

**Minutes of the Retford Oaks Academy Committee meeting
held on Tuesday 11 May 2021 at 5:30pm – 7:30pm
Via Microsoft Teams**

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

In attendance	Initials	Position	
Mrs H Widdup	HW	Executive Principal	
Mr C West	CW	Principal	
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Clerk and Advisor	
<i>Mrs C Greenwood</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>Observer</i>	
<i>Mrs D Hollingsworth</i>	<i>DH</i>	<i>Observer</i>	

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AC/53/2021	<p>Prior to the agenda starting, the governors made introductions with those new to the committee. Both Mrs Greenwood and Mrs Hollingsworth's appointments are to be confirmed under agenda item AC/58/2021 following electronic voting in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Update following central training. Mr Knight ran through the training event and highlighted ROA has had in depths discussions in the previous meeting regarding the Stonewall School Champion and noted how ROA was mentioned in the training for the work on LGBTQ+. Governors were also updated to the fact parents can withdraw consent to certain subjects, but this is limited.</p> <p>Mr Knight asked if the academy has a SLT linked in, which Mrs Widdup confirmed was Jane West. Mr Knight further clarified that the committee have a careers link governor and the Clerk confirmed this was Mr Gadie. Mr Knight requested confirmation that Mrs Leathum-Pugh is level 6 qualified, Mrs Widdup confirmed.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to know that careers are embedded through the whole curriculum, including students being able to understand the reality of further education choices including for example, a criminology degree and the careers options associated to that. Mrs Widdup added that each department has curriculum intent where it states its purpose and any links to careers within that. Each department also has a careers board highlighting the jobs / careers that their curriculum could link into.</p> <p><i>Mr West joined the meeting 5.42pm</i></p>	

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	<p>Mr Knight asked if the new T levels will affect the academy and Mrs Widdup confirmed they do not know at the minute, but it is something both the academy and the Trust are keeping an eye on to look at how it may be moved forward. Mr Farrell offered his help as he now works within the technical education policy unit within the DfE so any policy issues with the implementation of the T levels he is happy to help with. Both Mr West and Mrs Widdup thanked Mr Farrell for this offer.</p> <p>Mr Knight requested confirmation that when students go on visits to workplaces that there is always adequate H&S and safeguarding in place. Mrs Widdup confirmed that any visit or trip is always fully regulated.</p> <p>Governors were informed that the slideshow and recording for the Careers and RSE training is on SharePoint for anyone who missed the training to watch back. Governors were asked to inform the clerk if they do catch up after the live event so it can be added to the training log.</p>	
AC/54/2021	<p>Declaration of interest There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p>	
AC/55/2021	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Gadie and Mrs Bryn-Jones. Miss Ward was also absent however no apologies were given. Clerk to contact Miss Ward to check everything is ok.</p>	Clerk
AC/56/2021	<p>Minutes of the AC meeting dated 23rd March 2021 The minutes of the meeting that had previously been received were approved and signed by the chair.</p>	
AC/57/2021	<p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC/40/2021 – Mrs Clough-Watson has asked to come back to the governors with more information on bullying. Governors confirmed this could be added to the agenda in the next academic year. • AC/45/2021 – please see item AC/58/2021 • AC/46/2021 – to note the discussions surrounding link roles including GDPR is ongoing. Clerk to add to the next agenda. • AC/47/2021 – Governors were informed that there is a summer refresh programme planned for updating the staff computers and the academy are working with IT on what is needed and how many units are required. The governors queried if the budget for the replacement equipment was from ROA's budget or from a Trust pot. Mr West explained that the budget process within the academy has changed making the process more transparent. There is a significant investment planned for the summer and some from next year's budget. The governors further asked if the staff had a say in the units being purchased to ensure they are fit for purpose. Mr West confirmed that the IT department are working on the project including the specifications especially since most new laptops do not have VGA connections, so the priority is ensuring the specification is correct over cost. 	Clerk Clerk

