

**Minutes of the Autumn Term Local Academy Committee Meeting 3
held on Monday 16th January 2023 at 5.15pm in the Library**

Membership	Initial	Category	Absence
Mr J Burrows	JPB	Staff Governor	Left 6.30pm
Dr A Dziombak	AD	Appointed Governor	
Mrs J Hadfield	JH	Parent Governor	A
Mr U Joshi	UJ	Appointed Governor	A
Mr R Osborn	RO (Chair)	Appointed Governor	
Mr G Roberts	GR	Appointed Governor	
Mr R Tugnet	RT	Appointed Governor	A
Ms S Wilson	SW	Parent Governor	
<p>Quorum required: 4 Governors present: 5</p>			

In Attendance	Initial	Position	Absence
Mrs C Baxter	CLB	Assistant Principal (Pastoral Support)	
Dr S Benskin	SLB	Assistant Principal (Curriculum & TLA)	
Mr C Berry	CJB	Assistant Principal (Behaviour & Attitudes)	
Mr B Francis	BSF	Principal	
Mrs A Hewitt	AH	Clerk	
Mr T Jackson	TIJ	Vice Principal	
Ms C Marion		Observer	
Mrs V Purdy	VP	Assistant Principal (Staff Development)	
Mr D Vernon	DV	Executive Principal	
Mrs E Wilson	EW	Assistant Principal (Personal Development)	
Mrs S Woodward	SWo	Business Manager (Business Support)	A

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AC/22/2223	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Tugnet (work commitments), Mr Joshi (abroad until March), Mrs Hadfield (illness) and Mrs Woodward (work commitment in the academy).</p> <p>Mr Osborn Chaired the meeting in his position as Acting Chair of Governors since Mr Baker resigned on 30th November 2022. Mr Osborn, agreed to this position in order to cover the Chair of Governors role up to this meeting, when a new Chair would be elected. The Clerk circulated a thank you card for signing for the outgoing Chair and the Academy Committee thanked Mr Baker for the years of commitment and support he had given to the academy.</p>	

	Mr Osborn welcomed Ms Caroline Marion to the meeting as an observer. Ms Marion is keen to become a governor at East Leake Academy and it was noted that her CV had been placed on SharePoint prior to the meeting. Ms Marion had also met with Mr Osborn and the Principal at the academy before Christmas.	
AC/23/2223	Declaration of Interest and any changes to declarations made There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.	
AC/24/2223	Minutes of the previous Academy Committee 14.11.22 The minutes of the previous Academy Committee meeting were received and approved as an accurate record.	
AC/25/2223	<p>Matters arising from the previous meeting</p> <p>AC/15/2223, page 10: Item carried over from AC/78/2122, page 38: The Principal and Executive Principal to discuss 2022/23 agendas, focus and documentation with the Chair and Vice Chair ahead of the next meeting in September – Chair unavailable for this meeting. Vice Chair met to discuss ERM. Another meeting to be arranged and to include discussion of next ERM when released – update, due to changes in Chair of Governors, this meeting has been delayed until Spring Term 2023. To note that the Executive Principal, Principal, Acting Chair and Mrs Wilson met on 09.01.22 to discuss succession planning and governance moving forward (including link governor roles).</p> <p><u>Post Meeting Note:</u> the ERM meeting took place on 25.01.23.</p> <p>AC/16/2223, page 10, Training: Local response following central training for SEND Link Governor Briefing, 4th October (AD attended) – Dr Dziombak was absent from November meeting. Feedback at this meeting confirmed that the academy procedure was in place. The DfE will soon issue a green paper about changes to the SEND and alternative provision system in England so further updates are expected.</p> <p>AC/17/2223, page 12 Targets 2023 Mr Jackson to provide GCSE 4 year picture and pared down table from page 4 to governors for the next meeting in January – actioned (added to SharePoint).</p> <p>AC/17/2223, page 13, Pupil Premium: Mr Jackson to meet with Dr Dziombak (link governor) to review the revised strategy and feedback to governors at the next meeting in January. Mr Jackson confirmed that meeting had taken place – there is a lot for staff to do alongside additional training (higher qualifications in Teaching & Learning) and the academy will need to align what is being done.</p> <p>Funding has decreased and allocated to different strands. <u>Governors enquired</u> whether there will be less impact on outcomes and Mr Jackson responded that it will not have a negative impact on outcomes, moreover it is a better approach and recent data shows that gaps are closing in</p>	

