



**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (LGB) MEETING
HELD VIA VIDEO LINK
ON THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER 2021 AT 6.30PM**

Present: Mrs Natalie Garrett (Chair)
Mr Matt Green (Headteacher) *(left at 6.55pm)*
Mrs Louise Weaver
Mr Alan Eaton
Mr Tim Hughes
Mr Simon Blackbond

Apologies: Mrs Rachel Gallyot

In Attendance: Dr Annabel Kay (CEO Warriner MAT)
Mrs Wendy Willie (Clerk)

ACTIONS

1.	Health & Safety Staff Representative to be highlighted to staff with information to be shared about the role	Mr Green
2.	Accounts to be laid before the Members of the Academy Trust at the AGM scheduled for 27 January 2022	Mrs Willie
3.	Reappointment of Auditors to be an item on the AGM agenda	Mrs Willie
4.	EYFS Governor visit to take place early 2022	Mrs Gallyot
5.	Updated Nursery data to be circulated in January 2022	Mr Green
6.	EAL to be added to the SDP	Mr Green
7.	Website Equality statement to be broadened from lesbian and gay to LGBT	Mr Green
8.	Queries relating to the Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy to be raised with Mr Green	Mrs Willie
9.	Remote Learning Policy to be amended and sent to Mr Green	Mrs Willie
10.	Pupil Premium Report to be published on the school website	Mr Green
11.	Remaining visits to be rolled over to next meeting	Mrs Willie
12.	Lockdown Policy to be discussed with Mr Green	Mr Hughes
13.	Safeguarding leaflet for visitors to be checked during the next safeguarding audit	Dr Kay
14.	Follow-up phonics visit to be undertaken	Mrs Gallyot
15.	Register of Interest & Pecuniary Interest form to be updated	Mrs Gallyot/ Mrs Willie
16.	Governor site visits to be discussed with Mr Green	Mrs Garratt

This meeting was held via video link through Microsoft Teams due to Covid-19.

1. **Welcome & Consent to Absence**

Mrs Garrett welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apology as noted above which was accepted. It was noted that Mrs Sarah Mills had resigned as a Member of the Academy Trust with effect from 14 October 2021. All documents were made available on GovernorHub prior to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.

2. **Declarations of interest in respect of any items on the agenda & notice of any amendments to the Register of Interests**

None

3. **Presentation of draft Report & Financial Statements 01.09.2020 – 31.08.2021 Cooper Parry**

Mr Andy Jones of Cooper Parry Accountants was welcomed to the meeting.

External Audit Findings Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

Document 'External Audit Findings Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021' was shared on screen. Mr Jones briefed on the content of the document with the following noted and questions raised:

- No outstanding audit issues were reported.
- A clean report is being issued by the auditors.
- A clean report is also being issued in relation to the Trust being complaint in line with the Academy Trust Handbook.

Key Audit Risk Findings

Although a clean report is being issued, governors' attention was drawn to the key risk of the school being a going concern as detailed on page 01. It was noted that there is not yet any formal approval from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for Southfield to join the Warriner Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) or confirmation of financial support continuing, therefore, the accounts are being prepared on a going concern basis.

Mr Jones highlighted the 'Other Significant Findings' detailed on page 01, relating to the amount of £223,000 owed to Northants County Council (NCC) for uncollected third party payroll payments dating back to 2018/19. Although the accountants tried to obtain confirmation from NCC that this money is owed to them, NCC state that nothing is owed to them. The accountants have found no evidence that this money has been paid to NCC.

Mr Jones advised that last year eight internal control points were highlighted with six of these now resolved which is very positive. Two points identified last year have been carried forward, with two low-risk points identified in this year's audit.

It was confirmed that there will be a deficit of £255,000 in the school's reserves in relation to operating funds, which is a key factor, with financial support from the ESFA required moving forward.

Mr Jones explained that as Dr Kay is CEO of the Warriner MAT and Accounting Officer of Southfield Academy Trust and Mr Green is the Headteacher, a Trustee of Southfield Academy Trust and an employee of the Warriner MAT, there is an issue that Dr Kay and Mr Green could be in positions of influence. This raises the question of whether their positions should be declared in the Related Party Transactions with the Warriner MAT. It was noted that Dr Kay's appointment as Accounting Officer of Southfield Academy Trust and Mr Green's appointment as Headteacher were agreed by the ESFA. Mr Jones asked if the Board of Trustees are aware of all dealings and transactions and satisfied that paying charges to the Warriner MAT represents value for money and is the right course of action. The governors agreed that this is the right course of action and that they are happy with the positions Dr Kay and Mr Green hold and that they are happy with the processes in place. **A governor asked if there are any mitigations in place.** Mr Jones advised that the main issue is if it is considered that the

Warriner MAT and Southfield Academy Trust are related parties by virtue of Dr Kay's position as Southfield's Accounting Officer and CEO of the Warriner MAT. Dr Kay confirmed that no formal arrangement was in place with the Department for Education (DfE) to support the school, however, the DfE are aware of the relationship and receive the monthly accounts and details of transactions. Mr Jones asked the Board if Dr Kay is able to exert considerable influence over Southfield Academy Trust and stated that if the Board are satisfied with the arrangement and the transactions and do not feel the Warriner MAT has a hold over the school, then this can be closed off. The Chair of Governors clarified that the governors were all aware when they were appointed that the current management were in place. It was added that the governors do challenge the management, which is minuted. The ESFA are completely aware of the situation and have confirmed this to the Chair of Governors. Mr Jones thanked the Chair for providing clarification on this.

