

**Minutes of the joint Academy Committee Board Meeting  
held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 5.00pm at Thrumpton Primary Academy**

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

<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Absence</b>
Mrs L 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	5	Governor's present	8
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<b>Item No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action/ by who/when</b>
<b>AC/67/2324</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received from Mrs Gawthorpe and Mrs Farrar who are away on holiday, and these were accepted by the committee.	
<b>AC/68/2324</b>	<b>Declaration of interest and any changes to declarations made at the start of the year.</b> 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.	
<b>AC/69/2324</b>	<b>Safeguarding Training</b> The chair asked all governors to confirm that they had viewed the Safeguarding recording sent via email ahead of the meeting. Those governors present confirmed that they had. The chair asked governors if there were any questions following the training.  There were no questions following the training. Governors confirmed by signature that they had read the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education, part 2.	

	<p>Governors commented that the Safeguarding training demonstrates that the Trust are already ahead of the game with regards the KCSIE changes.</p>	
<b>AC/70/2324</b>	<p><b>Actions / Feedback from link governor visits</b></p> <p>There have been no recent visits and there were no reports to discuss. Mrs Cawkill shared that new governor Mr Wintle had been to look around at Bracken Lane prior to his appointment.</p> <p><u>Governors added</u> that they are all keen to get back to visiting more regularly but have been conscious, with all the recent upheaval at both sites, not to get in the way. Both Mrs Cawkill and Mrs Hurley reiterated that governors would always be made welcome in the schools and the children like to have the opportunity to talk to visitors.</p> <p>Mrs Cleary expressed that she had recently joined a nursery trip with Bracken Lane and that she had been very impressed with the clear safeguarding and organisation of the trip.</p>	
<b>AC/71/2324</b>	<p><b>Governance Action Plan</b></p> <p>The governance professional explained that the recent self-evaluation and draft action plan for 24/25 has been shared with everyone prior to the meeting. Having identified the areas for improvement, governors should now be thinking about what actions they might take that would help close those gaps. The governance professional agreed to populate the action plan with some suggestions for activities and actions that the committee can adopt and all governors agreed to consider the plan and make suggestions moving forwards. <b>[AP-NB/Govs]</b></p> <p>The governance professional shared some ideas such as in increasing governor profile with parents and the community by sharing governor pen pictures on the website.</p> <p>The principals re-iterated their open invitation to all governors to come into the schools for link visits, but also to pop in on a more informal basis and hear the children read and get a feel for the school.</p> <p><u>The governors added</u> that it is their understanding that the new leader of Ofsted is keen on governor input and how safeguarding is considered in particular around PE, Art and Music. <u>Governors also commented</u> that from a recent visit to both schools, the children appear well used to adults coming around the schools. Mrs Spacey agreed that the open culture within the MAT means that there are often staff members from other academies coming into the school, so children are used to it and embrace it.</p>	<p><b>NB 22/07/24</b> <b>GOVS</b> <b>25/09/24</b></p>
<b>AC/72/2324</b>	<p><b>Governance housekeeping for 2024/25</b></p> <p>All governors present voted unanimously to the reappointment of Mrs Garnett as Chair of Governors 2024/25 with effect from the autumn term meeting</p>	

	<p>All governors present voted unanimously to the reappointment of Mrs Simpson as Vice Chair of Governors 2024/25 with effect from the autumn term meeting</p> <p>All governors present voted unanimously to the reappointment of Mrs Malcolm for a four-year term office.</p> <p>The Annual Report to Trustees was completed following discussion with all committee members.</p> <p>In identifying challenges for governors moving forwards as part of the annual report to trustees, there was a discussion about the changing context of the local community. <u>Governors asked</u> if data can be provided on the EAL (English as an Additional Language) students. Mrs Spacey explained that data would not be significant as numbers are low. <u>The governors than asked</u> for clarity around the definition of EAL noting that some schools have different levels for EAL students. Mrs Spacey explained that in terms of removing children from a data set, there is tight criteria around this. Much of the decision will come down to communication and will be assessed in house based on all the intelligence we have and adapted accordingly. Some children may arrive with EAL on the register however they may have no need for adaptation within school.</p> <p>Mr Wintle shared from his experience that he can recommend some programmes where schools have used stages based on parental preference. Mr Wintle will share this information with the Principals. <b>[AP-MW]</b></p> <p><u>Governors were concerned</u> how staff would manage a situation whereby children were speaking to one another in their native language that staff cannot understand. Mrs Cawkill said that these children are very young and communicate in English but may acknowledge with one another that they also speak the same language, adding that in some other schools within the Trust there are large cohorts of foreign speaking children, and speaking in both English and their other language is encouraged and supported.</p>	<b>MW 25/09/24</b>
<b>AC/73/2324</b>	<b>Minutes of the last Academy committee meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024</b> The minutes of the last meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the chair.	
<b>AC/74/2324</b>	<b>Matters arising</b> <b>AC/54/2324</b> The governance professional to write to Mrs Cleary and Mr Wintle welcoming them formally and initiating their induction. <b>Complete</b>	
<b>AC/75/2324</b>	<b>Principal's reports – Thrumpton</b> <b>Thrumpton SATS results</b> Mrs Hurley shared the headline results from SATS explaining that the results were pleasing however maths outcomes were not as strong as they would have liked. Two new pupils had been admitted to Year 6 mid yer who were new to the country. These children should be able to be removed from the data set so figures were shared based on this.	

