

**Minutes of the joint Academy Committee Board Meeting
held on Wednesday 24th January 2024 at 5.00pm at Thrumpton Primary Academy (Retford
Education Centre)**

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	MM	Parent governor	
Miss S Garnett – Chair of Governors	SG	Parent governor	
Mrs S Willows	SW	Parent governor	A

In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Mrs Lucy Spacey	LS	Executive Principal	
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	6
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Item No	Item	Action/ by who/when
AC/26/2324	Tour Mrs Hurley gave all governors a tour of the school for governors to see the work that has gone into bringing Thrumpton into the Retford Education centre.	
AC/27/2324	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Mrs Farrar and Mrs Willows due to work commitments and these were accepted by the committee. Mrs Malcom explained that she will need to leave the meeting at 6pm.	
AC/28/2324	Declaration of interest and any changes to declarations made at the start of the year. There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda. The chair asked if anyone had any declarations to update. Governors confirmed that the declarations given at the beginning of the academic year were correct.	
AC/29/2324	Training Given the requirement for the meeting to close no later than 6:45pm to vacate the building, it was agreed that the training overview on Prevent and the update on the School Improvement Model will be added to the agenda	

	of the next meeting. ACTION: NB will ensure these items are added to the agenda for the March meeting.	NB
AC/30/2324	Actions / Feedback from link governor visits There have been no recent visits and there were no reports to discuss.	
AC/31/2324	Minutes of the last Academy committee meeting on 22nd November 2023 The minutes of the last meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the chair.	
AC/32/2324	Matters arising AC/12/2324 Contact Mr Murray regarding non-attendance. NB complete AC/13/2324 Complete new declaration of interests form. SG complete AC/14/2324 Share new Link governors document with contacts. NB complete AC/17/2324 Review governors action plan. GOVS ongoing	
AC/33/2324	<p>Principal's reports Mrs Hurley gave a summary of the content of the report for Thrumpton Primary Academy.</p> <p>Safeguarding – There is nothing new to report with regards safeguarding, social media, WhatsApp groups, Snapchat and mental health of parents continue to be the main safeguarding concerns and challenges. As part of the curriculum review Mrs Hurley will looking at PSHE to identify further things that can be done to support children and help manage those complex situations.</p> <p>Amanda is new in role this year as family support advisor and she has been working with Patrick Knight, Strategic Development Lead for Safeguarding to get up to speed with the systems and processes, particularly with ‘my concern’ and categorising concerns coming in.</p> <p>Academy Improvement Plan (AIP)– The AIP has not been a priority due to the flooding, subsequent relocation and all activity that was involved in getting up and running. Now the school is settling into the new site and with Mrs Spacey coming on board as Executive Principal it has been a good opportunity to review the AIP to ensure the main priorities are still relevant. Key themes will remain around curriculum development, current vision for SEND children particularly those that are classroom based, personal development and progress & attainment.</p> <p><i>The governors asked</i> how the SEND children had coped with the move. Mrs Hurley said the children have been incredible and the addition of the burrow has been very helpful, the staff have worked very hard to make sure the provision is right. Although the location is different, the support has remained the same. The governors all agreed that the space is excellent, and we are fortunate to have been able to move here as a whole school.</p>	

Behaviours - There has been a slight increase during unstructured time of behaviour incidents, and this is a result of not having Project Play and space for football etc. There is still work to do to find opportunities in the new space. The governors wanted to know if PE is still being delivered. Mrs Hurley said that due to limited space outside, PE is still going ahead but in the hall. The hall is a good space and is considerably bigger than the hall at Thrumpton. The additional fencing on the front has been much welcomed by the children to enable play with scooters and wheely boards. Mrs Hurley is confident incidents will reduce once the new space can be utilised better. The governors further asked if the increase in behaviour incidents tends to occur during lunchtimes. Mrs Hurley confirmed it was and both she and Mrs Spacey said that it's a testament to how well Project Play had been working. The governors then wanted to know if there is space to store outdoor equipment and Mrs Hurley confirmed that this is all work in progress.

