

**Summary of discussions of the Local Academy Committee meeting
held on Monday 6 July at 5:30pm at Retford Oaks Academy**

Membership	Initials	Governor	Absence
Mr A Knight Chair	AK	Appointed	A
Mr D Cartwright Temp Chair	DC	Appointed	
Mrs P Bryn-Jones Vice Chair	PBJ	Appointed	
Mr A Silcock	AS	Appointed	A
Dr Ann Harris	AH	Elected Parent	
Mrs Sarah Miles	SM	Elected Parent	A
Mrs L Clough-Watson	LCW	Staff Governor	A
Mrs J Wilson	JW	Appointed	
Miss S Babu	SB	Appointed	

In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Mrs H Widdup	HW	Executive Principal	A
Mr L Dickinson	LD	Principal	
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Governance Professional	
Mr J Rolph	JR	Trustee	
Mrs A Johnson	AJ	<i>Potential governor observing</i>	
Miss K Austerberry	KA	SENCO	
Quorum required			5

Outstanding Actions Log

C	= Complete	CF	= Carried forward	I	= Incomplete (carried forward more than once)
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Agenda item	Meeting Ref	Action Required	Responsible Person	Timeline	Update	Status
AC/42/2526	2526 - 4	LD to put Jacqui in touch with the right person to keep up to speed with what events are going on at the academy and when governors would be welcome to attend.	LD	27/03/2026	As with AC/49/2526, a list of events has been shared with the governors. A folder has been created with parent communication in for governors to be aware of what is happening.	C
AC/48/2526	2526 - 5	SEND and safeguarding link governor reports to be submitted to the LAC for the next meeting	DC / PBJ	06/07/2026	Verbal updates of visits shared. Hard copies of reports to be shared before the end of term.	CF

AC/48/2526	2526 - 5	RC to distribute list of link governor roles and committee to consider any they wish to cover	RC	26/06/2026	This was distributed to the governors in advance of the meeting. See AC/57/2526 for confirmation of link governor roles for 26/27 academic year	C
AC/49/2526	2526 - 5	To advise on the gender balance of the incoming Yr7 cohort	HW	06/07/2026	As of 20.05.26 it stands at 109 girls and 95 boys	C
AC/49/2526	2526 - 5	To advise if the SEND newsletter has stopped	HW	06/07/2026	It was confirmed that this is not currently being done but it is hopefully being reinstated soon.	C
AC/49/2526	2526 - 5	To confirm upcoming academy events that the governors can attend	HW	22/05/2026	This has been shared with the committee and governors have advised which events they can attend	C

Bold blue text = academy committee governor check and challenge

Bold green text = academy committee governor decision-making / approval

Q = Question from Governors

A = Answer from senior leaders

Agenda item	Key points / Summary	Action Required	Responsible Person	Timeline
AC/54/2526	Welcome and apologies for absence - AK and LCW will be absent from the committee for the foreseeable future due to illness and maternity leave. - SM sent apologies that were approved due to holiday. - No apologies sent from AS. - Welcomes to AJ, a new potential governor observing. - JR introduced himself and a background of the trustees and members			
AC/55/2526	Declarations of Interest There were no changes to declarations of interest made at the start of the year and no declarations in relation to the agenda.			

