

**Minutes of the Retford Oaks Academy Committee meeting  
held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 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 Parent	A
<b>Mr G Gadie Vice Chair of Governors</b>	GG	Appointed	
<b>Mr A Knight Chair of Governors</b>	AK	Appointed	
Mr A Silcock	AS	Appointed	
Mr W Spooner	WS	Staff	A
Miss Natalie Ward	NW	Appointed	
Mr Saul Farrell	SF	Appointed	
<i>1 x Appointed governor vacancy</i>			
<i>1 x Appointed governor vacancy</i>			
<i>1 x Parent governor vacancy</i>			

<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	

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action/ by who/when</b>
<b>AC/28/2122</b>	<p><b>Local response following central training on;</b></p> <p><b>Ofsted updates and School Evaluation Framework</b> The governors who attended the training ran through the updates. Some of the academies within the Trust have recently gone through Ofsted inspections which proved beneficial to see recent reports. Clerk to update the Ofsted crib sheet that is in SharePoint.</p> <p><b>Risk appetite and integration</b> Governors attended risk training prior to the meeting, as well as Chris sharing the risk identification for the academy.</p> <p>The key risks for Retford Oaks are</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attainment gaps – this risk is in the summer results with the attainment gaps for different cohorts. Based on the mock results there are gaps in cohorts notably PP and SEND but the academy is focusing departmental intervention on those areas. The academy is using the school led tutoring to help with this intervention. The risk is targeting at a 2 with no impacts.</li> </ol> <p><b>The governors asked</b> how confident the academy is that the mitigation will meet the target score. Mr West confirmed that there are several tutoring schemes which are helping with the targeted intervention. The National Tutoring Programme is a bought in service with the academy just completing round 1 with 15 students working with a Maths tutor online after school for 15 weeks. The Maths tutor was taking information given from the academy on the students' weaknesses and were working with the academy to ensure the students were better prepared. The academy is starting a second cohort in Maths and a cohort in English with the funding coming from the Covid catchup funding which academy has £46,000 to spend and justify. It is unclear how the academy will be</p>	<b>Clerk</b>

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	<p>required to submit evidence at the end. The potential of a 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort will be determined on the success and impact from the first 2. The governors were then advised that school led tutoring is ROA staff working with ROA students either before or after-school, working in groups of 3 students or less. The funding should be predominantly used for SEND, PP or vulnerable students with the academy needing to justify this on the census. This project is open to all subjects and all year groups except for Post 16. Mr West confirmed he is confident the academy can bring the gaps inline or further than they are but he would be surprised if there was no gap. The gaps will be within the tolerance. Governors agreed this risk identification.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="459 698 1353 1032">2. The financial viability of P16 – this is due to the numbers being small, therefore resulting in the academy using budgets from the lower school to top up the P16. There is significant lagged funding due to the way the academy is growing however there is a need to speculate to accumulate. Promotion of Post 16 for next September is underway with the academy looking at providing an attractive and cost-effective curriculum. Currently there are 53 students saying ROA is their 1<sup>st</sup> choice for next year which could result in 106 students in P16, however 130 is the break-even. Governors agreed the risk and the scoring.</li> <li data-bbox="459 1032 1353 1704">3. Behaviour &amp; attitudes – this is particularly post Covid. The students are not in the same place as they were, with challenges around their verbal challenge. The academy is pushing on being fair and intelligent whilst allowing lessons to continue with students starting to respond, with SLT starting to hear more manners. There are still some problems around unstructured times, with the duty points being a drain on the staff so this was reduced. However, this is no longer having an impact as there is not the staff visibility and presence so after half term the academy is going to flip back to a single break and a single lunch time. Governors were also made aware that Claire Rank went back to the architect drawings which highlighted a different queuing and till structure to the dining room. The academy has since met with the canteen staff and now have 6 queues instead of 3. This has resulted in a massive decrease in the length of time it takes to serve the students highlighting the fact the problem was never the volume of children but more on the organisation. Mr West confirmed that he is not as confident the academy will turn the behaviour and attitudes around as quick but will head towards it.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>The governors noted</u></b> that the academy can hope as the current cohort pass through the new students may have the right attitude. Mr West confirmed that the Yr11's is a much more focussed and better-behaved cohort, with the younger ones being the challenge. The current Yr7's are a challenge as they have had a disrupted start. <b><u>The governors asked</u></b> if the academy is planning a proper period of integration for the current Yr6's. Mr West confirmed the academy are planning for a normal transition. Governors agreed the risk and the scoring.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="459 1973 1353 2072">4. Finances – delegated funding doesn't reach budgeted levels. If the SEND team were not chasing the funding, then this would have a massive impact. The academy has achieved the income</li> </ol>	