Mr Jones highlighted that a governor had failed to declare an interest as a Director of Gallyot Consulting Ltd and that this needs to be added to the Register of Interests. Mrs Gallyot to be asked to clarify this on the Pecuniary Interest form. **Action: Mrs Willie/Mrs Gallyot**

Annual Report & Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

The Annual Report and Financial Statements were shared on screen. It was clarified that the accounts have to be with the ESFA by 31 January 2022. Mr Jones briefed on the report reiterating the material uncertainty related to the going concern noted within the accounts. The following questions were raised:

- **A governor asked how much Covid funding had been received.** Mr Jones confirmed £12,500 Catch up funding was received as detailed in Note 4 and that this funding was fully spent during the year.
- Confidential discussion held, please refer to confidential minute.

Dr Kay confirmed that the accounts would be signed and sent to Mr Jones tomorrow. Mr Jones was thanked for presenting the accounts and left the meeting at 7.35pm.

Approval of Annual Accounts 2020-21 for submission to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

With no further questions raised it was proposed that the accounts be approved for submission to the ESFA. All governors voted in agreement with the proposal, motion carried. Accounts to be laid before the Members of the Academy Trust at the AGM scheduled on 27 January 2022. **Action: Mrs Willie**

4. Reappointment of Auditors for Recommendation to the Members

It was proposed that Cooper Parry be retained as the auditors for the Academy Trust. With no objections raised, it was agreed that Cooper Parry be recommended to continue as auditors for the Academy Trust. Reappointment of auditors to be an item on the AGM agenda. **Action: Mrs Willie**

5. Minutes of the meeting held 14 October 2021 & Review of Actions

The minutes having been circulated were agreed as a true copy. Minutes deferred for signing.

Review of Action Points

Please refer to table above for new/outstanding actions. The following was reported:

- Mr Green confirmed that all staff had completed safeguarding training, with governors to redo this training next year.
- Mrs Willie confirmed that all governors had completed the declaration on GovernorHub to confirm they had read Keeping Children Safe In Education 2021 Part 1.
- Mr Green recommended that the staff survey be delayed until the spring term. No objections were made to this recommendation.

6. Confidential minutes of the meeting held 14 October 2021 & Matters Arising

The minutes having been read were agreed as a true copy. Minutes deferred for signing. There were no matters arising.

7. Headteacher's Report

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read. The following points were highlighted and questions raised:

- **A governor asked about Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) being graded as a 3 in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) but in the SEF report it is marked as 'Good'.** Mr Green explained that as there had been no external monitoring he was airing on the side of caution.
- **A governor referred to the monitoring report on writing and that the comments relating to Year 6 were not very positive.** Mr Green responded the work is to be done on embedding areas such as having targets in the front of workbooks. Staff were provided with feedback following the monitoring undertaken in Term 1 and there has been an improvement. Mr Green added that the quality of writing is good but the use of workbooks is not consistent across the school. **A governor asked if there had been clear improvement.** Mr Green said yes. **A governor asked if this practice is isolated in subjects.** Mr Green advised that pupils are able to link across the subjects and that he does not believe there is an issue with their learning.
- **A governor asked if a teacher is very good, if their practice is rolled out to other staff.** Mr Green said yes, training is rolled out to other staff.
- **A governor asked if best practice is recorded so, for example, a new member of staff could be provided with information on good feedback.** Mr Green clarified that they are embedding a formative assessment programme which is being followed and recorded.
- **A governor asked if the school trips will be affected by Covid.** Mr Green clarified that all trips have been cancelled to date, with it hoped that trips will resume in the summer.
- **A governor highlighted that within the Equality section on the website when referring to staff it states that there should be equal opportunities towards gay and lesbian staff and asked if this should refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).** It was agreed that the definition should be broadened and that this be amended. **Action: Mr Green**
- **A governor asked when Pupil Voice information was obtained for science.** Mr Green clarified this was obtained two weeks before the Peer Review and will fit into the curriculum development. **A governor asked if the format of the Pupil Voice was helpful.** Mr Green explained that the teacher had an idea of what he wanted to ask pupils, however, as the process moves forward questions will be changed.