The governors then asked if there is a timeline for getting back to Thrumpton, are we still looking at September? Mrs Hurley explained that it could be sooner than September, the building has been stripped, is almost completely dry and contracts are out to tender. The plan to move back to the school will need careful planning to consider the impact on everyone, most importantly the children particularly those participating in SATS.

Attendance 95.9% which is very good and considering the distance from home for some students. Mrs Hurley said the drive through drop off works well and parents seem to have welcomed this. Mrs Simpson added that she recently witnessed the drop off and said that the process was very slick, staff all had big smiles on their faces and helped the children out of the cars and it appeared extremely well organised. It was noted that pick up at the end of the day is more difficult as it is important that the children are released safely and parking on site is limited. There are staggered release times throughout a 15-minute window.

Mrs Hurley added that the younger children have become more independent and confident as a result. The governors noted that the professionalism and hard work of the staff is reflected by the attendance figures and should be commended.

Mrs Hurley said that during the January intake an additional 16 nursery children have been accepted which is a testament to the early years team considering the temporary location of the school in proximity to its real home.

Persistent absence figures are as a result of holidays taken during term time.

Pupil Premium strategy was attached to the principals' report for review. Mrs Hurley explained that it is a long-term plan and therefore hasn't updated much since last time. There were no questions from governors.

Staff wellbeing Mrs Hurley explained to governors that the reality of being here has started to hit some staff over the last couple of weeks after the

original 'Dunkirk spirit' they originally experienced. Mrs Hurley said that she feels certain that listening to staff feedback, making tweaks and working together to get project play and lunchtimes working better will improve staff wellbeing.

The Outstanding Teacher Programme Ward Rounds were hosted here, students were working in the hub and came downstairs to Thrumpton and were very complimentary about the academy.

Compliance

Admissions policy – No changes

Sept 2025 there have been 94 apps, 31 first place.

The academy has lost 11 children, 2 were as a result of the flooding situation and the others were all families that lived further away and had been choosing to drive but when the flooding happened, they looked to move to schools closer to home. 2 new children have joined the academy in year 2 and year 5.

The complaint from 2018 has now been settled out of court and dealt with by solicitors and there is no longer a requirement for staff to go to court.

Mrs Cawkill gave a summary of the content of the report for **Bracken Lane Primary Academy**

Mrs Cawkill explained that she has had her Academy Review Meeting (ARM) and Mrs Spacey had her Education Review Meeting (ERM). The ERM usually forms the basis of the principals' report. The last ERM for Bracken Lane was in November and therefore some of the items will have moved on, others are longer term and some of it will look slightly different with Mrs Spacey having taken over as Executive Principal from Mr Letton.

Safeguarding

Social media continues to be a challenge particular in key stage 2 but moving down through years 3 and 4. In particular, TikTok and WhatsApp cause the most challenges. Often children are using their parents WhatsApp accounts and parents do not realise the issues that can develop. Parents are being challenged where necessary, and work is underway to update displays in school. A discussion has been held to review the online safety board and how it can reflect the challenges experienced at Bracken Lane so that in assemblies it can be referred to, to help children understand what they should and shouldn't be accessing. Governors asked if there is any way of stopping children using WhatsApp and Mrs Cawkill acknowledged the school are not able to stop it but must deal with issues that cause conflict in school as a result of its use. Governors acknowledged that the genie is out of the bottle so teaching children to be kind and respectful should be a focus. Mrs Cawkill agreed but also stated that there is a duty of care and the government have made it clear that even if there are things happening outside of school it is the schools' responsibility to deal with it. Whilst the schools cannot stop children using social media. they can educate parents and show them how to implement parental controls. The governors asked if

there are any other schools that may have best practice on how to address this. Mrs Cawkill explained that all schools are dealing with these issues but responsibility to educate children and parents has fallen upon schools. The governors then asked if parents are responsive to attempts to 'educate them'. Mrs Cawkill explained that discussion on a 1-1 basis tend to be more effective but wider invitations to events at school aren't attended. Mrs Cawkill said that the school continue to look at ways that this message can be put across to parents.

There is currently one child protection order in place. The safeguarding checklist has been shared. There were no further questions regarding safeguarding from governors.

ERM – Mrs Spacey summarised the main points from the report. Priority points since the AIR (Academy Improvement Plan) have been around curriculum development looking at the three I's - Intent, Implementation and Impact.

