

**Minutes of the Retford Oaks Academy Committee meeting
held on Monday 18th November 2024 at 5:30pm at the Academy.**

Governor name	Initials	Governor category	A = absence
Mr A Knight Chair of Governors	AK	Appointed	A
Mr D Cartwright Vice Chair of Governors	DC	Appointed	
Mrs P Bryn-Jones	PBJ	Appointed Parent	A
Mr A Silcock	AS	Appointed	
Mrs J Bennett	JB	Appointed	A
Mr J Purle	JP	Appointed Parent	A
Mr K Morgan	KM	Appointed	
Miss W Luke	WL	Appointed	A
Miss N Bridgeman	NBR	Appointed	

In attendance	Initials	Position	
Mrs H Widdup	HW	Executive Principal	
Mr L Dickinson	LD	Principal	
Mr A Cooper	AC	Assistant Principal	A
Mrs A Elway	AE	Head of Governance	
Mrs N Benson	NBE	Governance Professional	

<i>Quorum numbers</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Governor's present</i>	<i>4</i>
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AC/12/2425	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Mr Knight and Mrs Bennett, both unexpected work commitments and from Mr Cooper. These were accepted by the committee. Mr Cartwright agreed to chair the meeting in Mr Knight's absence.</p> <p>No apologies have been received from Mr Purle, Miss Luke and Mrs Bryn-Jones and the governance professional (GP) will contact them following the meeting. [AP – NBE]</p> <p>The GP told the committee that with only 4 governors present the meeting would not be quorate and therefore no decisions could be made.</p> <p>Mr Cartwright as vice chair agreed to chair the meeting in Mr Knight's absence.</p>	<p>NBE 02/12/2024</p>
AC/13/2425	<p>Declaration of interest and notification of any changes to declaration made. There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda. The chair asked if anyone had any declarations to update. Governors confirmed that the declarations given at the beginning of the academic year were correct.</p>	

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AC/14/2425	<p>Ofsted Training</p> <p>All governors were asked if they have watched the Ofsted training recording and were asked if they had any questions. Not all governors had viewed to full recording before the meeting and the GP reminded governors to ensure training is reviewed prior to the meeting to aid questions and discussion.</p> <p>Mrs Elway asked those that had viewed the recording if they had any feedback, if it was pitched at the right level and the time was appropriate, and felt happy with the content and length of time.</p> <p>There were no questions regarding the training.</p>	
AC/15/2425	<p>Governance report</p> <p>The GP reminded all governors to complete the Declarations of Interest for 2024-2025 if they have not already done so [AP-Govs]. The GP reminded all governors to read and sign the Code of Conduct for 2024-2025 if they have not already done so [AP-Govs].</p> <p>The GP referred to the Action Log and acknowledged that some governors have held their 1 to 1 meeting with Andy and reminded all governors to try and sign up to a meeting next time some time slots are made available. [AP-Govs].</p> <p>All governors were asked to provide any suggestions and input to the autumn newsletter being prepared by Andy. [AP-Govs].</p> <p>Mr Morgan fed back to the committee that he had been hugely impressed when he came in for a tour around expressive arts commenting that the students were extremely calm when a member of staff had an accident while he was there. Mr Morgans' full report is available on the Governance Portal and vis a link in the Governance Professionals report.</p> <p>Mr Silcock has attended the Health & Safety meeting and fed back that the Science risk assessment is waiting to be approved, Lab checks were all done in July and recorded, the radiation course has been completed by two members of staff in line with the new guidelines, there have been no accidents, the audit inspection by Local Authority was carried out on 5th November, All PAT testing was done over the summer, risk assessments have been updated for science and the rest of the school, all health and safety training is completed or booked as required. The next first aid course is in November, fire marshals have been updated and a recent evacuation practice was held, and the school was cleared in 6 minutes, including registering everyone once evacuated.</p> <p>He added that a new internal audit system is to be installed and tested. And Mr Dickinson added context by explaining that when the school needs to be locked down it will take over everyone's</p>	