(Mr Green left the meeting)

8. Policies & Documents for Adoption

a) Teachers' Pay Policy 2021-22

It was proposed that the policy be adopted as presented. All governors voted in agreement with the proposal, motion carried.

b) Scheme of Delegation

It was proposed that the Scheme of Delegation be adopted as presented. All governors voted in agreement with the proposal, motion carried.

c) Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy

A governor asked if those members of staff who have completed health and safety training should be named in the policy. The governor also asked if the policy should state that parents can come into school to administer non-prescription medicines. Mrs Willie to clarify these points with Mr Green. With these points noted it was agreed that the policy be adopted. **Action: Mrs Willie**

d) Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy

It was proposed that the policy be adopted as presented. All governors voted in agreement with the proposal, motion carried.

e) Feedback Policy

It was proposed that the policy be adopted as presented. All governors voted in agreement with the proposal, motion carried.

f) Remote Learning Policy

A governor highlighted that within point 2 it states that ‘a school bubble has to self-isolate due to positive testing’. It was agreed this be deleted together with the reference to secondary schools in point 2.1. With these amendments noted, it was agreed that the policy be adopted.

Action: Mrs Willie

g) Anti-Bullying Policy

A governor asked what incidents relating to name calling or teasing are recorded. Dr Kay clarified that it depends on the severity and that a member of staff would make a professional judgement. **A governor expressed concern that low-level bullying may not be recorded.** Dr Kay stated that staff are aware of what should be recorded. **A governor asked about the definition of bullying at the beginning of the policy** and Dr Kay confirmed this is a recognised definition. With no further questions raised, it was proposed that the policy be adopted as presented. All governors voted in agreement with the proposal, motion carried.

h) Pupil Premium Report

It was proposed that the report be published on the school website. All governors were in agreement with the proposal, motion carried.

Action: Mr Green

9. Safeguarding

a) Safeguarding Audit (3 November 2021)

Dr Kay and Mrs Weaver, Safeguarding Governor, had completed a Safeguarding Audit on 3 November 2021. A governor visit form had been completed and circulated. One issue was noted that the wedging open of doors in Reception could be an issue following Covid. It was added that Mr Green is aware that a Lockdown Policy is required and that a lockdown drill needs to be practiced. Mr Hughes, Health & Safety Governor, to discuss this policy with Mr Green.

Action: Mr Hughes

Dr Kay stated that the audit was very comprehensive, with no concerns or significant actions to be brought to governors' attention. During the next safeguarding visit Dr Kay will speak to staff and pupils. **A governor highlighted that the safeguarding leaflet available for visitors is blank.** Dr Kay advised she would also check this during the next audit. **A governors asked if information recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR) is accessible.** Dr Kay said yes, information in the SCR is as it should be.

Action: Dr Kay

A Safeguarding Audit Report completed by Mr Green and Mrs Riley, Admin Manager, on 3 November 2021 had also been circulated. **A governor highlighted that Mr Green is due to retake Safer Recruitment training as detailed in Section 1.6a of the report.** Dr Kay advised that Mr Green is aware of this and added that her Safer Recruitment training is up to date. **A governor asked if there is a discrepancy in training dates.** Dr Kay clarified that it is a statutory requirement that this training is undertaken every 3 years, however, Oxfordshire County Council require this to be undertaken every 2 years.

A governor asked if staff have to sign a contract. Dr Kay explained that contracts are now electronic and it is not a statutory requirement that they be signed. WNC hold any signed contracts and the school is provided with a copy.

A governor highlighted that in Section 2.4 Induction the answer is 'No' to the statement: '**School have a record to show staff have signed to state they have read and understood the above**' and asked if this would be a 'Yes' going forward. Dr Kay confirmed this would be recorded electronically going forward.

10. Governance

a) Governor Monitoring

Phonics Visit – 17 November 2021

Mrs Gallyot, Phonics Governor, had submitted a report relating to the phonics visit completed on 17 November 2021. **A governor asked if another phonics visit would be required as this visit related to implementation and that this was an area picked up by Ofsted.** Dr Kay agreed another visit would be beneficial. Mrs Gallyot to give an overview of the visit at the next meeting and to be asked to undertake a follow-up phonics visit. **Action: Mrs Gallyot**

Peer Review – 4 October & 2 November 2021

Governor visits reports produced by Mrs Garratt and Mr Hughes had been circulated prior to the meeting.

11. Health & Safety

Mr Hughes, Health & Safety Governor, is visiting the school on 14 December 2021.

12. Any Other Business

a) Governor Visits

Remaining visits to be rolled over to next meeting. Mrs Garratt to discuss with Mr Green future governor site visits. **Action: Mrs Willie/Mrs Garratt**

b) Confidential Item

Confidential discussion held, please refer to confidential minute.

13. Future Meeting Dates

- Resource & Audit - Thursday 13 January 2022 6.30pm
- AGM & LGB – Thursday 27 January 2022 6.00pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Signed _____ Dated _____