

Minutes

THE LINK SECONDARY LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (LGB) MEETING ON TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 6PM

Attendees:	Rama Venchard Karen Hayward (KH) John Reilly (JR) Sameera Saleem (SS) Jenny Sutcliffe (JS) Sandy Turner (ST) Maryanne Vernede (MV)	OHC Trustee/ Chair Staff Governor Principal, Ex-officio Parent Governor Governor Governor Parent Governor
Also present:	Sarah Brooks-Watson (SBW) Amanda Griffiths (AG) Hannah Wallwork (HW) Susanne Wicks	Management Accountant Deputy Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Clerk
Absent:	Annabel Faulkner Jane Gibbs Will Scott	Governor Governor Governor

Item	Action
<p>1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Annabel Faulkner, Jane Gibbs and Will Scott. Governors consented to their absence.</p>	
<p>2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS RV welcomed all to the meeting and particularly Sarah Brooks-Watson, for whom this was the first LGB meeting.</p>	
<p>3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RV declared an interest as a project manager for OHCAT and Trustee of Orchard Hill College. RV encouraged all Governors to complete and return an annual declaration form to the school or the clerk.</p>	ALL
<p>4 SKILLS AUDIT ANALYSIS SW undertook to compile an analysis of the results of the skills audits once all Governors had completed and returned their form.</p>	SW

5 CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i The LGB agreed to recommend that the Board of Trustees appoint Rama Venchard as chair of the LGB until the Autumn Term 2020.
- ii As the current vice-chair, Annabel Faulkner was not present at this meeting, the LGB undertook to agree the recommendation of vice-chair by email.

SW

6 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- i Subject to the correction of a typographical error on page 8, the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.
- ii The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

7 MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Open Minutes

- i JR confirmed that Ofsted training had been delivered to Governors by David Scott.
- ii RV confirmed that all portfolios had been reviewed to ensure they dovetail with the new Ofsted Inspection Framework.
- iii JR undertook to circulate the Disaster Recovery Plan to all Governors by email.
- iv JR confirmed that the Equality and Diversity policy has been updated and is available on the school's website.

JR

Confidential Minutes

- v JR advised that a working party comprising Governors from the Primary and Secondary schools had been formed and had met in October 2019. He noted that the need for immediacy had passed, as JR would remain in post until the end of the current academic year. JR undertook to share the strategy with staff across the two schools on 13 November, but it would not be shared with parents until next term.

8 FINANCE AND FUNDING

Final Accounts 2018-19

SBW introduced the August 2019 accounts report which had been circulated prior to the meeting and noted that the accounts were unaudited but unlikely to be subject to substantial change. She reported that the year-end position was more positive than budgeted, due to increased income throughout the year and commended the Principal for achieving a balanced budget. Whilst more staff were needed in order to manage the increased roll, the staffing costs remained at the target levels. RV noted that the year-end position had been achieved through effective financial management and due to the improved reputation of the school which led to increased applications for places.

JR explained the reason for the contingency budget of £381K in order to repay a possible clawback from the ESFA of pupil place funding paid in 2017-18. The contingency will remain in the reserves until it is established if the monies are to be repaid, but it is not clear when that will be.

In response to questions, JR explained that if a member of agency staff secures a permanent role in school, the agency the school works with may not charge a high fee for that, as the school has had a longstanding relationship with the same agency.

JR outlined plans to make an application to the OHCAT budget panel to add an additional staff member to the establishment. Mandy Manson has returned to the school on a part-time basis as acting SENCO and JR will work with SBW to identify the budget for the role permanently. He advised that the work of the SENCO had been shared between staff members but was having a negative impact on their workload.

Management Accounts September 2019

SBW tabled the management accounts report for September 2019 and noted that there was little to report at this stage, although income had increased slightly. She described efforts being made to identify all available savings and income streams, but confirmed there were no areas of concern at this stage.

At the request of the Chair, SBW outlined the targets set for schools with regard to budget, including a 45 days' cash and 90 days' reserves target. RV also explained that the schools' financial performance is reported to the OHCAT Board regularly.

Reports received.