	<p>Pupil Premium (PP) and non-Pupil Premium students. Version 3 of the document will be circulated with new data. <u>Governors asked</u> what the overarching issue was and Mr Jackson stated that attendance has a massive impact on progress. Staff will drill down on this and are working to eliminate gaps in PP and disadvantaged students across the curriculum.</p> <p>Attainment is going up and progress is going down over time. In 2019, there was an issue with students not achieving the attainment across the eight 'baskets'. Therefore, the 2022 Progress 8 (P8) is not comparable with 2018, despite the information being in the public domain. Recent data shows that the academy are on track to be more in line with the 2018 figures so we do not have a continuing downward trend.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> whether the upheaval of recent years, including transition of staff, is calming down. The Principal responded that progress was an issue pre-Covid, however the recent curriculum presentation shows challenge to students in working hard. There was variability in 2022 with P8 across the county, post-Covid. The Principal went on to describe the change in culture at ELA with regards to kick-starting educational trips and extra-curricular activities. There is an attendance crisis and this is difficult to attribute to progress scores, so should also be taken into account. Progress of students was a significant part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) in 2019/20, then Covid hit. Mr Jackson added that students tried to align to the EBACC which possibly had an impact. The government have a target of 75% but for students in year 9-11 we need them to be on the right courses.</p> <p>AC/17/2223, page 13, Annual Review for SEND: The Executive Principal/Principal to follow up on details for the 2021/22 SEND Annual Review – Clerk sent query to Mrs Elway on 09.01.23 and will feedback at meeting. The Clerk stated that the Annual Review had been completed and the issue had been a confusion in the document title. The report had been acknowledge by the governors at the November meeting (on the academy website) and titled 'information report'.</p>	
AC/26/2223	<p>Governance discussion: Succession planning (moving forward as an Academy Committee), link governors and voting for a new Chair of Governors (link Governor information was added to SharePoint prior to the meeting)</p> <p>The Acting Chair acknowledged that, after 1:1 conversations with the Executive Principal, governors were struggling to find the commitment time for the Chair of Governors role going forward. However, after further discussions between Mrs Wilson, Mr Osborn, Executive Principal and Principal, Mrs Wilson has put herself forward for role with support from the afore mentioned staff and governor. No other governors were nominated and the Academy Committee voted unanimously for Mrs Wilson to take on the role as Chair. The Clerk stated that Mr Osborn was content to resume his role as Vice Chair of Governors and the Academy Committee voted unanimously for Mr Osborn to continue in this role. Mr</p>	

