

**Minutes of the Retford Oaks Academy Committee meeting
held on Tuesday 1 December 2020 at 5:30pm – 7:30pm
Via Microsoft Teams**

Governor name	Initials	Governor category	A = absence
Mrs P Bryn-Jones	PBJ	Appointed	
Mr G Gadie Vice Chair of Governors	GD	Appointed	
Mr A Knight Chair of Governors	AK	Appointed	
Mr N Trickett	NT	Appointed	A
Mr A Silcock	AS	Appointed	
Mr W Spooner	WS	Staff	
2 x parent vacancies 2 x appointed			

In attendance	Initials	Position	
Mrs H Widdup	HW	Executive Principal	
Mr C West	CW	Principal	
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Clerk and Advisor	
Mr Saul Farrell	SF	Observing	
Miss Natalie Ward	NW	Observing	
Mrs Victoria Hobson-Maxwell	VM	Observing	

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AC/16/2021	<p>Update following central training Governors were informed that both the Risk Management and the SEND / Pupil Premium (PP) training slideshows were on SharePoint for anyone who missed the training to watch back.</p> <p>The governors questioned if everything was up to date on the website as per the PP requirements. Mr West confirmed the PP plan was being updated this week along with the latest guidance so the website will be updated in the short future.</p> <p>The governors queried if the academy had plans in place should they have any access requests for any students with a disability. Mr West highlighted that with Retford Oaks being a new build there is street level access at both ends of the building as well as having the lifts and evac chairs.</p> <p>The governors asked for clarification on the proportion of students who are on care plans and how this fits in nationally around Diverse Academies Trust (DAT). Mr West informed there was only 6 pupils on care plans at this current time. There are a couple more students who are working towards a care plan as the new SENDCO team get up to speed. It was also highlighted that the national figure of students with SEND is 1.8% which is a tiny proportion of the school population</p> <p>Mr West informed the governors of a new system, B Squared, which has been put into place in the academy. The system is DAT wide to help track and monitor the work with the SENDCO students. The governors asked if this system costs the academy and if it is going to save the staff</p>	

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	<p>time. Mr West confirmed the cost was being picked up centrally and so far is saving time. Miss Ward added that as a member of staff at Bracken Lane she could confirm that although it does take a little more time in the beginning, it does save time in the long run. It is a quick tick sheet and very easy to use.</p> <p>The governors requested for more information on the PP statistics for the academy. Mr West to send this information to governors.</p> <p>Mrs Widdup joined at 17.41pm</p>	CW
AC/17/2021	<p>Declaration of interest There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p>	
AC/18/2021	<p>Apologies for absence No apologies were received for Mr Trickett. A letter is to be sent to Mr Trickett about non-attendance as his absence is unusual.</p>	Clerk
AC/19/2021	<p>Minutes of the AC meeting dated 29th September 2020 The minutes of the meeting that had previously been received were approved and signed by the chair.</p>	
AC/20/2021	<p>Matters Arising: AC/04/2021 – To be actioned under agenda item AC/21/2021</p> <p>AC/51/1920 – To note the safeguarding certificates have been received</p> <p>AC/54/1920 – To be actioned under agenda item AC/23/2021</p> <p>AC/07/2021 – Safeguarding - To be discussed in agenda item AC/21/2021 Finance – To be discussed in agenda item AC/25/2021 Policies – To be discussed in agenda time AC/23/2021</p>	
AC/21/2021	<p>Appointments The Clerk noted that term of office for Mr Silcock and Mrs Bryn-Jones had expired on 30th August and 3rd August 2020 respectively. All members of the Academy Committee approved, in writing to the Clerk, the re-appointment of Mr Silcock and Mrs Bryn-Jones on 7th October 2020. It is now confirmed that the term of office for Mr Silcock and Mrs Bryn-Jones is 07/10/2020 to 06/10/2024.</p> <p>Mr Spooner had been unanimously voted by the staff to remain as the staff governor. It is now confirmed that the term of office for Mr Spooner is 02/10/2020 to 01/10/2024.</p> <p>Miss Ward's information had been circulated prior to the meeting due to previously being a governor for ROA. Governors voted unanimously for Miss Ward to join the Academy Committee for a four-year term from 01/12/2020 to 30/11/2024.</p>	

