chair for 2023/24, Review and assign link roles for 2023 /24 <b>complete</b> <b>AC/01/2324</b> - Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest to be completed by all governors <b>AC/01/2324</b> - All governors to review the governor self-evaluation and governor action plan for 2023/24 and feedback any comments to the governance professional prior to the next meeting. <b>AC/04/2324</b> NB to arrange a session prior to the next meeting at Thrumpton for governors to complete the GDPR course online at the academy. <b>Individual reminders sent</b> <b>AC/04/2324</b> NB to communicate the 2023/24 training programme as soon as it is available <b>carried forward</b></p>	
<b>AC/20/2324</b>	<p><b>Flood Update</b> Mrs Hurley shared an update on the situation at Thrumpton following the recent devastating flood. On the Friday before October half term there was a flood warning. On the Saturday, John Ashton site manager was keeping an eye on the situation and by the evening on Saturday the water was rising. John stayed onsite until 3am when the houses close to school were evacuated. On the Sunday morning, the entire close and the whole of the school grounds, including every single room in the building was full of water.</p>	

The water was contaminated sewage water. The Trust, Head of Estates was immediately in touch with the insurance company and by Monday morning a loss adjuster was on site. The damage is extensive, all the furniture has been condemned and had to be removed. Most of the half term was spent looking at options to provide education to the children. Parents were informed about the floods on the Sunday morning. At this time the HQ building on Old Hall Dive was considered the best option as it was felt vitally important to keep the school together if possible. A wing has been allocated in the building and staff have spent a significant amount of time transforming the building (previously a post 16 science block) into a primary school.

The first of a series of meetings has been held with parents to show them around. Activity onsite has been significant with new perimeter fencing, and outdoor areas prepared, appropriate furniture has been brought in. The Academy has its own specific entrance doors and to take pressure off the carpark and access, staggered start and end times and a drop off system has been put in place. *The governors asked* if some children have already been in the new setting. Mrs Hurley confirmed that all staff have been based there for 2 and a half weeks and those children that have really needed support have been accommodated already with approximately 30 children a day being supported in the hub provision. Mrs Hurley went on to say how grateful she was for the support of the trust and all the work that has gone into the turnaround. *The governors wanted to know* more about what provision there was for catering for school meals and access to toilets etc. Mrs Hurley explained that catering will be provided via the canteen within the education centre and all other partners using the building have been supportive.

*The governors asked* for an indication as to when the school will reopen. Mrs Hurley said that the expectation is that the school building will not be ready to re-open for at least 9 months so the best-case scenario will be for the school to reopen in September 2024 to enable a smooth transition back to the building. This is yet to be confirmed as the whole building must be stripped out and completely dried out before any further work can take place. She added that as part of the renovation, flood defences are being considered.

*The governors had heard* that perception in other schools is negative with regards the academy's / trusts' response to the flooding *and wondered* if there should be some focus on positive PR for Thrumpton. *The governors also noted* anecdotally that people were concerned about the effect on their children in terms of loss of education. Mrs Hurley said that initial responses were negative for a lot of valid reasons but in the end, it was a small proportion of parents within the community. Mrs Spacey added that when she met with the loss adjuster after the flood on the Monday morning, he was incredibly sceptical that a plan could be executed to keep the school and community together and that he had thought a maximum of 3 weeks online learning was very ambitious. The governors commended the hard work that has been done.

	<p><u>Mrs Gawthorpe asked</u> for clarity for her next Safeguarding link visit for Thrumpton and Mrs Hurley confirmed that a visit next term would be a better use of time.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley explained that 9 children have transferred to other schools in total following the flood and this is a low number considering the amount of initial disruption. Mrs Spacey added that under these circumstances, it is important to be supportive of parental choice.</p>	
<p><b>AC/21/2324</b></p>	<p><b>Principal's reports – Bracken Lane</b></p> <p>Mrs Cawkill gave a summary of the content of the report for Bracken Lane</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Social media in KS2, (TikTok and WhatsApp) continues to be an issue. It is always highlighted to parents that there is a huge safeguarding concern for children having access to social media accounts on their own phones and also on their parents' devices. There appears to be further work to do with parents. One attempt has been made at inviting parents in to discuss the issues and no-one came. This will be addressed at a share the learning event.</p> <p>There are several families working with family support workers due to issues already highlighted and discussed around attendance.</p> <p><b>AIR report</b></p> <p>Feedback from the AIR report has been positive overall and Mrs Cawkill asked if there were any questions. <u>The governors asked</u> if Mrs Cawkill could share the highlights.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill explained that areas to work on had been identified on the AIP for Bracken Lane and the results of the AIR were very much in line with that. The AIP is currently being rewritten to better reflect the feedback. The curriculum needs to be written down in a clear and concise way and many of the primaries are in a similar position, Wainwright primary will support with this having recently been visited by Ofsted. Mrs Spacey added that the rigor and expectation seen through section 5 inspections has notched up. As a result of covid there had been interim arrangements and now with the removal of these arrangements, the deep dive process has been refined and this change is notable. It is now essential to ensure that all great practice that goes on is recorded and can be demonstrated effectively. Sequencing needs to be clear to show the progression made.</p> <p><u>The governors wanted to know</u> if this work is primarily for Ofsted or if it has value. Mrs Cawkill confirmed that it does have value, when you take away well versed staff from areas of strength the path needs to be re reviewed to ensure that the curriculum is still having the right impact. Clear thought processes need to be demonstrated in terms of paperwork to ensure delivery and future planning is more straight forward. She added that assessment is also an area to develop. Assessment at the point of teaching is good but it is important to use the assessment to inform teaching and planning. Expectations overall are higher, but this is not a bad thing.</p>	