Ensuring that the intent is hitting the mark and ensuring that the personal development element is covered. Including contextual priorities within the Personal Development curriculum that are specific to Bracken Lane. Looking at individual curriculum scores in terms of the medium-term strand of the AIP and ensuring that the impact section of the three I's is there in that children are remembering what they are being taught and how that sequences together to give them the key skills that they need.

The governors asked if that was a recommendation from the Ofsted report. Mrs Spacey confirmed that it feeds directly into Ofsted and does reflect what was picked up. The current framework is focussed on quality of education and Mrs Spacey feels that this framework and the current Ofsted system that we are in is the best one we've been in for many years as it focuses on quality of education. Mrs Spacey went on to explain that the Personal Development element is the area that needs more work to ensure all elements are right and pulled together towards a comprehensive plan and intent. The governors further asked if this is more around development of young people in terms of behaviours and social skills rather than educational performance and Mrs Spacey confirmed that it is about values, developing behaviour systems and adding enrichment to their individual interests. For example, at Bracken Lane one of the key behaviours being developed is around independence, so the focus around the football club will be on getting the children to be responsible for setting up matches, doing match reports, washing their own kits, teamwork etc.

The governors asked about early years and if new staff had come in to help develop their experience and expertise in this area. Mrs Cawkill explained that it is important that there is capacity within the team to support new teachers coming in. Currently there is a new teacher in nursery and an experienced teacher but new to early years working in reception being supported by Mrs Cawkill. There are also experts within the trust that can be used for support, to build networks and share knowledge. Governors stated that Bracken Lane are fortunate to have some very experienced

