

**Minutes of the Spring Term Local Academy Committee Meeting 3  
held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 5.15pm in the library.**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Absence</b>
Ms J England	JE	Staff Governor	
Mr U Joshi	UJ	Appointed Governor	A
Mr K Leckie	KL	Appointed Governor	
Ms C Marion	CM	Appointed Governor	
Mrs A Moore	AM	Parent Governor	
Mr R Osborn	RO	Appointed Governor	
Mrs S Riches	SR	Parent Governor	
Mr G Roberts	GR	Appointed Governor	A
Ms S Wilson	SW (Chair)	Appointed Governor	
Quorum required: 4 Governors present: 7			

<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Absence</b>
Mr C Berry	CLB	Assistant Principal	
Mrs A Hewitt	AH	Governance Professional	
Mr T Jackson	TIJ	Vice Principal	
Mr T Reid	TER	New Principal from September 2023	
Mr D Vernon	DV	Executive Principal	

***Training 1: Governance Responsibilities/Scheme of Delegation/Terms of Reference  
Dave Vernon, 5.15pm – 5.30pm***

The Chair introduced the first part of the training session for the evening. As part of the ELA governance action plan for 2023/24, for the benefit of new governors and as a refresher for standing governors, a reminder of governor responsibilities will take place. This looks at the governance structure across the Trust, and down to a local level, and includes our designated responsibilities. The Chair invited the Executive Principal, Mr Vernon, to present the session.

The Executive Principal explained that the PowerPoint used will be available on SharePoint after the meeting. It was noted that the full document, Final Governance strategy-November 2023, had been made available on SharePoint prior to the meeting.

The Executive Leadership structure was available for viewing and can also be found on the Trust website here [Our people - Diverse Academies Trust](#). It was explained that the Chief Executive Team (CET) meets weekly as the senior strategic group for the Trust. It receives executive summaries for school improvement prior to reporting to trustees. This group sets the strategy and agenda for the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and is accountable to the Trust board. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) meet every two weeks. This group brings executive leaders, ensuring a unified Trust

team, sharply focused on the improvement of standards of education provided by our academies. ELT is accountable to the Chief Executive Team (CET).

The best education for our students is paramount; strategies for recruitment are discussed in this time of such a competitive market. There are 14 schools in the Trust: a mixture of primaries, secondaries and special schools. It is important that we maximise resources and collaborate as best we can on staffing, finances, safeguarding, policy and best practise (to name but a few). Members of the ELT and CET rotate visits to schools to assist in sharing best practise and for a good overview of the academies. With a current focus on year 11, we look at what support is available as whole.

Operations under the Business Leadership structure used to be ran by the local authority but are now in-house: marketing, finance, estates, IT, HR and procurement. All these teams also meet regularly.

Regarding School Improvement capacity, there are Strategic Development Groups (SDG's), Curriculum Development Groups (CDG's) and the Diverse Association for Professional Learning. SDG's are led by strategic development leaders, such as all heads of English for example, and they all get together to decide on their brief. They will also meet across the academies. The Diverse Association for Professional Learning provides high quality professional development for all staff across the Trust based on personal and Trust priorities.

All academies have an annual Academy Improvement Review (AIR). This is a deep dive into the school led by the chief education officers and a chance to work with schools to gain a deep insight and to test the quality and impact of school improvement. ELA has recently undergone the AIR and the report has been received by governors.

Academy Review Meetings (ARMs) are scheduled four times a year between the Executive Principal, Principal and Business Manager. Each meeting starts with a walk around the academy and is focused on the areas of improvement. Outcomes from the most recent AIR or Ofsted inspection will also be discussed, alongside progress towards the academy improvement plan (AIP) objectives. The Executive Principal sets the agenda for the ARM.

Educational Review Meetings (ERMs) follow the ARMs, and schedule meetings between the Chief Education Officers, the Chief Operating Officer/Chief Finance Officer (COO/CFO) and the Executive Principal. These take place to review the summary records for the academies and evaluate progress. This information is shared with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), Local Academy Committees (LACs) and the Standards and Outcomes committee of the trustees. It also forms the basis of the Trust academy performance report.

The governance structure shows how the mission, vision and values of the Trust are embedded into schools. The quality assurance of ARMs and ERMs feeds into the LAC duties.

The Chair thanked the Executive Principal for the useful presentation. Governors did not have any immediate questions, however the Chair suggested that once the presentation was shared following the meeting, governors are welcome to email the Chair/Clerk with any questions for the Executive Principal. The Chair commented that at the start of a term of governance, this structure and the designated responsibilities of governor can be difficult to grasp, but this presentation made it much clearer.

*Action:* Governors to email any questions to Chair/Clerk following the meeting (if applicable).