	<p>Osborn explained that through discussions it became apparent that he would be more flexible during the school day to attend any meetings or 'drop ins' and would support the Chair where he could in this way.</p> <p>Mr Osborn and Mrs Wilson agreed that Mr Osborn would continue to Chair this meeting.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted that documents had been placed on SharePoint with regards to link governor roles. The four statutory roles required are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safeguarding: currently Mr Roberts 2. SEND: currently Dr Dziombak 3. Careers: currently Mrs Wilson 4. Health & Safety: currently Mr Tugnet <p>An additional priority role would be to include a Complaints link governor and the Chair explained that although the workload can be heavier due to the investigations and responses that need to take place, complaints that reach the governor stage are rare. Ideally the Chair of Governors would not undertake this role should the complaint escalate to panel level and the Chair may need to be involved. Pupil Premium is another link area but this is currently managed by Dr Dziombak alongside SEND.</p> <p>The Chair stated that the three AIP links are optional and the Academy Committee would need to decide if they wish to continue with these:</p> <p>Objective 1 Curriculum: currently Mrs Wilson Objective 2 SEND: currently covered by Dr Dziombak Objective 3 Literacy: currently Mrs Hadfield.</p> <p>All link governors present confirmed that they are happy to continue with the role, with the exception of Mrs Wilson. The Chair recommends that Mrs Wilson relinquishes the link role of Careers now that Mrs Wilson has taken on the Chair of Governors role, therefore this link area is open for a new governor. As not all Academy Committee members were present, it was agreed that link discussions be pushed to the next meeting.</p> <p><i>Action:</i> link governor discussions to resume at the next meeting on 20th March.</p> <p>The Executive Principal thanked the governors for the 1:1 conversations that he was able to have in December. With regards to link roles, governors must take into consideration the flexibility/availability of governors when allocating these as it may be that some roles can be carried out via Team meetings, whereas others would require a school visit. Governors must consider where they are a 'best fit'. The information on SharePoint offers some role descriptors and guidance on visits that all governors are encouraged to have a look at.</p> <p><i>Action:</i> Governors to consider the link governor information on SharePoint before the next meeting on 20th March.</p>	<p>Govs</p> <p>Govs</p>
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AC/27/2223	<p>Training</p> <p>Local response following central training in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees and Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Governors Conference, 30.11.22 (RO attended). The Chair stated that his feedback on the event is available on SharePoint. The conference is a valuable session and all governors are able to meet the Trustees who are very accessible on the evening, as is the CEO, Dave Cotton. It is felt that the Trustees do take the Academy Committee governor comments on board. The Chair explained that there are two spaces available at each meeting, and governors can attend even if they are not the Chair/Vice Chair. The meetings are at HQ in Retford, but car sharing can be arranged and fuel expenses paid. • SEND, 05.01.23 (AD and GR attended). Both governors agreed that the briefings confirmed what is happening to support our SEND students at ELA and is what is discussed at Academy Committee meetings. It is what we do well. 	
Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils.		
AC/28/2223	<p>Principals report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding – verbal report on exceptions only. Mrs Baxter provided an update regarding a confidential item discussed previously. The update is also deemed confidential. • Behaviour and attendance/FTS/PEx review 2021/22 and AP in place (number of days/pupils). A document had been shared on SharePoint prior to the meeting and questions submitted to Mr Berry following the governor pre-meeting (also on SharePoint). Mr Berry addressed the questions asked. <u>Governors queried</u> the language used on page four, action number five, which inferred that suspensions were positive. Mr Berry explained that a change in wording would be beneficial, as the information should state that suspensions should <u>trigger</u> something positive (as in a positive outcome following the suspension). <u>Governors queried</u> the sentence '<i>Parent / student support for external agencies poses a threat</i>' and Mr Berry explained that parent consent is required for the school to access external support for their child and this poses a barrier of not given. Mr Berry went on to report that there had been three Permanent Exclusions (PEX) during the Autumn Term 2022/23. The Principal added that there had been an increase in PEX's across the Trust and the enforcement of policy had added to this. Permanent Exclusion is seen as a last resort. The Executive Principal added that there is also a national increase in PEX's, however it is vital that staff and governors are confident that all required thresholds have been met and to not get caught up in numbers. The Principal explained that schools used to have the power to use Alternative Provision (AP) indefinitely, but now it is seen as a short-term solution for the student to then be re-integrated. As ELA is a registered provider of Alternative Provision (Brook House), there are restrictions and limitations to the service. A student cannot stay full-time and if a 	

student fails their AP then they return to their mainstream school. The update in the DfE guidance has added greater barriers to accessing some AP and this has led to a shortage of places in registered providers who are all now full. Mr Berry reported that staff meet the AP providers to quality assure the process. If students have an EHCP, the staff meet with the student and parent. The provision is monitored to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the student. There are currently nine KS4 students in Brook House and six KS3 students. There are also four commissioned places. The Principal reported that there have been more Fixed Term Suspensions (FTS – previously called FTE, Fixed Term Exclusion) this term. An updated behaviour policy has been launched, and communicated with staff and students, while also re-confirming expectations within assemblies. Governors asked how staff will know if the behaviour policy is working. Mr Berry responded that the term two data will be able to show this. The Principal added that the Student Council has been resurrected and the student voice had input into the behaviour policy, which was tweaked with their feedback. Mrs Wilson is running the Council and meets with the students once a term – the student representatives talk within Tutor time then take each year group points to whole school discussion.