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	<p>budget line but the academy has also added more PP students which has brought in more funding. This therefore results in the academy expecting a target of 1 that will be met this academic year.</p> <p><b>The governors questioned</b> if this risk should be classed as a treat and not a tolerate in this instance. Mr West advised he has left it as a tolerate as there is nothing more the academy can do. It is doing what it needs to do. The governors agreed to leave it as tolerate.</p> <p>5. Insufficient staff resources – Mr West advised the governors this risk is based on the current scenario and potential turnover. There is also a potential risk that the academy will not fill any vacancies, however the academy currently has the staffing they require as well as the budget if any extra support is required. It was added that the academy is confident the academy can action any staffing level changes.</p> <p><b>The governors asked</b> what the academy’s recruitment experience is like and if the landscape is reasonably ok to which Mr West confirmed that staff retention has significantly increased. Where the academy has recruited there has been a wider and stronger field than previously. This has also been the same for the mid-year recruitment. Governors agreed the risk and the score.</p> <p>Governors requested a second session on the risk identification to allow for a broader view. Governors also requested the risk identifications to come to every meeting.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p>
<b>AC/29/2122</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> Both Mr Spooner and Mrs Bryn-Jones had sent apologies in advance of the meeting due to illness.</p>	
<b>AC/30/2122</b>	<p><b>Declaration of interest</b> There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p> <p>Mr Farrell advised the committee he is now working for Heritage Lincolnshire as a Project Manager. Clerk to update on the website.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p>
<b>AC/31/2122</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the AC meeting dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.</b> The minutes of the meeting that had previously been received were approved and signed by the chair.</p>	

<p><b>AC/32/2122</b></p>	<p><b>Matters arising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AC/14/2122 – governors to let Clerk know when they have caught up with the training</li> <li>• AC/15/2122 – to note the parent election applications closed on the 24th of January 2022.</li> </ul> <p>The clerk informed the committee that Oliver Jones has been appointed as the parent governor. With a 4-year term of office commencing from the 01/02/2022 to the 31/01/2026.</p> <p>From the parent elections there has been further interest from Joanne Bennett with the governors looking to appoint her at the next meeting. Mr Knight to contact both Mr Jones and Ms Bennett regarding the roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AC/03/2122 – Clerk caught up with Mr Farrell.</li> <li>• AC/19/2122 – Mr Gadie has completed the GDPR training, Mr Silcock still to complete.</li> <li>• AC/19/2122 – To note the NCC safeguarding checklist was submitted.</li> <li>• AC/20/2122 – To note, Mr Knight signed the EVC policy.</li> <li>• AC/21/2122 – To note Mrs Bryn-Jones is working with the Office of National Statistics and NASEN to provide an area position to support the academy in getting more staff to support the SEND pupils but this has been delayed due to personal circumstances. Mrs Bryn-Jones has also received a response from DAT when requesting information from them to which she was disappointed in the response.</li> </ul> <p><i>“Each academy is different, as each academy's needs are different. It really comes down to how the Principals spend their Notional Budget. There is no formula or ratio for the number of FTE Support Staff employed verses the number of children with SEND within a mainstream school or academy. It is simply down to the level of need and the amount of support that those children with SEND require whilst at the school or academy.”</i></p> <p>Mrs Widdup agreed with the DAT update.</p>	<p><b>AK</b></p> <p><b>AS</b></p>
<p><b>AC/33/2122</b></p>	<p><b>Report from Principal</b></p> <p>Governors were given a copy of the ERM summary report in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding; culture &amp; compliance inc. online safety</b></p> <p>Mr West advised the governors that there is a significant ICPC situation with a couple of students who are involved in a high level with a case however there was no real update at this point. The peer-on-peer abuse was delivered on LE day which involved ROA staff delivering on a wide range of issues surrounding these topics. Governors were advised it has caused a spike in My Concern which was expected with a handful of students making comments that the academy needs to follow up on. Student feedback shows that they felt better educated at the end of it.</p> <p><b>Identified academy risks inc. education, H&amp;S, staff &amp; pupil well-being, GDPR and complaints</b></p> <p>The academy risks had been discussed in detail in agenda item AC/28/2122.</p>	

