

**Minutes of the Retford Oaks Academy Committee meeting  
held on Tuesday 23 March 2021 at 5:30pm – 7:30pm  
Via Microsoft Teams**

<b>Governor name</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Governor category</b>	A = absence
Mrs P Bryn-Jones	PBJ	Appointed	A
<b>Mr G Gadie Vice Chair of Governors</b>	GD	Appointed	
<b>Mr A Knight Chair of Governors</b>	AK	Appointed	
Mr A Silcock	AS	Appointed	A
Mr W Spooner	WS	Staff	
Mrs V Hobson-Maxwell	VHM	Appointed Parent	
Miss Natalie Ward	NW	Appointed	A
Mr Saul Farrell	SF	Appointed	A
1 x parent vacancy			
1 x appointed vacancy			

<b>In attendance</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Position</b>	
Mrs H Widdup	HW	Executive Principal	
Mr C West	CW	Principal	
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Clerk and Advisor	
Mrs L Clough-Watson	LCW	Head of Science	
<i>Mrs C Greenwood</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>Observer</i>	

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action/ by who/when</b>
<b>AC/40/2021</b>	<p><b>LGBTQ+</b></p> <p>Mrs Clough-Watson shared a presentation with the governors highlighting what has been done so far to achieve the academy the Stonewall School Champion Silver. This has included the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring that staff policies and inductions are clear that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) and sexism are unacceptable.</li> <li>- Conducted a survey for both staff and pupils on the awareness and provisions of LGBTQ+</li> <li>- Further monitoring of bullying incidents.</li> <li>- Incorporated people, themes and examples into the curriculum.</li> <li>- Holding celebrations and awareness events throughout the academy.</li> </ul> <p>Within the next 12 months the academy has an aim to apply for the gold criteria and governors were informed of the steps the academy would need to do to get to this stage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring all school policies are LGBTQ+ inclusive including the wording. To also allow RSHE to back up inclusivity and remove unnecessary barriers.</li> <li>- Ensuring the curriculum content is consistently LGBTQ+ inclusive across subjects and ages. Linking into intent sheets and teacher planning.</li> <li>- Ensuring staff are trained and supported to champion LGBT inclusion actively. Via policies and procedures including those that govern 3<sup>rd</sup> parties entering the school are clear on how they</li> </ul>	

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	<p>should respond to any incidents. The academy is currently creating a toolkit to support this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Looking at ways LGBTQ+ students are supported to be themselves at school and ensuring they can access all provisions e.g. bathrooms, changing areas and being able to partake in personal development days. This will be supported by training days, G4S and display boards.</li> <li>- Ensuring that LGBTQ+ inclusion is a core value across the whole setting and that students are accepted without exception. The academy will continue with events to celebrate including pride month, in addition to use of PD days and intent sheets.</li> <li>- LGBT children have opportunities to shape our approach to LGBT information. Focussing on the students helping with decision making and policy / practice around school.</li> </ul> <p>Mrs Clough-Watson asked if governors have any suggestions as to how the academy can share our LGBT inclusive approach with the local community. Suggestions after the meeting most welcome. Approaches using the academy website to share events and student work is already being utilised.</p> <p>Mrs Clough-Watson detailed the following bullying statistics that have been logged on the academy's system (since September 2020)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15 homophobic incidents which has mostly been comments in both communal and classroom environments.</li> <li>- 0 incidents of a biphobic / transphobic nature.</li> </ul> <p>Governors were informed that the academy are actively looking into ways of which the students can report any HBT bullying anonymously whilst also being able to report without outing themselves. Mr West added that the academy does have an anti-bullying email address and box in the student reception which allows for the students to remain anonymous. <b>The governors queried</b> if there could be a number that the students could text in to of which Mr West said it could be investigated. <b>The governors asked</b> against other bullying how does the HBT compare. Mrs Clough-Watson to confirm this after the meeting.</p> <p><b>The governors queried</b> if all bullying is being reported. Mrs Clough-Watson confirmed there is different reporting structures between Go 4 Schools and those done in the academy. There is ongoing work to remind staff of the correct functions to ensure it is a tight procedure and this will be further clarified through staff training. Mrs Widdup added that the work of which has been done at ROA has also led the way with the other academies in the Trust and governors thanked Mrs Clough-Watson for all her hard work and was acknowledged that most has been conducted in her own time.</p> <p><b>The governors questioned</b> if there were students who are not coming forward due to this resulting in being identified. Mrs Clough-Watson explained that throughout the broad aspect of school life, there will be students who do not report bullying. There is work in place to ensure students feel confident and supported and as the staff training and awareness increases then the academy will be more welcoming and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>LCW</b></p>