9 PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

ST gave a detailed account of the meeting of the Pay Committee that took place on 31 October 2019. She confirmed that the Committee had carefully considered the Principal's recommendations for teachers' and therapists' pay for 2019-20, and that there had been robust scrutiny and challenge by the Committee. She relayed the view of the Committee that performance management of staff was thorough and robust and that pay progression was linked to performance, and clearly evidenced through the TES and appraisals. Furthermore, all decisions were compliant with the appropriate OHCAT policies.

JR reported that he meets with all staff prior to the Pay Committee meeting for an end of year review, to let them know what his recommendation was, to ensure maximum transparency.

ST explained that the next step would be for the OHCAT Finance and Payroll Teams to check the figures in time for staff to receive the increase and back-pay in their November salary.

10a STAFF SURVEY

Governors received the results of the staff survey which had been carried out online via SurveyMonkey, enabling staff to contribute anonymously. Governors noted that where some staff had answered "unsure" that could be because they were new or because the question referred to something

outside of their remit. It was agreed therefore that future surveys would also have a “not applicable / not able to judge” option.

JR

MV suggested that future reports should split the results for agree / strongly and agree and disagree / strongly disagree, which would be useful for comparison in future years.

JR

ST commended the school for the very high response rate of 27 out of 28 staff members and noted the largely positive responses, which would suggest the school was in a good place, with well supported staff. JR pointed out that the actions identified are largely out of his direct control as they mostly relate to premises and facilities. In addition there were some issues around staff progression to which he would give further thought, given the size of the school and number of staff. RV undertook to raise this issue with the Board, to think about the range of learning and development available for staff across the Trust and HW outlined some of the opportunities which staff in this school have already undertaken.

RV

With regard to pupil progress and the use of SOLAR for tracking, JR confirmed that the software is being embedded across the school and noted the importance of accurate assessment data in making improvements to teaching and learning. He advised that his evaluation of teaching throughout the school was solidly good, but in order to become outstanding, it must meet the individual needs of each child in order to maximise their progress. The school is on track but teachers need to continue to improve their planning in order to meet all children’s needs.

JR confirmed that the outcome of the survey would be reported to staff. On behalf of the LGB, RV commended JR for the continuous improvement demonstrated by the survey outcomes.

10b WELL-BEING SURVEY

JS outlined the methodology of the staff well-being survey that she and Caroline Nield (OHCAT HR Business Partner) had carried out and highlighted the key outcomes and next steps identified for the school. She and Caroline agreed that it would be useful to extend the time of the interviews if the exercise were conducted again. JS advised that staff appreciated the chance to participate in the survey, and noted that she would alter the survey slightly in future based on the experience this time.

MV expressed disappointment at the format of the interviews, which she thought could have been tagged onto a written staff survey and expressed the view that the concerns that had been raised by staff at the end of the last academic year had not been fully addressed by the well-being survey. In response, RV pointed out that the staff had the opportunity to raise their concerns in the interviews or through the staff survey and expressed frustration that MV was seeking responses from staff that would not be forthcoming, as most of the staff members who had raised concerns in the summer had since left. MV noted her disappointment that the well-being survey was not anonymous and staff may not have felt comfortable answering

questions with the interview style format. RV suggested that MV was disappointed that the survey did not show the results she was hoping to see and MV responded this was not the case but that because the survey did not ask the right questions, in her view, it wasn't possible to draw accurate conclusions.

JR advised that he had been disappointed to receive negative feedback in the summer but reported that staff morale in school was very high and staff were puzzled as to why the surveys were being carried out at all. He stated that appropriate action had been taken to address the concerns that had been raised, and there was no evidence that staff wellbeing was a concern in school. Both JR and RV agreed that the outcomes of the surveys had not substantiated the complaints made earlier in the year and that the matter should be brought to a close, and for the LGB to now focus on other priorities.

11A. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

JR welcomed questions and comments about his report which had been circulated prior to the meeting and matters discussed are detailed below.

HW and AG advised that the newly recruited teachers and SSA are settling in very well, and particularly highlighted the positive impact of the new Maths teacher, who has effected increased engagement from pupils who previously struggled to remain in class. In addition, the new Humanities and the new PE teacher are also having a very positive impact.