	<p>79% in Reading – [national at 74%] 79% in Writing – [national at 72%] 61% in Maths – [below national at 73%] 79% in Grammar – which indicates a 16% improvement on last year as a result of changes made to our approach to spelling.</p> <p><u>The governors questioned</u> if the improvements were due to the cohort or the work that has gone into them. Mrs Hurley confirmed that it was the change of strategy for the teaching of spelling. Mrs Hurley said that all elements of the teaching of match are good and strong but that a focus on moving beyond the Power Maths scheme has been identified for next year. The combined outcomes were at 57% (national average was 61%), however results were 4 % better than last year.</p> <p>Mrs Spacey added that there appears to have been a polarisation in maths with some schools doing very well and some not very well. The work that Sarah Kahler is doing across the Trust will ensure that there is focus on using and applying learning from nursery all the way through. <u>The governors further wondered</u> if there was a lack of confidence in children when it came to reasoning in maths. Mrs Cawkill explained that there are multiple parts to the more difficult maths questions, and it is important for children to show their working, some of the issue is in processing stamina. Children can often complete these types of question in the classroom but given a time limit some may struggle to finish the whole question.</p> <p><b>Thrumpton Outcomes</b> Mrs Hurley referred to her principals’ report and the statutory outcomes explaining that GLD (Good Level of Development) was 76% up by 6% from last year. Improvement in phonics and greater rigor to writing in early years has helped with this improvement. In terms of phonics, huge gains have been seen over the last 3 years from 67% to 97 % of the cohort passing the phonics test. <u>Governors commented</u> that this is an excellent score, given the impact of the flood.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley described the Multiplication check which is carried out in year 4 assessing whether children know times tables facts. The academy has adopted the <a href="#">Number-sense</a> times table strategy which focusses on learning 36 key facts. In 2022 30% of children got full marks but in the last 2 years 71% and 70% have achieved full marks with 96% achieving 22 plus marks this year.</p> <p><b>Thrumpton AIP (Academy Improvement Plan) priorities</b> for next year. Mrs Hurley told the committee that work will continue on the <b>curriculum</b> with more focus on implementation and application of learning. The work on <b>oracy</b> will be further built upon next year with the implementation of Voice 21 to engage children in talking about their learning across all subjects within the curriculum.</p>	
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The final priority is **SEND**, ensuring that paperwork and learning plans are informing teaching and learning in the classroom

#### **Thrumpton Behaviour**

Mrs Hurley referred to the principal's report and asked if there were any questions with regards behaviour, no questions were raised.

#### **Thrumpton Attendance**

The principals report contains an extract from the Attendance dashboard produced by the Department for Education. Mrs Hurley explained that there is a slight lag in the data. Attendance for children of statutory school age to end June was 95.3%. This is still not as strong as pre-covid attendance figures. However, the biggest challenge continues to be around non statutory attendance and ensuring that parents value children being in school in the same way as from age 5. Thrumpton sits within the top 20-30% of schools for attendance this year to date. With regards persistent absence much of the figure relates to holidays and parents factoring the fines into the cost of their holiday. The governors wanted to know what was being done to address the persistently absent. Mrs Hurley responded that those families that are causing concern are working with the support worker, others within the PA category are accounted for by genuine illness or holidays.

#### **Thrumpton Admissions and staffing structure**

Mrs Hurley told governors that the staffing structure remains as is with two Teaching Assistant posts being recruited to cover maternity leave and a retirement from September.

Admissions information has been shared within the principal's report with 30 reception places filled and 1 appeal this year which is pleasing given the recent upheaval. There are some spaces throughout school which is unusual but reflects the birth rate and local demographics. There was a confidential discussion regarding admissions.

#### **Principal's reports - Bracken Lane**

##### **Bracken Lane SATS results**

Mrs Cawkill shared that headline results from SATS were as follows:

Reading 77%

Writing moderated 77% (10% at greater depth)

Maths 83% which is 4% lower than last year (17% greater depth)

Combined 67% (may come up to 70% after remarking)

Mrs Cawkill added that there were no surprises in terms of the overall data adding that GPS (grammar, punctuation and spelling) was better overall and that results are consistent with the cohort. Mrs Spacey added that the curriculum work will be helping with the approach towards getting more children progressing into working at greater depth.