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	<p>accepting. Mr West added that in the September 2019 student survey, 30% of students said that bullying occurs within the academy and 70% stated that bullying was effectively managed by staff. The parent survey feedback confirmed this with over 60% saying they had no knowledge of bullying with 15% strongly agreeing that any bullying had been dealt with quickly. These statistics shows that when bullying is brought forward it is dealt with quickly and effectively and the academy continue to tell students that it is ok to talk.</p> <p><i>Mrs Clough-Watson was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting at 17.53.</i></p>	
<b>AC/41/2021</b>	<p><b>Update following central training</b> Governors were informed that the slideshow and recording for the Ofsted Preparation training is on SharePoint for anyone who missed the training to watch back. It was noted that Ofsted now see it as 'curriculum is key, not the data'.</p> <p><b>The governors asked</b> for the number of students with alternative provision, Mr West confirmed this as 4 students currently. <b>The governors further queried</b> if Mr West was happy the students are being monitored and that the quality of education is assured, and Mr West confirmed he is.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that the next training event is on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May and the topic is Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education as well as Careers.</p>	
<b>AC/42/2021</b>	<p><b>Declaration of interest</b> There is an amendment to Mr Gadie's declaration of interest due to re-joining the Board of Trustees for Citizens Advice for Newark and Sherwood. The committee approved this change.</p>	
<b>AC/43/2021</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies for absence were received and approved from Mrs Bryn-Jones and Mr Farrell. Mr Silcock and Miss Ward were also absent, but apologies were not received.</p>	
<b>AC/44/2021</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the AC meeting dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021</b> The minutes of the meeting that had previously been received were approved and signed by the chair.</p>	
<b>AC/45/2021</b>	<p><b>Matters arising:</b> AC/32/2021 – update on recruitment. An application has been made for a new governor to join the board who currently sits on another committee within the Trust. The Clerk confirmed from a Trust perspective this was accepted. Governors confirmed they were happy to proceed with the recruitment of Mrs Hollingsworth.</p> <p>In attendance to the meeting was Mrs Greenwood, who had also expressed an interest in joining the committee. Following the meeting Mrs Greenwood confirmed she would like to proceed with her induction.</p>	

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	<p>Appointment of both Mrs Hollingsworth and Mrs Greenwood to be added to the agenda at the next meeting. With these inductions it will take the committee to a full board.</p> <p>AC/34/2021 – To note regards were sent to Mr Trickett. - Recruit a GDPR link governor – see agenda item AC/46/2021</p> <p>AC/35/2021 – To note the admissions policy has been sent to the LA.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>AC/46/2021</b>	<p><b>Governor admin</b> The Chair requested any expressions of interest for the GDPR link governor, to which none were received. Clerk and the chair to investigate after the meeting.</p>	<b>AK / Clerk</b>
<b>AC/47/2021</b>	<p><b>Report from Principal</b></p> <p><b>Return to the Academy</b> The governors had received updates from Mr West with the planned opening of the academy with the students having a staggered return between 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> March. 90% of the students have consented to rapid lateral flow testing which equates to 96% of the students who are on site. The staff have had 6 tests and the procedure is running well. Mr West informed governors that testing students has been a colossal task as there is a need to get through the whole school body in 9 days and test each year 3 times whilst also dealing with the catch however the testing team have continuously blown him away with their professionalism whilst ensuring the children who were finding it difficult are supported. The governors have sent a letter of gratitude to the testing team prior to the meeting including a thank you to Mr West following feedback from staff relating to his positive input.</p> <p>Mr West confirmed it has been a seamless switch back to classroom learning. There has been a small increase in negative behaviour events, but the majority have been around classroom rules / uniform infringements or late homework. Since lockdown, the academy has awarded 100 students with their Bronze badge for their behaviour this year and 7 with their Silver Badge.</p> <p><b>Current position – outcomes and transitions</b> Mr West educated governors that the challenge currently is for the students applying to other P16 provisions as they need grades to apply however until the academy has confirmation as to how this is completed it is proving hard with the information expected after the Easter holidays. The academy has set up focussed intervention sessions within various subjects where each student can focus on key areas to move forward. Mr West confirmed the Y11 students have found this beneficial and the progress in English has been significant resulting in it being replicated across all subjects to ensure the academy has ample evidence for the exam board. Mr West added further that through the current gradings the Y13 students are ahead of targets and previous year groups.</p> <p>Once the academy has had confirmation on the process for the exam gradings this year this will be communicated with parents, students and</p>	