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AC/58/2021	<p>Governor admin</p> <p>Mrs Hollingsworth's information had been circulated prior to the meeting after expressing an interest to join the committee. Governors voted unanimously for Mrs Hollingsworth to join the Academy Committee for a four-year term from 11/05/2021 to 10/05/2025.</p> <p>Mrs Greenwood's CV information had been circulated prior to the meeting after expressing an interest to join the committee and after observing the meeting in March 2021. Governors voted unanimously for Mrs Greenwood to join the Academy Committee for a four-year term from 11/05/2021 to 10/05/2025.</p>	
AC/59/2021	<p>Report from Principal</p> <p>Governors had received the ERM in advance. Data wise, there is no progress 8 score for the current year with the acknowledgement that the data will not count in league tables. Attainment 8 is still increasing with a significant step on previous years. Attendance remains above national average and still increasing. Exclusions are higher than the academy would like at this point, but a lot are from Covid-19 related issues or bubble breaking. Coming back into a regimented process has been a struggle for several students.</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Mr West informed governors that there are no safeguarding concerns currently. The academy had a safeguarding review completed by the Trust and are currently awaiting the report which will hopefully be received prior to the next meeting and will be shared then.</p> <p>Integrated Risk Management Risk Register inc. education risks, Health & Safety, staff & pupil well-being, GDPR</p> <p>Governors were also informed the academy also had a risk register audit 2 weeks ago and are also awaiting the report. The report to be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>Academy Improvement Plan evaluation</p> <p>Mr West reminded governors of the 3 key objectives from the AIP. Objective 1 is on track. To ensure the students are getting the best experience the academy can offer, there are 2 staff leading a virtual trip day. They will be turning the science department into Stratford for the day and other year groups will go to other departments who will be conducting other virtual trips. Objective 2 is also on track; the QA is proving the students are being stretched and challenged which is helping move towards outstanding judgements with students taking on deeper learning. Governors were informed that for objective 3 the staff are working well as a team. The assessment tasks set by the boards has been taken on including the organisation and management and staff are working together on how to overcome any issues.</p> <p>PP strategy impact</p> <p>The academy has taken on additional PP students during lockdowns due to loss of earnings etc which has brought in an additional £30k in funding so the academy are looking at additional ways to support those students. The academy is also working with the Trust on poverty</p>	<p>CW</p> <p>CW</p>

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	<p>proofing. This project contains a lot of work which the academy is already doing including the PP voucher booklets which is being heralded as a great start around the project. The academy has also provided 1-1 tutor support to those students to help play catch up and had been targeted for the Easter schools.</p> <p>Mr Knight asked if the academy is happy that they are capturing everyone who is entitled to the support. Mr West confirmed they are doing as much as they can be. There have been constant reminders throughout the lockdowns as some parents may have fallen into the PP category without realising and the academy have helped parents to submit forms if needed.</p> <p>The governors acknowledged the links to Oxford and Cambridge via the Disadvantaged High Ability programme and questioned what format those links take the young people who engage in the programme and how they found it. Mr West confirmed that the engagement this year has been a lot less than it normally would be, but they have been involved with working with student mentors. Mr West does not have a full evaluation of the programme, but this will be done this half term including student voice. Clerk to add to the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>SEND strategy impact Mrs Deer is now fully qualified as the SENDco for the academy which allows Mrs Truseler to work across the Trust. The academy has secured additional funding which is £20k more than expected. The TAs are a lot more focused and more pointed in the support. During the restrictions, the TA's have been based on the departmental offices which has made them more visible, but it has also allowed teachers to intervene a lot more and work with the TA's which has promoted their abilities around the school. The academy does have an aim to lower the number of exclusions linked to SEND students due to being slightly disproportionate. The teacher assessment grades (TAG) are key at this point to ensure those students due to get support in exams are getting the support in the evidence gathering sessions. Within the guidelines it shows that if you have a reader in the final exam, then this should be the standard way of working.</p> <p>The governors queried if the additional £20k of SEND funding was capital or income. Mr West explained it was additional bids, for additional students who reached the threshold for high level needs funding.</p> <p>The governors noted that the academy is aiming to lower exclusions linked to SEND as is disproportionate but questioned how disproportionate that is. Mr West confirmed the figures are not massively out and because the academy work with percentages, the SEND cohort is smaller. Mrs Widdup added that the academy is looking to create some strategies moving forward. Mr West to send the numbers to the committee. Mr Knight questioned if Covid-19 has influenced these figures being higher or was it happening before. Mr West verified that Covid-19 has been the biggest reason for the swing, but some students are not coping with the various school closures.</p>	<p>CW / Clerk</p> <p>CW</p>