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	<p>Mrs Hobson-Maxwell's information had also been circulated prior to the meeting due to previously being a parent governor for ROA. Governors noted that there had been no interest or applications to the parent elections conducted at the beginning of term and a reminder had also been sent to all parents after the closing date. Governors voted unanimously for Mrs Hobson-Maxwell to re-join the Academy Committee as an Appointed Parent Governor for a four-year term from 01/12/2020 to 30/11/2024.</p> <p>The governors voted for Mrs Hobson-Maxwell to be the safeguarding link governor. Clerk to link Mrs Hobson-Maxwell with Mr Tomkins so the safeguarding audit and policy appendix can be approved.</p> <p>The governors requested for the clerk to send a list of all link governor roles to ensure all were being actioned / met</p> <p>Mr Farrell (observer) was also introduced to the committee. After recently moving into the area he is looking to join as a governor. His background is in education and skills policy. Following the meeting Mr Farrell has expressed an interest in joining the committee so will be appointed at the next meeting</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
AC/22/2021	<p>New Trust vision / mission statement</p> <p>The governors were informed that there has been a new Trust vision / mission statement. The academy version has taken time to evolve and is now in line with the trust direction although there may only be a tweak of wording but no major amendments. It was also confirmed that the 4 key strategic objectives are being fed into the Academy Improvement Plan.</p>	
AC/23/2021	<p>Report from the Principal.</p> <p>SEF</p> <p>Mr West confirmed the SEF had been rewritten for this year and despite covid restrictions it was all moving forward rapidly. Within the academy, they are continuing the journey to become 'outstanding' when Ofsted next visit the academy.</p> <p>Mr Farrell requested to see a copy of the SEF. The clerk to send a copy through.</p> <p>Safeguarding; culture & compliance inc. approval safeguarding audit to LA</p> <p>To note in AC/21/2021, Mrs Hobson-Maxwell was appointed as the safeguarding link governor.</p> <p>Mr West confirmed to the committee that staff are starting to see a few more safeguarding incidents being reported.</p> <p>The governors asked if staff have seen a large rise in cases of child mental health. Now that the students are back in school. Mr West confirmed that the second lockdown has highlighted a few more issues</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

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	<p>however he is extremely pleased with how resilient the children are being. As expected, there are a couple of students that are really struggling but the academy hasn't seen the large numbers which they were expecting. There are also a couple of bereavement cases and there have been cases where a couple of people are showing symptoms of covid which is to be expected.</p> <p>The governors further queried if the school councillor was in place. Mr West confirmed the councillor had left and to this point hadn't been replaced. There is a much stronger link with the NHS and within the academy, they are in the process of appointing a Teaching Assistant who will have a key impact.</p> <p>The governors questioned if the academy were using any external voluntary agencies to help. It was confirmed they are being used where needed. Mr West asked Mrs Hobson-Maxwell and Mr Farrell if they knew of any different agencies to the ones currently used, due to their line of work. Both governors agreed to send over known agencies.</p> <p>The governors requested further information into if there was an unmet need within the academy. Mr West confirmed there always was.</p> <p>COVID bridging plan including use of additional intervention funding Mr West highlighted to governors that the academy is currently working on student resilience in case of a need to lock down again. Ways in which this is being done is ensuring the students are up to speed with the IT systems and that there has been a Teaching Assistant assigned to Maths and English catch up work to help bridge the gap in the knowledge.</p> <p>In relation to the gaps in the student's knowledge, all of the Heads of Department are working this into the longer-term plans. Nationally, reading ages skipped by 6 months and the data shows the same. However, where they have missed out, the students are catching up quite quickly so no alarming risk at this stage.</p> <p>Mr West further highlighted the link in with the National Tutoring Programme and assured governors that the academy is getting appropriate funding from the programme. There is a barrier around supply especially with how many teaching staff the academy has had off resulting in the cost of supply being significantly great. The academy is still actively looking at using time in the school holidays later in the year for any knowledge gaps at that point.</p> <p>The governors asked if there is any additional funding available under the circumstances. Mr West explained to governors that the old catchup funding is now called Covid funding. There are plans in place for some of the money, but the cost of supply is a big proportion of the problem. Mrs Widdup further added that the government had announced at the weekend that there would be financial support for supply staff but isn't</p>	<p>VHM / SF</p>