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	<p>governors. The academy has a timeline with a number of cross moderation plans scheduled including interrogating results at teacher level, departmental level and whole school level before Mr West and Mrs Widdup confirm to the board on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021.</p> <p>The academy has received 388 applications including 153 first choices. This has resulted in 215 offers which is positive and shows the academy continues to grow. There has been a significant shift within certain primaries including 93% of students coming from Thrumpton Primary (increased from 77%) and 71% coming from Bracken Lane Primary (BLPA) (increased from 48%). Discussions with the Principal at BLPA has highlighted that some of this increase has come with freedom of choice, as in previous years the sibling effect has taken control. ROA has also been supporting with the PE provision across these two primaries as well as being the Hub during the first national lockdown of which it is believed that all 3 elements have boosted the applications.</p> <p><b>The governors queried</b> the plans for transition week following this being cancelled in 2020. Mr West confirmed the academy are planning for a full transition week if the lockdown restrictions go to plan. All parents who have been offered a place have been notified but the academy do have another plan in case.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding; culture &amp; compliance</b> The governors were informed that the academy is having a safeguarding review completed by the Trust after Easter. Mr West also informed governors there has been a slight increase of concerns logged on My Concern following the reopening but not the spike that was expected.</p> <p><b>Integrated Risk Management including; Risk Register inc education risks, Health &amp; Safety, staff &amp; pupil well-being, GDPR</b> Mrs Widdup explained to the governors that following the confidential minutes at the previous meeting, there was nothing further to update on at this time and the level of risk remains unchanged.</p> <p>Mr West informed governors that the site team made sure all compliance checks were completed prior to the academy reopening as well as all risk assessments being verified. The risk assessments were reviewed daily during the first 2 weeks. Within the academy, the staff have voiced that they feel safe including a member of staff who has health issues.</p> <p>Governors were also informed the students had a personal development day on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> which coincided with Comic Relief. The students have also worked with Max Litchfield on his campaign for a #lockdownlitterpick where students all filled one bag with litter on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March and featured on his Instagram account.</p> <p><b>Review development plans</b> The AIP is due to reviewed at Easter.</p>	

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	<p><b>The staff governor</b> highlighted several concerns with the rapidly ageing staff laptops and <b>queried</b> if there were any plans to replace these. Mrs Widdup confirmed the staff laptops come via the Trust and each laptop has a life cycle.</p> <p><b>The staff governor</b> discussed the level of stock that is in the academy from the students and <b>further queried</b> why these are unable to be used. Mr West confirmed that the stock of laptops is from the DfE however they are machines designed for a standalone home machine and are incapable of working on the Trust / academy network. Mr West confirmed that the academy must keep highlighting any issues and problems to IT.</p> <p><b>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification &amp; any audit results;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Other policy updates (Financial Procedures Manual, Staff Grievance, GDPR Subject Access request form, Governors Allowances, Accessibility, Health and Safety, Covid-19 appendix to Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles statement)</b></li> </ul> <p>The above Diverse Academies policies were updated by the Trust on the 8<sup>th</sup> February &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 and are available on the Trust website. Governors were informed of these updates on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.</p> <p><b>The governors thanked</b> Mr West and all the staff in the academy for how well they have brought the students back into the academy in challenging times and as always for their dedication to ROA.</p>	<p><b>HW</b></p>
<p><b>AC/48/2021</b></p>	<p><b>Finance: Management Accounts including HR staffing report</b></p> <p>The governors had received the management accounts in advance of the meeting. Mr West highlighted there are issues in the agency staffing line however the bottom line is positive. Mr West has been liaising with Mr Lowe (Senior Finance Manager) and he is happy with how the academy are working proactively to keep this line down. Governors were informed that the biggest expense is due to long term illness and a vacancy which is being covered by agency.</p> <p><b>The governors queried</b> if the Trust were concerned seen as most academies will currently be using more agency. Mrs Widdup confirmed that every school does have the same challenges, but the academy is spending less in other areas including invigilation costs and they may not to replace as many text books. Mr West added that the academy is managing it as tight as possible and as long as things remain the same then the accounts will balance at the end of the year.</p> <p>Regarding HR, the biggest challenge is shielding staff with the academy currently working the way through the latest guidance. <b>The governors queried</b> if there would be a turnover of staff this year with Mr West confirming there are a couple of staff looking for promotion, one member of staff wanting to go abroad and a cook supervisor leaving. The academy will need to expand their staffing due to the increased numbers in the new cohort. <b>The governors questioned</b> when the</p>	

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	vacancies would be live to ensure the academy are getting good applicants. Mr West confirmed the vacancies will hopefully be out by Easter.	
<b>AC/49/2021</b>	<p><b>Link governor visit updates / reports</b> Mrs Hobson-Maxwell informed governors she had recently been involved in link governor training for both SEN and safeguarding with the lead from the Trust. She explained it was beneficial and suggested all governors could watch the training back if interested.</p> <p>There is also a scheduled SCR check before Easter.</p>	
<b>AC/50/2021</b>	<p><b>How have governors held the school leaders to account?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bullying rates and ensuring students can come forward anonymously should they wish.</li> <li>- Transition week plans</li> <li>- Staff IT struggles</li> <li>- Agency staffing costs.</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/51/2021</b>	<p><b>Determination of Confidentiality Equality Act consideration Nolan Principles</b></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"> <li>- There were no confidential items discussed.</li> <li>- There had been no Equality Act implications.</li> </ul> <p>Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles.</p>	
<b>AC/52/2021</b>	<p><b>Complete report to Trustees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Like to see the finances every meeting to allow the governors to challenge if concerned.</li> <li>- Follow up staff life cycle for staff laptops.</li> <li>- Praise for Mr West from the staff and governors</li> <li>- LGBTQ+ lead across the trust and work in academy</li> <li>- Behaviour and attendance in the pupils</li> <li>- General positivity within the academy bearing in mind interruptions and challenges around covid.</li> <li>- #lockdownlitterpicking with Max Litchfield</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 11 May at 5.30pm.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 18.55pm</p>	
	<p>Signed..... (chair) Date.....</p> <p>Print.....</p>	