JR advised that there has been one in-year admission since September, with four applications currently being processed. He described the measures in place to ensure new students have a smooth and successful transition and confirmed that most settle very well. Whilst welcoming the increased demand for places, JR described the amount of work the consultation process creates, which has been challenging without a SENCO or Head of Therapy. Governors agreed to review the school's Admissions Policy during this academic year, and JR undertook to liaise with the Trust's Head of Research and Policy Development when reviewing the policy.

JR and HW updated Governors on two students with high levels of need and described the levels of support in place for one student in particular. HW advised that one child was receiving regular one to one support, which was not fully funded and outlined the process to review the EHCP in order to secure funding for the appropriate levels of support. ST added that the process is both lengthy and challenging and requires the school to collect a range of evidence in order to make a robust case for the Local Authority (LA) Panel to consider. If unsuccessful the school may have to suggest that the LA find another suitable placement for the child.

JR pointed out the increasing size of the KS3 cohort and outlined plans to introduce a third pathway in order to offer more individual support to those that need it from September 2020. The Chair asked if it would be appropriate to review the EHCPs for those children needing one to one support, and HW

**JR/
LGB**

undertook to liaise with the acting SENCO to establish if that would be worth doing and to report back to the spring meeting. JR outlined measures in place in the meantime to support the KS3 pupils and confirmed that they were making progress and engaging in their education, but that could be improved if their individual learning style was identified.

HW

With regard to the end of year progress data, JR acknowledged that comparison between the ASDAN and Link Steps data was not particularly useful for Governors but advised that it is useful in school to inform teachers about progress in class. He explained that a lot of work had been done to ensure the SOLAR software was fit for purpose and enabled the setting of meaningful targets. Governors noted the need for them to differentiate progress towards accreditation and progress in class, and sought reassurance that teachers were aware of what children were actually learning. Governors agreed that it would be useful to receive progress data broken down by class and subject.

JR

Given the focus on cultural capital in the new Ofsted Inspection Framework, JR undertook to deliver a synopsis of the school's offer to the next LGB meeting.

JR

11B. DASHBOARD

Received.

12 GOVERNOR VISITS, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Governors received the portfolio reports and matters discussed are detailed below.

Business Development & Marketing: JR updated Governors on a meeting he and ST had attended with officers from LB Sutton about pupil places for 2020-21. He and ST confirmed that there has been an increase in applications for places in the Primary and Secondary schools for LB Sutton children, but there also is demand for out of borough places.

Safeguarding: JR highlighted that the delivery of the RSE curriculum is a priority as it will be statutory with effect from September 2020 and the school must focus on the challenges inherent in delivering the curriculum in the context of the cohort whilst minimising anxiety to pupils. JR advised that an audit is underway to inform an action plan to be compiled in the spring term. He noted that there will be consultation with parents and undertook to discuss with colleagues at the next OHCAT Principals' Away Day in November about their plans to deliver the RSE curriculum.

JR

Teaching & Learning: Governors discussed how to raise their profile with staff and parents and welcomed any opportunity to attend formal and informal school events.

Ethos, Vision & Strategy: JR undertook to circulate the Business Continuity Plan. He also reported that a surveyor has inspected the school to evaluate access and safeguarding, with a view to submitting a CIF bid for funding to improve the security of the site.

JR

JR also reported on efforts made over the last two years to obtain expert advice on how to make improvements to the school playground. He advised that he had been working with the Trust's premises team but had not been able to get the advice required. RV undertook to discuss this with OHCAT's Director of Business Services.

RV

OTHER VISIT REPORTS

There were no further reports.

GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Chair encouraged all Governors to register with GovernorHub. SW to issue guidance.

SW

Governors agreed that the recent OHCAT Governor Conference and the Ofsted briefing session from David Scott had been very useful.

13 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A Governors noted the policies and procedures that had been approved by the Board at their meeting in June 2019.
- B Governors approved the Curriculum Policy and Teaching & Learning Policy.

14 KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION SEPTEMBER 2019

Noted.

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

JR shared details of some forthcoming school events, to which Governors were invited. KH undertook to email the details after the meeting.

KH

16 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

10 March and 16 June 2020.

17 CONFIDENTIALITY

No items were deemed confidential.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Signed..... Date:

Chair of the Local Governing Body