AC/56/2526	Approve actions log dated 18 May The Actions log from 18 th May was reviewed and approved.			
AC/57/2526	Governance Report - Since the last meeting, there has been link visits in safeguarding, SEND and PP. Reports to be sent in and shared. - The link roles within the committee were reconfirmed. - Governors voted unanimously for DC to continue as Chair of Governors for a 2-year term of office from September 2026. - Governors voted unanimously for PBJ to continue as Vice-Chair of Governors for a 2-year term of office from September 2026. - RC to share new link governor visit report. - All governors reminded to complete the annual Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interest and the skills audit for new academic year. -	PBJ and JW to send link governor reports. RC to share safeguarding report Share link governor visit form To complete annual forms	PBJ / JW RC RC All govs	22.07.26 09.07.26 09.07.26 22.07.26
AC/58/2526	Self-evaluation and action plan - The action plan was discussed with the committee, and it was then approved.			
AC/59/2526	Training - KA shared a presentation with the governors. The plan to move SEND forward includes; - o Increase parent / carer communication - o Increase collaboration not only with parents but also with the primary schools. This includes launching events such as 'Kenco with SENCO'. - o Looking at events based on area of need rather than age. This will allow for parents to share stories and strategies across year groups rather than it being age group specific. - o Reinstating the SEND newsletters. - o Looking across the academy at the adaptative teaching strategies to ensure they are they being implemented. By doing this it breaks down the barriers to learning in lessons. - o Close working with PP lead and the inclusion team.			