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	<p>The governors questioned if the exclusions are fixed term or permanent which Mr West confirmed they are all fixed and the academy have had no permanent exclusions for 7 years. The academy work hard to get every student to the end of their education with ROA if possible. The permanent exclusion is a last resort, so they always try to find the right routes before that. With the alternative provisions available there is always something that fits the needs of the student beforehand. When students look like they are heading down the wrong route, the academy may send them to an alternative provision for a short time, but they have then returned to ROA and been successful.</p> <p>Appraisal update Appraisals are all up to date with a potential of one staff who may need informal support after half term.</p> <p>Admissions next academic year Governors were informed that admissions are still not stable for this year with no clear reason why. An additional 13 students appeared on the list just before the meeting and it is believed that this may be because the schools in Worksop are full and appeals have been rejected. The projected intake is at 216. The applications for year 12 are much more stable and intake is around 65. There are a couple of external applications being worked through, but this figure will not move massively.</p> <p>Mr Knight queried if the students sent from Worksop get additional support with transport costs. Mr West confirmed he is asking the same questions to Notts County Council. Mr Knight expressed a concern that the academy may start to see absences if parents are unable to afford the transport. Mr West added that there is currently a subsidised bus that comes from Worksop, but this does not have the ability to expand to take on the additional 43 students which have Worksop addresses. Mr West added that it is believed they have failed on their appeals, so they have been allocated a space at the nearest school with availability. Those families may not want to send their children to ROA so may then apply to The Elizabethan Academy, but Mr West will update further at the next meeting.</p> <p>Governors were informed that the academy has appointed a Teacher of Geography which was from someone completing a placement of ROA. Recruitment is also underway for a cover supervisor. The academy has appointed maternity leave cover for Computing with a NQT who was a very strong candidate. Mr West also informed governors that Mr Tomkins is retiring from the end of May. Mr Knight agreed he would email on behalf of the committee.</p> <p>Mrs Widdup highlighted in the ERM where Mr Holmes, Chief Education Officer, had noted ROA has the best managed CLFP and budget in the Trust. Governors were made aware that the academy had been praised for this and are the leading light within the Trust.</p>	<p>CW</p> <p>AK</p>

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	<p>CAG – Mr West informed governors that the staff are fully trained and up to speed with what needs to be done for the CAG (centre assessed grades) however there is a significant workload associated to this and staff are being supported throughout the whole process. The CAG is creating anxiety in both the students and staff with several staff not being experienced in coursework so are finding it challenging. The academy has been open and honest with students and parents with what is required, how it will be completed and why. The year 11's have also been made aware of their leaving date, so they know the deadline and what needs to be produced to get there. Mr Knight requested that Mr West pass on thanks from the governing body to ensure all staff are aware of how appreciative they are of the extra work and dedication.</p> <p>Catch up plans – There are several ways the academy is planning to help students catch up including 1-1 tutors and the potential for a summer school. With the summer school, a plan is being developed across ROA, BLPA and THPA and although the summer schools are around secondary school level, they are more around the students coming into the academy so there is a desire for a joint up approach with the main feeder primaries. They want to work on the experience and skills the year 6 teachers have and the knowledge of where those students are, to work with ROA to bridge the gap. There are financial risks as the funding is for those who turn up rather than those who say they will come.</p> <p>Ofsted readiness– At a SLT level, the academy is working on a response document to the previous Ofsted report and there is a plan for Mrs Widdup to hold mock Ofsted interviews, so everyone has had an option to experience this before any official visit. It was noted the Clerk is also working on a similar document from the governor perspective so clerk and academy to have a joint up approach to this.</p> <p>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification & any audit results;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other policy updates (Privacy Notice for Staff and Photography & Videography Policy) <p>The above Diverse Academies policies were updated by the Trust on the 4th May 2021 and are available on the Trust website. Governors were informed of these updates on the 4th May 2021.</p>	<p>CW</p> <p>CW / Clerk</p>
AC/60/2021	<p>Link governor visit updates / reports Mr Silcock informed governors he had attended Trust H&S training and explained there is an emphasis on link governors having an overview including inspecting documentation, ensuring policies are in place and procedures are being implemented rather than a hands-on approach. Mr Silcock will be in touch with Claire Rank to ensure everything is in place and will continue the role overseeing the H&S within the academy. Mr Silcock questioned if the problems with the roof are resolved which Mr West confirmed the hall is dry. It was agreed that everyone acknowledged the schools' responsibilities is to</p>	