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	<p>confident that anything would be received. The Covid funding needs to last the academy 2 years.</p> <p>The governors queried if there were any issues with PPE within the academy. Mr West verified that the academy has all the PPE needed as not much has been used. There is plenty of alcohol hand gel but the academy has noticed that students are bringing their own.</p> <p>Targets 2021 The governors were told that the targets for the academy had been set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attendance target has been lowered to 90% and although this is lower than normal, it still sits above national average and is in line with the national picture. • Mr West highlighted to governors that it is difficult to set a target for Progress 8 as there is no KS2 results for the year group and it is hard to set a target with no starting point. The academy is currently waiting on national guidance for this scenario. • The Attainment 8 target is set at 4.3 with the Post16 target of 25.7. Post 16 also have a value added of 0 with national average data being used. • Persistent Absence (PA) target is less than 13% • Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) target is less than 1% of the school body. <p>The governors queried if the drop in attendance from the usual rate of 94%, is due to parents keeping the students off school. Mrs Widdup stressed that the national picture for attendance is at 80% so the drop for the academy target puts that into perspective. Parents are feeling uneasy about their children being in school though. Mr Farrell enlightened the governors that in his line of work he has seen figures closer to 80% attendance due to whole communities not wanting to send their children to school. Mr West added that the academy is currently on 91.3% so much further ahead of national average. There are discounts if a student is isolating.</p> <p>Mr Farrell asked if the academy had seen a rise in home educating. Mr West confirmed there had been 4 students at the beginning, but this has ended</p> <p>The governors asked if the government confirm that year 11 and year 13 revert back to teacher assessment, do the academy have enough evidence on the students to help with accurate grading. Mr West informed the governors the academy is planning for 100% exam or 100% non-exam to ensure all bases are covered. Mr West reminded governors that at Retford Oaks they found the process simple last time due to how much evidence they had on each student, so the academy is currently building on this to have even more. The students are having</p>	

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	<p>mock exams after Christmas, so the teachers are highlighting the importance of these to students in the eventuality that exams are cancelled again. The SLT have also had interviews with the students to discuss any current gradings so that the students know where they are currently at and what they need to do to advance themselves.</p> <p>Quality of education update The key message in the academy at the minute is around moving students forward. Every child is being challenged in every lesson and are made to think and 'challenge, support and add' around questioning.</p> <p>In year admissions (Autumn term entry and planned Spring) Mr West confirmed there is currently no information on the current year 6 / new year 7 however this is due to be released in the coming weeks. Currently there are 21 students on the in-year waiting list and the academy is still growing across all year groups. There are currently +10 on the migration list.</p> <p>The governors asked where the students are coming from. Mr West said they were coming from the surrounding areas including Worksop as well as students moving into the area and changing academies. There is a high number of outward students in December, but this isn't causing an alarm like it has in previous years. Locally, Retford Oaks is the only academy not at PAN.</p> <p>The governors highlighted a planning application for another 800 houses has been submitted locally which will bring more children to the area. Mr West confirmed that the aim is for the academy to be at PAN which will be achieved in a couple of years' time.</p> <p>The governors then asked if the other academies are at PAN, does it mean that ROA are not getting the best students. Mr West confirmed each academy has to apply their admissions criteria. A couple of the recent admissions have been in the high ability groups which has placed challenges in year 10 as the top sets are at capacity some students have had to move from set 1 to set 2.</p> <p>Link governors visit updates/reports All governors were reminded that link governor visits can still be done albeit virtually.</p> <p>Clerk to send a list of link governor requirements so the committee can ensure all positions covered.</p> <p>Approval of AIP for 2020/21 For the minutes, the AIP was approved by the governors.</p> <p>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification & any audit results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and Child Protection policy sign off Mrs Hobson-Maxwell to liaise with Mr Tomkins to sign off the safeguarding policy. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>VHM / AT</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other policy updates (Charging and Remissions, Pay and Reward, Capability, Staff grievance, Concerns and Complaints, Anti-bullying, Exclusion) <p>The above Diverse Academies policies were updated by the Trust on the 2nd and 14th October and are available on the Trust website. Governors were informed of these updates on the 14th October 2020.</p>	
AC/24/2021	<p>Staff survey evaluation and actions & governor stakeholder involvement</p> <p>Mr West confirmed the annual staff survey had been completed and the results were very positive with a swing towards 'strongly agree' more than 'agree'. With CPD, the results were positive from teachers with the support staff not being quite so strong. There has been a development of a new structure around CPD for support staff which is tailored specifically to their needs which hasn't fully filtered through yet. Mr West added that the picture would be different if the survey had been done 3-4 weeks later.</p> <p>Staff wellbeing</p> <p>Mr West confirmed this is something that is being taken very seriously and the academy is doing its best to support staff. There has been some work completed in the last week into the issues that the staff are facing. The biggest issue is that staff are moving around the building rather than the students.</p> <p>Mr West did inform governors that all staff had received an advent calendar on their desk, and they had had a 'cream cake' Friday recently just to try to lift spirits. Within the survey, the results showed that 96% of staff agreed that leaders and managers are considering their wellbeing.</p> <p>The governors asked if there are any vacancies within the staffing structure. Mr West confirmed there is 1 vacancy for a RE teacher however there are interviews this week. Other than that, the academy is fully staffed.</p> <p>The governors queried about staff absence. Mr West informed the governors that shielding had affected 5 members of staff. There is then the usual maternity leave, other illnesses, and COVID-19 issues.</p> <p>The governors questioned if there is a difference in absence between teaching staff and support staff. Mr West highlighted to governors that although there isn't a big difference in percentage there is in numbers due to there being more teaching assistants on site.</p>	
AC/25/2021	<p>Finance: Management Accounts</p> <p>Mr West informed governors that at the time of printing (October) the academy is £18k ahead of budget. The staffing total is £7k ahead year to date with this mostly being around the pay rise.</p> <p>There are no red flags other than for supply staff. Mr West further highlighted that on some days there has been 7 supply staff on site which are all an additional cost which couldn't have been budgeted for. The governors were informed that this could cause a significant overspend</p>	