- **Persistent absence (number of days/pupils).** Mrs Baxter reported that there has been an increase in persistent absences and school refusers. Attendance is currently 90% and this is difficult to compare to this time last year due to Covid. However, pre-Covid, the academy attendance has always hovered around 94/95%, so we are seeing a decrease. Regarding the increase in persistent absence, 10% of the student cohort are considered persistent absentees across the school. This includes students who are school refusers and who have mental health issues regarding non-attendance. There is currently very little information (from government guidance) on support for students with mental health non-attendance issues, but the academy have identified members of staff who are always involved with these students. More analysis is needed to look at the capacity of staff supporting in this area. Nationally there is a focus on attendance post-Covid and as the trend in mental health issues rose, so did the access to these services (such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, CAMHS - the NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties). The academy do have a highly skilled pastoral team and the student Attendance Officer is now working with the Student Councillor. Governors commented that this low attendance figure would not be looked on favourably by Ofsted and Mrs Baxter responded that the figure is still sitting around what the national figure is currently. The Principal added that there needs to be a culture change; students have been through a long period having days off for feeling unwell through Covid and now we need to change that. Mrs Baxter reported that year 10 (at 88%) and year 11 (at 87%) are the lowest year groups for attendance. Year 7 is at 93%. Year 11 in particular is historically lower, around 91%, but not as low as it is currently. More students in

year 10 and 11 are school refusers, largely mental health and anxiety related. These students continue to have curriculum and pastoral support from school and links with external agencies, but unless these students engage with this, it is difficult to do much more. Not all absences are down to mental health issues; there is a culture attitude now where students/families were used to on-line learning during Covid so feel that it is something the school can do now if their child isn't attending school. Year 11 is a significant concern and all strategies are in place to support their progress. Mr Burrows highlighted that year 10 experienced high impact from Covid two years ago. Students are now struggling with crowds and interacting with other people. These students have had one full year of secondary school in year 9 then dropped into KS4 and on GCSE courses. The governors were satisfied that this report had covered the question raised at the pre-meeting with regards to governors awareness of absence trends.

- **Health & Safety and Risk Reports** – The Principal reported on exceptions only. Regarding student numbers, years 7-9 are full and there have been many applications for year 6 into 7 for September 2023. Post 16 application numbers are low and work continues in this area to drill down into detail of why this is. This area of work is on the Leadership agenda. Governors asked whether there was an underlying reason for low numbers. The Principal responded that more promotion of the Open Evening is required and the possibility of expanding this more into a careers fair, using the dining hall space too, making it a more exciting and engaging event. Regarding outcomes, data tracking from the forthcoming mocks will give the school projective Progress 8 figure. The Principal went on to report that the Alternative Provision has been re-scored and placed at a lower risk due to financial viability. Income was good and the Principal is looking to secure the funding. The academy require good outcomes for the current year 11's so that the AP on site is seen as a good option and a preferred route for other schools seeking this provision. Potentially in the future, Brook House could run as a school within a school, but for now we are budgeting for it. The income has reduced the risk significantly. A new risk has been added which is the recruitment of support and teaching staff – this is a nationwide issue. Regarding the PFI contract, the DfE have visited the academy to take a site survey and conversations have begun regarding the handover. Liaison meetings will be held termly.
- **In-year admissions, all year groups:** The Principal reported that a document had been placed on SharePoint prior to the meeting. There has been lots of movement in and out of the academy; some students have left for home education and some have relocated. There has been a change in the Admissions Code to Fair Access and in the past, if the academy was full, we would not need to offer extra places. Now, the academy must take the student, even if the places are full. This change shows fluid movement of students in and out of the academy under the Fair Access rules. Governors enquired