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	<p>follow the procedures and Mr Silcock' s responsibility to oversee and ensure the policy is being followed.</p> <p>Mrs Hollingsworth informed governors that through her role as a governor at Tuxford Academy (TA) she had recently conducted a virtual inspection assessment on the Focus Group which is an alternative provision which also includes ROA students. It was noted that Mrs Hollingsworth would send the report through to the ROA governors if the TA governors approved. It was agreed for Mrs Hollingsworth to let Mrs Hobson-Maxwell know of any future visits as safeguarding lead for ROA.</p> <p>Mrs Hobson-Maxwell noted she had been through the SCR with Mr West and Mr Tomkins and highlighted some of the governor's DBS checks were dated. It was requested for the clerk to investigate if there may be a mutual timescale for DBS checks to be renewed for governors. Clerk to confirm with HR.</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>Clerk / HR</p>
<p>AC/61/2021</p>	<p>Staff, pupils, parent survey evaluations</p> <p>Mr West informed governors that the recent evaluations had been overwhelmingly positive with the academy receiving praise for how quickly the online teaching was set up and then how easily the students have returned, and education has carried on.</p> <p>75% of parents felt the amount of work set during home learning was just right with 20% saying there was too much. There had also been comments around the pace that the academy teaches at and parents were surprised at how much work is completed in a 50-minute period. Mr West also highlighted there was a higher work rate in the second lockdown rather than first.</p> <p>Mr Knight asked how this compares to last year as it looks more positive. Mr West confirmed it is massively more positive and the year-on-year survey which is completed in September also showed this. Governors were informed that Mr West often receives positive emails throughout the week. Mr Knight asked the staff governor if the staff are aware of the good reports coming back. Mr Spooner confirmed the staff are very regularly updated by Mr West in briefings as well as all staff emails.</p> <p>Mr West informed governors that he is doing more to include staff voice in decisions around the academy. For example, the year 8's were causing concerns during lesson change overs so the academy changed the procedure around this, staff voice said it worked well and was a good thing to do so went back to staff and they chose to also implement the new procedure with the year 9's.</p> <p>Attendance for the whole academy is at 93%. Year 13 and year 11 are at a significant stage with CAG and the academy are working hard to ensure attendance does not impact those. There are also several anxiety related issues in year 9 & 10, as expected. Hopefully ss much of this anxiety can be removed by the students working with the</p>	

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	academy counsellor. Mr Knight questioned the data that was received as it stated attendance is at 93% for the year but is also noted at 90.72%. Mr West confirmed this is down to the way it is calculated through the lockdown periods. The academy is working on what was coded in lockdown and how it works as there is some miscoding which is why it is different. The academy is above 90% which is above national average at 87%.	
AC/62/2021	How have governors held the school leaders to account? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laptops - Capturing of PP through covid - Exclusions - Cost of students being sent from Worksop 	
AC/63/2021	Determination of Confidentiality Equality Act consideration Nolan Principles Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no confidential items discussed. - There had been no Equality Act implications. Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles.	
AC/64/2021	Complete report to Trustees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition work being continued - Positivity around CAG 	
	Date and time of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 13 July at 5.30pm. The meeting closed at 18.52pm	
	Signed..... (chair) Date..... Print.....	