Mrs Cawkill told the governors that the 3<sup>rd</sup> objective on the AIP is about pupil leadership, and personal development for children. Understanding pupils preferred learning styles and giving children a voice. PD is a vast subject area and can often get lost. Part of this work will make clear what are the most important aspects of PD to be covered. Mrs Spacey added that where PD is done well, it feels like it runs through everything.

The governors asked about formative and summative assessments for SEND. Mrs Cawkill confirmed that [BSquared](#) is being used alongside [Provision Map](#). She added that there is a need to get better at ensuring that this transfers to the classrooms and that good SEND practice is great for everyone.

#### **SEF**

Changes on the SEF has been reworded but the content remains the same.

#### **Behaviour and attendance**

There was one suspension last half term and there have been no issues since. Trauma informed training has been revisited to accommodate newer staff and there are currently 3 children in school who require a different approach in terms of safe space and processing time etc.

Midday supervisors have had additional training on behaviour as requested. Attendance is 96.7%, persistent absence accounts for 22 children, only 6 involved with family support. Attendance meetings are held fortnightly and children are positively congratulated for attending by Mrs Cawkill.

#### **Sports premium**

Sports premium covers staffing, wow sports and outdoor sports alongside the forest school package.

#### **Stakeholder engagement**

All parents were asked to complete a feedback form at parents evenings and this presented better results in terms of volume of responses, nothing significantly negative was picked up with the majority of responses being positive. Some parents did not view their children's books which is a concern. The governors asked if there were any trends from feedback received and Mrs Cawkill said there were no obvious trends, one or two grumbles were picked up and have been dealt with. The governors further asked what parents thoughts were on what their children were learning. Mrs Cawkill said that this time parents responded more knowledgeably to those questions, however a lot didn't know about rewind Friday so some more PR around this might be valuable.

Mrs Cawkill said that staff survey results from the Edurio survey in the summer were interesting in that some staff don't associate **themselves** as being a member of the trust. Staff don't often recognise coaching as coaching and CPD is also not considered as having been received if staff haven't been out on courses even though much training is delivered in house.

	<p><b>Admissions</b> There have been 5 new admissions, there will be another 15 or 16 starting in January. There are 35 applications in for September already.</p> <p><b>Risks</b> Risks have been removed for the register since the last meeting as they are no longer of concern. The drains have been replaced on front of school. There was an on-site accident where the caretaker needed to attend hospital, he is ok.</p> <p>Data protection review has been completed. No complaints or claims have been received and there have been no data protection breaches.</p> <p><b>Academy specific updates</b> Mrs Smith (year 2) is leaving at Christmas as she has secured a full-time job at a school closer to home. One of the teaching assistants has put in a request for reduction of hours which has affected wraparound care, two adverts are out now to recruit.</p>	
<b>AC/22/2324</b>	<p><b>How has the AC held senior leaders to account?</b> Challenges from the governors have included.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance</li> <li>- Buildings and maintenance and costs involved</li> <li>- Curriculum</li> <li>- Stakeholder engagement</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/23/2324</b>	<p><b>How have the VMV of Trust / Equality been upheld?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was agreed that the VMV of the Trust &amp; Equality has been upheld. The academy committee members felt that there had been a respectful and positive discussion, high expectations and aspirations.</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/24/2324</b>	<p><b>Complete report to Trustees</b> The report to trustees was completed and noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The committee welcome Lucy Spacey, Executive Principal</li> <li>o Much of the meeting revolved around the flood at Thrumpton and the amazing efforts of all involved in setting up the school at Retford Education centre</li> <li>o Progress has been made with the governance action plan, in particular a review and assignment of link roles</li> <li>o The recorded Attendance training was well received by those at the meeting</li> <li>o Fiona Simpson has been appointed as vice chair.</li> <li>o Sarah Garnett has changed job and completed a new declaration of interests form</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/25/2324</b>	<p><b>Determination of Confidentiality</b> <b>Equalities Act consideration</b> AC members considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There were no confidential items discussed.</li> <li>- There had been no Equalities Act implications.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> Academy Committee meeting <b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 5.00pm</b> at Bracken Lane.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 19:04</p>	

Signed by Chair:



Date: 20/12/2023.

**Sarah Garnett, Chair of Governors**