**Training 2: Behaviour and Attendance Update**  
**Chris Berry, 5.30pm – 5.45pm**

Mr Berry presented the second part of the training session, focussing on the behaviour and attendance data at East Leake Academy. The data had been made available on SharePoint prior to the meeting. Mr Berry has completed a year in his position of lead in this area and it's now time to take the practise to the next level. The academy is implementing excellent habits which are embedded into the curriculum; this shows what this looks like from the moment a person steps into school. A positive learning environment is in place, students need a positive attitude and staff need to be able to teach without being interrupted. Students are being prepared for future success and for once they have left school.

Suspension levels were high in the Autumn Term at 3.52% on Fixed Term Suspensions (FTS's). It is important to hold young people to account and support them in making better decisions. Brook House (Alternative Provision for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs) hold a significant proportion of the FTS's. This provision has received a positive report from the Local Authority who have supported the implementation of curriculum and structural changes.

Regarding the data presented, FTS's and removals were shown to be higher in year groups 8 and 9; the academy has engaged with Positive Futures to work on interventions with these students, including personal development and coaching in order to counteract the challenges the student and academy area facing. The figures are coming down – 93% of all behaviour across the academy is positive, compared to 80% a year ago.

There has been a behaviour re-boot on the return from the Christmas break as students return dysregulated. We have changed the way we present out habits and expectations to students, presenting it positively and showing them why we have these in place.

Governors commented that it would be useful to see data on positive merits and excellent behaviours considering the shift from negative to positive. It was a conscious decision for the academy to crack down on this area so it was only natural the percentage of FTS's and removals would go up before it came down but now we can see it obviously reducing.

*Action:* Mr Berry to provide positive data at the next meeting in March.

Mr Berry added that consistency is the key and the framing of language is shifting, for example, 'Don't be late' becomes 'Arrive on time'. Students understand what excellence looks like at ELA. The Principal also noted that student voice is picking up that the positives are being recognised. 90% of students are involved in their year group celebrations at the end of each term.

Governors asked if the rewards are tracked on the register. Mr Berry responded that they are tracked on Class Charts so that parents and students can view them. Governors went on to enquire whether a student is supported if they received a succession of de-merits for the same reason. Mr Berry stated that the Tutor would have a conversation with the student and then onto Head of Year if needed for the next step of implemented strategies of support.

The Chair thanked Mr Berry for the presentation.

5.55pm		Action
AC/29/2324	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Joshi (away in India) and Mr Roberts (work commitment).</p>	
AC/30/2324	<p><b>Declaration of Interest and any changes to declarations made.</b> There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p>	
AC/31/2324	<p><b>Welcome to our new governors and introductions around the table</b> The Chair welcomed new governors Ms England (staff), Mrs Moore (parent) and Mrs Riches (parent) and all members of the Academy Committee introduced themselves.</p>	
AC/32/2324	<p><b>Minutes of the previous Academy Committee 13.11.23</b> The minutes of the previous Academy Committee meeting were received and approved as an accurate record.</p>	
AC/33/2324	<p><b>Matters arising from the previous meeting.</b> AC/20/2324 Matters Arising: Action: Mr Jackson to provide local authority and Rushcliffe comparisons by the next meeting in January – actioned. <u>Governors stated</u> that Mr Jackson’s data helpfully shows ELA against local comparators which raises some questions about the differences - for Grade 5+ the drop from 2022 to 2023 is much more severe in ELA's numbers against the local comparators. Do we understand why there is this difference. Mr Jackson responded that there is a drop in Rushcliffe and nationally. There have been staffing changes at the academy in English, but the figure is English and Maths. There is a lot of work going on with the current year 11 cohort in this area and interventions are in place. Extra capacity has been built in this year in Maths and English; Ms Harlow (an ex member of staff) is currently supporting 25 students for Maths and SLT are supporting in English. There is a sharper focus on year 11 without forgetting the other year groups. The predictions at the moment are 42% achieving 5+ in English and Maths and 63% achieving 4+ in English and Maths.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> what the interventions look like. Mr Jackson responded that the progress of all students has been examined and students who are not working to their target have been identified; these are students who will benefit in progress. The interventions work on a rotation of lessons missed on Tuesday and Thursdays. The impact of small group intervention has proven positive. <u>Governors enquired</u> how long these interventions will be in place for and Mr Jackson stated that they will be in place until the summer term. Pat Evans, the Diverse Academies English Executive Assistant Principal, will be visiting the academy to look at support and profile students. Ms Evans will be working with Mrs Baxter. <u>Governors asked</u> if students are set by ability and Mr Jackson responded that they are not.</p>	