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	<p>by the end of the year so the academy are currently looking at how they can work strategically but ultimately there is a need to ensure there is a teacher in front of the students. The teachers working from home are now teaching the students at home to ensure the teachers on site are teaching the students on site, however a little over 50% of the yearly supply budget has been spent already. On the whole, the academy are using the same 5 supply staff to ensure the students are getting continuity and the supply staff have been in receipt of a ROA lanyard and badge to help encompass them into the school. The supply staff have been extremely complimentary about how the academy are dealing with COVID-19 and the students.</p> <p>The governors asked if the academy is due catchup funding. Mr West confirmed that there is some lagged funding. There are smaller year groups leaving the academy than the ones coming in and there are still payments around the P16 centre however this was all budgeted for at the start of the year. If it wasn't for the supply teachers, then the academy would be in line with the budget. The governors further asked if the academy could go back to the LA if there is a significant change.</p> <p>The governors further asked if a case could be put together to request this funding is received sooner than it is due, but Mr West confirmed that the academy does not fit this criteria.</p> <p>The governors questioned if the biggest issue is around the budget for supply staff then surely it is reasonably predictable given the current situation and that all academies are in a similar situation. Mrs Widdup confirmed that it has been discussed and the Trust are very much aware. ROA is one of the better positions in terms of impact it has had but it is still having a major impact. The Trust is aware and is investigating government funding that was announced at the weekend.</p>	
AC/26/2021	<p>How have governors held school leaders to account?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff wellbeing • SEND / PP following the central training • COVID-19 finances • Student plan and targets 	
AC/27/2021	<p>Determination of Confidentiality Equality Act consideration Nolan Principles</p> <p>Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There had been no confidential discussions held - There had been no Equality Act implications - Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles. 	
AC/28/2021	<p>Complete report to Trustees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance / budget / supply - Recognition of the hard work the staff have been doing and Mr West and the Leadership Team with very few Covid-19 cases in the academy due to strong, careful and well managed systems. 	

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	<p>Date and time of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 2 February at 5.30pm.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 18.50pm</p>	
	<p>Signed..... (chair) Date.....</p> <p>Print.....</p>	