Governors were advised that all actions from the H&S audit have now been dealt with.

Mr West confirmed that the academy is moving the dashboard forward and are now working entirely on SIMS which has made life easier for staff and has taken the lag out of attendance which helps massively.

The academy hosted the opportunity to have their 2<sup>nd</sup> round of vaccinations last week with 60 students participating. Whilst it was offered to parents, it was not encouraged and parents were reminded the academy was purely the host.

The SEF has been evaluated for the year and the academy have clear steps to ensure the gradings are moving forward. On the AIP, there has been a review of term 1. The document has been changed since it was written, as the SLT have been looking at better ways to report the current position.

Mr West confirmed that the SEND offering is updated and on the website. The academy is trialling a different response to coloured paper including looking at buying exercise books with the correct colour pages in so that the students who find it easier to work with blue paper will be able to do so.

Governors were advised that the academy's attendance is currently at 87% with 2% being the impact of Covid. Following an update on guidance, the academy is currently going back through and cross referencing the Covid codes to ensure the attendance is coded right. Overall, the current position is still above national attendance.

**The governors noted** that the 87% is concerning as the attendance is usually about 94% **before requesting clarification** that the academy are doing everything possible to keep the students engaged. Mr West confirmed that the academy has made 2 appointments to the attendance team with one extremely interested in the low persistent absence and one more keen to work on the students just tipping into poor attendance. It was also noted that the NCC are reluctant to issue fines with several parents taking delayed holidays as well as the Covid reluctance cases. The committee discussed ways in which the academy could help to ensure families understand the importance of attendance. Mr West added that the academy has gone into outbreak management due to the number of Covid cases and so far, this year the academy has lost 7196 sessions which is a significant amount. The academy will continue to monitor the attendance and get student's back into the academy that are off for other reasons and challenge them. The governors were comfortable that the academy is doing everything possible to get as many students' as possible attending.

#### **In-year admissions – all year groups**

Governors were made aware that so far there has been 43 arrivals and 20 departures with the academy currently having 7 students on the waiting list. It was noted that the 2 losses in Yr12 are students who have gone on to apprentices. **The governors questioned** why a high number of Yr9 students are arriving to which Mr West confirmed it is due to several reasons including a few from Worksop schools due to the students' not coping there. **The governors further asked** if there was