	<p>The Principal added that a variety of data has been examined and each faculty has a clearly defined ‘battle plan’ and a plan for each individual student. Students who have gaps in their knowledge have been identified and supported. <u>Governors enquired</u> whether the students are tracked on Progress 8. The Principal responded that they are, and alongside that the focus of PDL has changed to allow for hall and year group teaching with experienced staff. SLT mentoring groups are also established. Mr Jackson added that on completion of the mock exams, tracking software will identify gaps in order to inform students of their individual focus areas and the academy can offer the resources and support to target that. Miss Paxton has been looking into the consistency of resourcing revision materials and coaching students on how to use these. <u>Governors asked</u> when the next mock exams are due to take place and Mr Jackson responded that they start next week and the results will be available after half term. After half term it will be 10 weeks until exams commence on 9<sup>th</sup> May.</p> <p><u>Governors commented</u> that in 2022-23, students achieving a grade 5+ in English dropped 17% at the academy. Mr Jackson stated that weaknesses have been identified in extended writing and English analysis. The Principal added that there has also been an impact of students sitting exams in Brook House. The delivery mechanism and impact of disruption has been addressed. Mr Jackson noted that the Senior Leadership Team has been working more consistently and regularly; we know where are students are; and we are chasing progress rather than grade increases. The predicted progress has got to be accurate and this has shown an impact since October.</p> <p>Miss England commented that the work ethics of the year 11 staff and students shows that they want to achieve. The climate of learning as improved – whatever is going on, is working. The Executive Principal thanked Miss England for her positive comments and acknowledged the work of the whole staff team in changing the culture at the academy; this is a testament to Mr Reid and the senior leaders. Mr Reid added that we must remember that we are continue to work on the medium and long term plan of the academy.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Jackson for the discussion.</p> <p>AC/21/2324 Governance Matters: Action: Clerk to contact Mr Joshi about arranging a link visit. Mr Osborn to arrange a link visit. This item will be taken under AC/34/2324 below.</p>	
<p><b>AC/34/2324</b></p>	<p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feedback from RO/KL following the Y9 Pathways Evening: Mr Osborn felt that it was very useful to be at the event and noted that it was a positive vibe and very student led. The event was well attended and the presentations were good. The Principal added that the event had been brought forward in the academic year in order to recruit if required.</li> </ol>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Feedback from RO following the ELA Festive Celebration (including feedback from the Principal): Mr Osborn commented that this event was exactly what is liked about the school – it was student run and as a governor it was fantastic to see what is happening at the school. Mr Osborn highly recommended that governors attend school events such as these in the future. The Principal added that the Revu made a return during the day and the festive evening event was very enjoyable. Celebration mornings have been going well and the staff enjoyed a breakfast get together one morning during the last week of term. These events bring people together. Comic Relief and High School Musical are coming up next.</li> <li>3. Link Visit Reports: any feedback on arranged visits or visits that have taken place. Mr Leckie stated that he is in the process of arranging a meeting with Miss Paxton (Curriculum) and Mr Osborn confirmed he is in the process of arranging a meeting with Mr Renshaw (careers).</li> <li>4. Link Governors: clarification of roles and continuing cover for SEND/PP: The Chair confirmed that she had met with Mr Jackson regarding SEND/PP, plus another meeting was in the pipeline for after half term. The Chair has been in discussions with Ms Marion about her taking over the role of link governors for SEND/PP and they are working out a transition plan. Ms Marion will join in the next link meeting in March.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>AC/35/2324</b></p>	<p><b>Principals Report</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ERM (including Attendance, Year 11 Plan and Year 11 Targets). The ERM report had been available on SharePoint prior to the meeting. The Principal stated that the report contains all the information regarding attendance and Year 11 targets. The Senior Leadsheip Team are reviewing the AIP objectives to look ahead to 2024/25 and will continue to drive forward improvements. There were no further questions from governors regarding the ERM. It was acknowledged that the team had covered information on year 11 under item AC/33/2324 above.</li> <li>2. Safeguarding template: The template had been available on SharePoint prior to the meeting. Governors acknowledged receipt and there were no questions.</li> <li>3. Risk Report: The report had been available on SharePoint prior to the meeting. <u>Governors commented</u> that it would be useful to re-circulate the previous report as well next time so that the reports can be compared. It was noted that the last report was received in May 2023. <u>Governors highlighted</u> that the risk report showed many of the pre-mitigation factors are in the red and didn't recall these items being red in previous reviews.</li> </ol> <p><i>Action: SW/Clerk to circulate current and previous risk reports next time the report is to be received by governors (before the end of the academic year).</i></p>	<p><b>SW/Clerk</b></p>