Governors congratulated both principals on the initial SATS results.

**Bracken Lane Outcomes**

At Bracken Lane a new to early years teacher has been in place which has enabled a granular approach to communication and language. Only 2 children are not meeting the GLD standard. There has been positive progress with 100% personal and social and physical. 4 pupils did not achieve, all have adverse childhood experiences (ACES). Mrs Cawkill said that she is confident that those children will catch up by Christmas next year. Phonics 90% passed in year 1. 93% at year 2.

With regards the multiplication check, Mrs Cawkill explained that the picture at Thrumpton this year is very similar to that of Bracken Lane last year. This year at Bracken Lane 93% got full marks, the remaining 2 children got 24 out of 25.

The governors were keen to know if the children tested in year 4 are continuing to use those multiplication skills in year 5 and 6. Mrs Cawkill said that rewards have been brought back into years 5 and 6 to encourage a continuation in using these skills. Mrs Spacey added that it is important that we are not teaching children to pass tests. The phonics and Read Write Inc takes to children up to year 2. There is then a jump into year 3 in terms of the breadth and depth of their knowledge and understanding. More work is ongoing around fluency of reading to keep the momentum going.

Governors stated that they were pleased to see such positive results in early years, particularly given the upheaval experienced by both schools this year.

**Bracken Lane – AIP priorities**

Mrs Cawkill told the governors that Bracken Lane is looking at curriculum and oracy together with Thrumpton. The key for Bracken Lane is to develop consistency, making it consistent everywhere with everybody for everybody.

Mrs Spacey added that a change in staffing at Bracken Lane provides an exciting opportunity to move some staff around and this emphasises the importance of consistency and clarity. The governors questioned whether the need for consistency provides an argument for specific year teachers.

Mrs Cawkill explained that it benefits the whole school if teaching staff understand one another’s roles and responsibilities and challenges.

**Bracken Lane Attendance**

Mrs Cawkill informed governors that attendance for children of statutory school age to end June was 95.9%.

Non statutory was lower. Persistent absence is at 6.2% and lists 11 children however, there are only 2 children under 90% due to persistently absence rather than holidays or illness. Given all the upheaval towards the end of this year this is encouraging.

	<p><b>Bracken Lane Admissions and staffing structure</b> Staffing changes have already been explained and is listed in the report. Two TA posts are currently being advertised for September.</p> <p>Nursery – numbers are high Reception is 26 for September which reflects the falling birth rate Movement of children out of the school has been children relocating due to housing.</p> <p><i>The governors wondered</i> if the perception that Bracken Lane is always full needs to change as it deters parents from selecting Bracken Lane as a first choice. Mrs Cawkill agreed and told the governors that she is working with the marketing department on this. Other governors agreed that there appeared to have been a worry amongst parents of younger children that they might not get in.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill added that one of the other reasons for parents not choosing Bracken Lane may be their need to utilise wraparound care and holiday clubs which Bracken Lane is not able to offer for nursery. The governors expressed that expansion in early years funding might have an impact moving forwards as the political landscape changes. <i>Governors then questioned</i> why the birth rate is low. Mrs Hurley said there are more single child families, other governors added that childcare costs are so high for working parents which may influence this.</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill told the committee that Nic Eade has passed the NPQBL (Behaviour &amp; Culture Lead) which should be celebrated and is great for the school.</p>	
<b>AC/76/2324</b>	<p><b>Updated Scheme of Delegation</b> <a href="#">Governance Strategy with changes</a></p> <p>The governance professional explained that this document has been shared for information only adding that the Strategy will be reviewed and re-issued in line with Trust policy in January 2025.</p>	
<b>AC/77/2324</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>- Valuable discussion and questions on data</li> <li>- EAL</li> <li>- Attendance</li> <li>- Outcomes</li> <li>- Academy Improvement Plan</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/78/2324</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/79/2324</b>	<p><b>Complete report to Trustees</b></p> <p>The report to trustees was completed and noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Celebration on outcomes for both schools</li> <li>- Celebration of Staff development</li> <li>- Attendance figures are good</li> <li>- Outcomes are good, given the amount of disruption</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/80/2324</b>	<p><b>Determination of Confidentiality</b></p> <p><b>Equalities Act consideration</b></p> <p>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>- Confidential items were discussed AC/75/2324 (Page 45) and these have been acknowledged and removed from the minutes.</li> <li>- There had been no Equalities Act implications.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting:</b></p> <p>Academy Committee meeting <b>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 5.15pm</b> at Bracken Lane.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 18:35</p>	

Signed by Vice Chair: *F Simpson*

Date: 25/09/2024

**Fiona Simpson, Vice Chair of Governors**