	○ Whole staff CPD – including working with Notts CC for training on specific need e.g. masking. Teachers have found this beneficial. ○ SnapB tool is being launched in the academy next year and student assessments can be taken 3 times a year so progress can be seen more easily. ○ Closing the gap on the attendance of children with SEND. This is being done by ensuring students feel like they belong and that they feel safe. By ensuring the academy is welcoming and accessible and that children with SEND know they have a safe place or person to go too then this aids them attending. Once they are attending then they can access the interventions that are put in place. ○ The SEND rooms in the academy have changed and there is now a safe and emotionally available space in the academy for students to go to. ○ Working collaboratively with specialist agencies collaboration. By doing this it helps to look at other strategies that staff can implement and use. - The suspension rate of students with SEND is at 9% compared to the national figure of 20% - The outcomes are above the national figure for children with SEND which is testament to the impact of KA work. - The academy does need to work on the attendance for children with SEND as it is below national. 17 children in Y11 did not attend Retford Oaks on a full-time timetable and had a fully bespoke package but the academy strives to ensure that primary the package on offer is right for the student. <i>Q: Noting the behaviour problems with the core group of Y7 boys, is this impacting attendance?</i> A: Yes, it is, but the academy will always look at alternatives available opposed to suspension. Retford Oaks works closely with a lot of local schools which gives opportunities for students to have a period of time in another school instead of			
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	a suspension. The academy will work geographically with the student to ensure it is an offer that works. This offer is also a reciprocal offer for the other academies too. <i>Q: Looking into next year, is it deemed that the academy is in the best position?</i> A: Yes, the academy is the strongest it has ever been with inclusion. Governors noted that KA has a significant amount of admin support which covers the academy under the SEND code of practice. KA agreed with this. LD added that from the Trust, Heather Widdup and Lucy Spacey have taken over the leadership of SEND. Kirsty Simpson is also now the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning and with KA, it has made for a more cohesive approach to SEND. <i>Q: What interventions have had the biggest impact?</i> A: There has been a big cohort of students doing IDL and the literacy screening and intervention that has stemmed from that. Reading and spelling has also had a large impact with spelling ages increasing by 2 years for some students. - There is a whole school strategy for reading where all students are reading the same book together. The reading age of students is increased dramatically and will help with outcomes as will support students in reading exam papers. <i>Q: What is being done to push the higher achieving readers?</i> A: An academic reading group is being created to support those students. The academy continues to focus on stretching and challenging all students. <i>Q: Do you need any support from governors?</i> A: No thank you, feeling very positive, supported and empowered with the school and the whole staff body. <i>Q: A future target was to develop the TA's, is there a plan for this?</i>			
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	A: The focus is around empowerment and giving them something to focus on and develop. There will also be a Champion in specific areas of need and TA's will also support the SENCO with parent meetings too. As a team, the SEND department can continually be driven forward. Q: How often do you offer SEND CPD? A: There tends to often be briefings and after school meetings. In these meetings key students are discussed and as an inclusion team, a strategy can be formulated. Q: How do the incoming Y7 cohort look from a SEND perspective? A: There is a high level of EHCP's coming with 4 from Lincolnshire and 4 from Nottinghamshire. Lots of transitional meetings are taking place with the SENCOs in primary schools and also with the parents. The information form that parents complete prior to joining has been adapted to allow for more information to be shared so that strategies can be in place from the day the child arrives at the academy. This has resulted in the academy having a broad knowledge of the children with SEND who will be joining. Transition week was w/c 29th June. It was a positive week and allowed the academy to also get student voice to ensure the context is right ahead of September. - Feedback from transition has been that students felt comfortable before they arrived at the academy. Those coming from feeder primaries have mostly already been to ROA through events. - Bespoke transition days have also been held for the smaller primaries locally e.g. St Peters at Gringley on the Hill. Q: How are children joining from Lincolnshire? A: This is down to parent choice which is shows the reputational improvement of the academy. - LD shared a presentation on Young Carers - The academy has just been awarded a quality mark for the excellence in Young Carers Support in Nottinghamshire			
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	- There are 71 Young Carers in the academy at the minute. Q: How does the academy identify young carers? A: Some are self-identified, but the academy does explore this with parents / carers and students. Over 80% of the Young Carers have been identified by the academy. - Students are being advised what Young Carers are in assemblies and PD activities to ensure all students appreciate their peers. - The biggest aim is to make Young Carers experience in school the same as those non-Young Carers. - There is a focus on making it less of a stigma and parents are more open on discussing the topic. - Attendance of Young Carers is improving. Q: Can students go on and off the Young Carers register? A: Yes, they can be removed and readded as situations change. Q: How does the academy know this? A: This is predominately through communication with parents / carers and students through pastoral support. Q: There is a Sheffield Young Carers charity, is there anything local that could help with funding? A: Not that the academy is aware of, but they are working closely with the Nottinghamshire Carers Association. Retford Oaks pay for events to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation. Q: Is Young Carers a new rising trend? A: No, it has always been something that schools were aware of, but it is now on the OFSTED schedule. Retford Oaks have been focussing on ensuring it is engrained in the academy so that there is not a single point of failure with one member of staff.			
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	Q: What does the accreditation mean for the academy? A: It gives the recognition for what the academy are doing. - LD shared a presentation on Pupil Premium (PP) including the PP strategy, funding and monitoring record. - The academy is close to national average for the outcomes of PP students - PP attendance is the academies best performing centile in the school. - PP students get a free breakfast at the academy; there is currently a 30% uptake rate. Q: When is the free breakfast available? A: Prior to the school day Q: Could this change to morning break to get a bigger uptake? A: PP students also get an allowance for break and lunch time in addition to the breakfast. - There will be whole staff CPD on the PP strategy in September. Q: Is PP sufficiently funded? A: It is workable, but it would be nice for more funding. Governors noted that the academy need to be able to show the impact the funding is having. LD confirmed that the PP report highlights the headlines, but the academy does have case studies to evidence the impact. - The priorities for PP moving forwards is; increased communication with families, targeted intervention, monitoring and accountability and improving classroom practice. Q: What about LAC?			
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	A: There are currently 9 in the academy and are overseen by Richard Stewardson, DSL. Q: What about EAL? A: The academy has a teacher who is EAL so appropriate interventions are being put in place to support more academically. Q: Are there any pressures looking ahead to September? A: No, the academy is fully staffed and for any staff who have expressed interest in leaving, it has been timetabled that they will not have key year groups or top sets to ensure continuity and consistency for the students throughout the academic year. .			
AC/60/2526	Complete annual summary template on the effectiveness of governance 2025/26 - The annual summary was completed and retrospective approval was granted.			
AC/61/2526	Determine Confidentiality Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved: - There were no confidential discussions. - There had been no Equality Act implications.			
AC/53/2526	Next meeting Monday 21st September 2026 at 5:30pm at Retford Oaks Academy Meeting closed at 7.24pm			

Signed by Chair: <i>D.Cartwright</i>	Date: 21.09.26
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