	<p><u>Governors highlighted</u> that there hadn't been an update on the lockdown bell situation. The Executive Principal stated that it remained on hold due to the infrastructure issue with the alarm system. However, an interim measure is required.</p> <p><i>Action:</i> Executive Principal to speak with the Business Manager about the possible interim measures that could be taken. Report back at the next meeting in March.</p> <p>4. In-year admissions numbers – all year groups: The Principal stated that this data will follow at the next meeting. There is a lot of movement in Nottinghamshire at the moment; the academy is at PAN in most year groups. Year 11 stand at 175 and although the PAN is 180, we won't take any more student in this year group. The Executive Principal reminded governors of the additional 30 students the academy has to take from the Local Authority; the academy will receive funding for this but cannot take over the PAN of 210. Movement of students into the area is more of an issue. Some students are allocated a place at the academy but transport can be problematic. A short discussion followed regarding the development site at Fairham, located between Gotham and Clifton. It is known that the new school will be the last building to be built which will mean a new area with students who have no secondary school place.</p> <p>5. Behaviour and attendance/PD update: This was discussed under the training session by Mr Berry. The Principal added that a new Attendance Officer will be in post from 5<sup>th</sup> February – there is a lot of work happening in this area and attendance is on the agenda of both government parties. <u>The Chair commented</u> that big efforts were made in the Autumn Term of sending strong messages about attendance. <u>Governors asked</u> if the academy issue penalties and the Principal responded that they do. Miss England noted that the pastoral team are working hard on attendance, this includes celebrating it in Tutor time with rewards.</p> <p>6. Receive any audit/review reports: The Trust visit report had been available on SharePoint prior to the meeting. <u>The Chair stated</u> that it was a very positive report and commented that the Trust visitors were really pleased with their visit and wanted more time at the academy. <u>The Vice chair noted</u> that to have the visibility of Trust members in the academy is great and if they can attend anything like an Academy Committees meeting then that would be most welcomed.</p>	<p><b>DV/SW</b></p>
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<p><b>AC/24/2324</b></p>	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>The following Trust policies were agreed in November 2023: A summary of changes was available for the policies with an *</p> <p>Standards &amp; Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-bullying policy *</li> <li>• Attendance policy &amp; appendix *</li> <li>• Behaviour policy*</li> <li>• Early Years Foundation Stage policy &amp; appendix*</li> <li>• Online Safety*</li> <li>• Safeguarding and Low Level Concerns*</li> <li>• Suspensions and Exclusions of Pupils*</li> <li>• Early Careers Teacher Policy*</li> </ul> <p>Finance &amp; Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistleblowing policy</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy*</li> <li>• Reserves and Investment Policy</li> <li>• EDI policy</li> </ul> <p>The following ELA Policy Appendix was due for review and available on SharePoint prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive Engagement for Learning</li> </ul> <p>There were no comments from governors regarding the local appendix.</p> <p><u>Governors commented</u> that the Trust Anti-Bullying summary was a good example of a summary page (compared to some of the others). The Clerk noted that this has been feedback to Governance Services.</p>	
<p><b>AC/25/2324</b></p>	<p><b>Review of governor action plan from self-evaluation</b></p> <p>The document was made available on SharePoint prior to the meeting. The Chair ran through the updates since the start of the academic year which included an improvement in governor visibility within the academy (Open Evenings etc). This has been a really positive change. In addition, new governors were highlighted within the academy Christmas newsletter and pen portraits are on the website. It was noted that the Trust training has now changed to pre-recorded video which should help the issue of low attendance at the training sessions that used to take place online.</p> <p>The Principal commented that staff do like to see the presence of governors in school. Miss England added that governors are welcome to come in and talk to students about their knowledge of industry and experiences. Mr Osborn commented that he will be attending to do this in March.</p>	



<b>AC/26/2324</b>	<b>How has the Academy Committee held the Senior Leaders to account?</b> The governors and Senior Leaders agreed that challenging questions had been offered to Senior Leaders, particularly concerning behaviour, attendance, year 11 progress and interventions, and current academy risks.  Questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting and these were available on SharePoint.	
<b>AC/27/2324</b>	<b>How have the vision, mission and values of the Trust been upheld?</b> The governors agreed that these had been upheld.	
<b>AC/27/2324</b>	<b>Complete report to Trustees</b> The Academy Committee highlighted positive areas to be the improvements in Behaviour and Attitudes that are impacting on outcomes and the focus on year 11. Areas of development would be the link visits.	
<b>AC/28/2324</b>	<b>Determination of confidentiality of business and Equality Act consideration</b> No items were deemed confidential. The Equality Act was considered throughout the meeting.	
<b>AC/29/2324</b>	<b>Date and time of next Academy Committee meeting</b> The next meeting will be held on Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 5.15pm, in the ELA Library.	
	The meeting closed at 7.01pm.	

Signed: *Sharon Wilson* (approved by Chair for circulation)

Date: 14.02.24

Signed: *Sharon Wilson* (approved by Academy Committee for publication)

Date: 18.03.24