	<p>teaching assistants. <u>Governors then asked</u> if Early Excellence material had been used. Mrs Spacey confirmed that it is being used and there has been investment into early excellence furniture and resourcing which is due to arrive any day now. Mrs Cawkill explained that there has been nothing new in nursery in 13 years. The room and toilets can't be changed but the environment is only as good as the person at the front of the class. <u>Governors asked</u> if staff had been to look at Early Excellence and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that she has visited but it is too far and too expensive for all staff to be able to go there.</p> <p>Mrs Malcom left the meeting at 18:09.</p> <p>Mrs Spacey added that the IRIS kit has been relaunched. Every academy has 2 kits. This is a video editing tool that allows you to film yourself in the classroom environment, clips can be shared onto an online platform that can only be viewed if the owner chooses to share it. This is useful tool to help work with other academies to share knowledge, skills and best practice. Good examples of phonics lessons can then be shared for example. <u>Governors asked</u> if it is possible to see how effective a shared video is, for example how often other academies are looking to Bracken Lane to see good practice. Mrs Cawkill explained that it can, but clips need to be shared carefully to ensure it is used a development tool internally. The filming is on how the children interact with staff, Bracken Lane have a phonics one, a retrieval one for example to check how children learn. <u>Governors then asked</u> if is used for staff development and Mrs Cawkill confirmed that it mostly for staff development and used in a positive staff culture to share good practice and not to pick up on faults. <u>The governors wanted to know</u> how long IRIS has been in use. Mrs Cawkill said that Bracken Lane have been using this technology for about 4 years. The system is set up so that it doesn't distract the children and then afterwards it can be viewed, edited and notes added. Mrs Spacey added that when it is used well it is non-threatening, the team can be asked to share thoughts and trouble shoot when certain things aren't working. It works well when the team are collaborative and supportive of one another.</p> <p><u>The governors then asked</u> how it works from a safeguarding point of view as it is filming the children. Mrs Cawkill and Mrs Spacey confirmed that it is a secure platform which cannot be shared externally to the trust. <u>The governors wanted to know more</u> about how it works and if parents are aware that it is being used, in particular those parents that do not want their children being photographed and videoed. Mrs Cawkill reassured governors that the kit is 'safeguarding proof' however governors were concerned that children were being filmed without parental consent. Mrs Cawkill reiterated that the recording cannot be accessed by anyone outside of the trust, only trusted persons within the trust can see the recordings. Mrs Wyles in her capacity as Safeguarding link governors requested a separate meeting to discuss this further. ACTION: HC to arrange a meeting with CW.</p> <p>Mrs Spacey explained that she understands the concerns of governors but wanted to assure them that recordings can only be seen to those that have been given permission to view them.</p>	<p>HC</p>
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	<p>Discussion continued and <u>governors suggested</u> that parents should be made aware that this was happening in school. Mrs Spacey explained that the parent consent form that some parents choose not to sign is around sharing of photographs on the school website, or newsletter for example. As these recordings are not being shared with the public or outside of the trust, the consent form does not apply. Whilst governors fully support and understand that the tool is helpful for teaching development, some remained concerned that the academy were not being open with parents by not informing them that the tool is being used. ACTION: Mrs Spacey agreed to review the consent form.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill stated that she would not want to give the impression that the academy are randomly videoing children without a valid reason and said that she would welcome a visit from those concerned governors to see the equipment in action to better understand how it works and alleviate any concerns that they might have. PREVIOUS ACTION</p> <p>The chair said that consent forms are shared regularly and are very clear and said, ‘speaking as a parent of children in one of the schools’, she is happy that the tool is being used to improve teaching and outcomes for the children. Whilst she can understand governors’ concerns, she feels assured that the advancement in technology is for shared best practice within the trust only.</p> <p>Behaviours No significant behaviour issues New teacher in year 2 who is an ECT 1 and being mentored by the vice principal, she has just started teaching and is accessing all the ECT training.</p> <p>Attendance 26 children have been off today, unfortunately this will impact on the figures. Persistent Absence is down to 6.7%, which is good. Attend framework is being engaged with by most families and attendance has improved, one family has relocated which should improve attendance for those children in their new school. No suspensions</p> <p>Pupil premium Pupil Premium is now at 20% which is 50% higher than pre covid. Pupil Premium strategy has been shared again. The strategy is for everyone not just PP children. 25% are accessing clubs which is an improvement but we are looking at pupil voice to improve uptake.</p> <p>Compliance 36 first place applications, approximately 80 overall. 15 new children to nursery have started and over 20 staying for lunch. 2 leavers, 1 new starter and another starting next week and 1 more after half term. 3 spaces in reception.</p>	<p>LS</p> <p>HC</p>
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	<p>No H&S issues to report No complaints or claims No data protection breaches</p> <p>Academy Specific Information The Christmas event raised over £1000 and thanks to Mr Wyles for playing Father Christmas. Raised enough to fund everything next year like for like as this year. Easter fundraising is now starting.</p> <p>After School club Miss Elisha Wood has been appointed to run after school club, she is being supported by 2 TA's, Elisha is a fantastic addition, the children love her, and she has quickly become part of the team. As Elisha is hard of hearing, the school have invested in a new doorbell with a flashing light and a vibrating alarm, and these adjustments have been useful for all staff.</p>	
AC/34/2324	<p>Review of Governor Action Plan – Priority 4 It was agreed that this agenda item would be moved to the next meeting in March due to time constraints. ACTION NB will ensure this item is added to the agenda for the March meeting.</p>	NB
AC/35/2324	<p>How has the AC held senior leaders to account? Challenges from the governors have included.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour, in particular misuse of social media outside of school - Safeguarding - Teacher Development and Training 	
AC/36/2324	<p>How have the VMV of Trust / Equality been upheld? - It was agreed that the VMV of the Trust & Equality has been upheld. The academy committee members felt that there had been a respectful and positive discussion, high expectations and aspirations.</p>	
AC/37/2324	<p>Complete report to Trustees The report to trustees was completed and noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The drive through drop-off system at Thrumpton is working extremely well. - The Christmas event at Bracken Lane raised over £1000. - The new team member running after school club at Bracken Lane has been an exceptional addition to the team. - All governors received a tour of Thrumpton prior to the meeting and were impressed by the setup and work that has gone in to making the building feel like Thrumpton - A new potential appointed governor has requested a meeting with the chair and will be invited to attend the next committee meeting. 	
AC/38/2324	<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 Tuesday 12th March at 5.00pm at Bracken Lane.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 18:38</p>	

Signed by Chair:



Date: 05/02/2024

Sarah Garnett, Chair of Governors