	<p>whether the decisions to home educate are positive family decisions. The Principal responded that there is a mix of decisions. Some families felt that lockdown worked for their children and also that their child's mental health was a priority. Families must liaise with the Council and provide an educational plan with examples of work in order for the process to be agreed. The academy cannot remove a student from roll until the Local Authority confirm that the home education has been agreed. The academy do maintain contact with the family during the process, until the outcome is agreed. Mr Berry added that there has been such an increase in home education that there is a back log and it is taking a long time to process through the Local Authority.</p> <p><i>Mr Burrows left the meeting at 6.30pm (due to family commitments).</i></p>	
<p>AC/29/2223</p>	<p>Approval of CAT C Trips</p> <p>The Chair informed governors that he had been informed of the following CAT C trips and was satisfied with the information provided for the trips to commence to the next stage of planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dovedale, Derbyshire: Year 11 GCSE Geography Field Trip, 28.02.23 • Snowdonia, Wales: Year 12 A-Level Geography Field Trip, 06.02.23 • Twycross Zoo, Leicestershire: Year 12 A-level Field Trip, 16.03.22 <p><u>Post Meeting Note</u></p> <p>Following the meeting, the Chair approved a further CAT C trip to the next stage of planning: Perlethorpe, Nottinghamshire – A-level Biology Field Trip, 20.04.23</p>	
<p>AC/30/2223</p>	<p>Diverse Academies Policies (* indicates that a summary of changes is available on SharePoint Trust Policies) https://www.diverseacademies.org.uk/about-us/policies/</p> <p>The Standards and Outcomes Committee approved the following Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying * • Behaviour * • Suspension and Exclusion * • Online Safety Policy * <p>The Finance and Resources committee approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of Authority policy (no summary of changes was provided) <p>East Leake Academy appendix/policies for review (all available on SharePoint ELA Policies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Appendix 2024/25: It was noted that there were no changes from the previous year. Governors approved the policy. • Uniform and Dress Code Policy: There were no comments from governors. • Positive Engagement for Learning Policy: Mr Berry talked through the updates to the Behaviour Policy and explained the use of the Conduct Card (consequence and reward slips were used previously). The idea behind the Conduct Card is that student have reflection time before a 	

	<p>sanction (three opportunities – signatures). The card re-sets every term. There is a consequence for losing the card and evidence is required if the card is washed. Staff have been discussing developing the card to include positive signatures too, in order to build cumulative rewards. There are currently rewards in place for merrits collected. Initial feedback from staff is positive and it is easier to manage and challenge a student. Low level issues seem to be decreasing as conduct can be easily challenged which offers a more consistent approach for staff. <u>Governors asked</u> how the impact will be measured and Mr Berry stated that he will provide feedback at the next meeting.</p> <p><i>Action:</i> Mr Berry to provide feedback in the updated Behaviour Policy and conduct card system at the next meeting in March.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Bullying Policy: Governors highlighted that the name of the Safeguarding Link Governor was missing. <p><i>Action:</i> Mr Berry to add Mr Gareth Roberts as safeguarding Link Governor to the Anti-Bullying Policy before publication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Appendix: there were no comments from governors. • Attendance Appendix: <u>Governors highlighted</u> that usually no reasons were given for attendance absences, however Mrs Baxter had given a comprehensive report this evening. The Executive Principal added that this can also be covered at the Chair/Vice Chair Educational Review Meeting (ERM) and a report can be given. 	<p>CJB</p> <p>CJB</p>
<p>AC/31/2223</p>	<p>How has the Academy Committee held the Senior Leaders to account? The governors and Senior Leaders agreed that very challenging questions had been offered to Senior Leaders. Questions had also been submitted in advance of the meeting and these were available on SharePoint.</p>	
<p>AC/32/2223</p>	<p>How have the vision, mission and values of the Trust been upheld? The governors agreed that these had been upheld. A copy of the vision, mission and values of the Trust was available on the agenda for the meeting and is also available in the meetings folder on SharePoint for future reference.</p>	
<p>AC/33/2223</p>	<p>Completion of report to Trustees (if applicable) The Chair confirmed that there were no matters to raise for Trustees.</p> <p><u>Post Meeting Note</u> Mrs Elway, Head of Governance, requested the report to Trustees from ELA with information regarding the election of a new Chair of Governors. The Clerk completed this on 21st January 2023.</p>	

AC/34/2223	Determination of confidentiality of business and Equality Act consideration The Clerk noted that a discussion under item AC/28/2223, regarding safeguarding, was deemed confidential. The Equality Act was considered throughout the meeting.	
AC/35/2223	Date and time of next Academy Committee meeting The next meeting will be held on Monday 20 th March 2023 at 5.15pm via MS Teams.	
	The meeting closed at 6.47pm.	

Signed: *Richard Osborn* (approved by Chair for circulation)

Date: 08.02.23

Signed: *Blake Francis* (approved by Principal for circulation)

Date: 29.01.23