	any particular reason for the 20 departures. It was advised that the majority are due to moving out of the area with a couple going to other schools locally so nothing is alarming.	
<b>AC/34/2122</b>	<p><b>Link governor visits:</b> Mr Knight advised the committee he is planning to complete a safeguarding link governor visit prior to the next committee meeting. Mr Gadie confirmed he will meet with the new careers lead once they have settled into their role.</p> <p>Mr Knight agreed the committee need to complete more visits. Mr West added that he values governors being in the academy, meeting with staff and offering friendly challenge. Governors were reminded that the SLT are all relatively new to their roles and with there being a lot of experience in the governing body, the critical friend would be good. It was noted that governance is a concern for Mr West in the Leadership &amp; Management section on the ERM and ultimately needs the governors to be in the school.</p> <p>It was agreed for the next governor meeting to be held at the academy, covid permitting.</p>	<p><b>AK</b></p> <p><b>All governors</b></p>
<b>AC/35/2122</b>	<p><b>Confirm determined admission arrangements &amp; approval of local appendix</b> The governors determined the admissions policy for the 23/24 academic year and Mr West to ensure they are sent to the LA for inclusion on their website. <b>The governors questioned</b> if the academy will be oversubscribed to which Mr West confirmed he will be in a better place to confirm in the March meeting.</p>	<b>CW</b>
<b>AC/36/2122</b>	<p><b>December management accounts</b> The management accounts were sent in advance of the meeting. There were no questions from the governors.</p>	
<b>AC/37/2122</b>	<p><b>Forecast 1</b> Sent in advance. Mr West noted that the agency staffing line does look concerning with the forecast suggesting this could be significantly overbudget. However, the academy does know the reasons for that with some being because of Covid, long term absence and some form the way the academy has done the staffing. The teaching staff line is £23k positive with the agency staff being £41k negative. This is due to a maternity post being staffed through agencies. Overall, the total staffing expenditure is showing as £18k overbudget which is the cost of agency staff the academy has had to bring to in to ensure the academy can still function while staff have been off. <b>The governors noted</b> that the agency staffing overspend is to be expected however, it is a healthy position to be in overall. <b>The governors questioned</b> if the academy has the right level of staff numbers to which Mr West confirmed there is. However, it is a challenge to ensure all lessons are covered and that the students' education is moving forward. SLT have taken on a volume of the cover however discussions have been ongoing between Mr West and Mrs Widdup to look at the volume of lessons that SLT are covering to ensure the right balance is being met. Mrs Widdup added that currently there would not</p>	



	<p>be any justification to bring in any additional members of staff in as in terms of the curriculum, the academy is fully staffed.</p>	
<b>AC/38/2122</b>	<p><b>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification, audits, and Cat C trip approval.</b> There were no Cat C trips for the committee to approve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Other policy updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical Conditions Policy</li> <li>• Provider Access Policy</li> <li>• Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The above Diverse Academies policies were updated by the Trust on the 12th of January 2022 and are available on the Trust website. Governors were informed of these updates on the 18th of January 2022.</p>	
<b>AC/39/2122</b>	<p><b>Review of governor action plan from self-evaluation</b> The committee went through the governance action plan and acknowledged the need to complete more link governor visits. Clerk to update.</p> <p><b>The governors asked</b> if they could attend the upcoming Matilda production. Mr West advised the academy are currently looking at if the production can still run or if they will need to reduce the numbers of the audience. The tickets out currently available to the parents at the moment and Mr West confirmed he will come back to the governors when the academy knows what tickets are available.</p>	<b>Clerk.</b>
<b>AC/40/2122</b>	<p><b>How have governors held the school leaders to account?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Confidence intervals on the academy risks</li> <li>- Transitions</li> <li>- Staffing costs v agency costs.</li> </ul>	
<b>AC/41/2122</b>	<p><b>Determination of Confidentiality</b> <b>Equality Act consideration</b> <b>Nolan Principles</b> <b>Trust mission, vision, and values</b> 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 and that the Trust mission, vision and values had been upheld.</p>	
<b>AC/42/2122</b>	<p><b>Complete report to Trustees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion about risk</li> <li>- Concerned about national picture on attendance.</li> <li>- Good work being carried out by Chris (worried about burnout) going above and beyond.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 5.30pm – to be held in the academy.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 19.06pm</p>	

	Signed..... (chair) Date..... Print.....	
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