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	<p>computer screen in the academy and students would see it a drill to avoid panic. The governors asked if the previous situation with a vegetable knife in DT being unaccounted for would be a reason for such an event and Mr Dickinson confirmed that it would be.</p> <p>Mr Silcock went on to share his feedback that cooks have all been serviced in DT and Mr Silcock confirmed that he would share his full report with the committee. [AP-AS]</p> <p>Mr Cartwright confirmed that he will be visiting this half term for a Safeguarding Link visit and will share report afterwards. [AP-DC]</p> <p>The GP told governors that the cyber security training link has been shared within the GP report and asked all governors to review the training and confirm that they have completed it by sending their certificates [AP-Govs]. All governors were also reminded that separate emails have been sent with regards outstanding mandatory training requirements.</p> <p>Trust led training sessions planned were referred to and the GP reminded all governors to check that specific Link training sessions are in diaries and that they are receiving invitations and to attend wherever possible.</p> <p>The GP asked all governors to review the draft scheme of delegation and feedback any comments by the end of the week. [AP-Govs]</p> <p>The GP referred to the admissions appendix and told governors that the current policy is out for consultation at present so if they have any comments / suggestions to please feed them back. The GP to ensure a reminder is sent with the minutes. [AP-NBE]</p>	<p>AS 20/01/2024</p> <p>DC 20/01/2024</p> <p>Govs 20/01/2024</p> <p>Govs 29/11/2024</p> <p>NBE 09/12/2024</p>
AC/16/2425	<p>Minutes of the meeting dated 23rd September 2024</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting that had previously been received were approved and signed by the vice chair.</p>	
AC/17/2425	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>AC/01/2425 NBE contact JP and NW regarding attendance complete</p> <p>AC/03/2425 All governors to complete the Declarations of Interest for 2024-2025 [see GP report for outstanding DoI's].</p> <p>AC/03/2425 All governors to read and sign the Code of Conduct for 2024-2025 [see GP report for outstanding CoC's].</p> <p>AC/03/2425 All governors to review the Action Plan and complete necessary actions around training and housekeeping. ongoing</p> <p>AC/05/2425 AK to produce a newsletter for November concentrating on the role of governors. Carried Forward</p> <p>AC/06/2425 LD to share the Pupil Premium strategy. complete</p>	

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	<p>AC/07/2425 Mr Rolph to request the finance manager attend the committee meeting once a year to provide an overview and answer any questions.</p> <p>Mrs Widdup shared an update that Simon Lowe is working on a document to share with committees rather than having a member of the finance team attend the meeting and this will be brought to the committee when it is ready.</p> <p>AC/07/2425 NBE organise a new nomination and election process for a staff governor complete, there were no applicants.</p> <p>AC/07/2425 AK/NBE arrange 1 to 1 meeting with each committee member. Complete, another set of dates will be shared in the Spring term.</p>	
AC/18/2425	<p>Principals Report</p> <p>Quality of Education</p> <p>Mr Dickinson passed on apologies from Adam Cooper who is not in work and displayed a presentation on the screen. Teaching & Learning Presentation</p> <p>Priorities are based on Assessment for Learning (AfL), exam question preparation and questioning.</p> <p><u>AfL</u> – assessing where students are at a point in the lesson and then responding and adapting to that information, looking at different strategies that can be used for students and ensuring it is appropriate to all students.</p> <p><u>Exam questions</u> - ensuring students are familiar with exam style questions, scaffold responses and work towards independence and understanding marking schemes by self-marking and peer marking to increase familiarity.</p> <p><u>Questioning</u> - cold calling, making sure the students are equally asked to contribute and given thinking time and giving students an appropriate level of challenge.</p> <p>Student led discussions, asking questions of the teacher, increasing depth of understanding.</p> <p>In order to meet these priorities, a whole school CPD model, will be utilised, this began with whole INSET at the start of the year and then moving to department-based development to ensure that the all-staff members engage in smaller groups. Every Monday there is a department session which is split into one third pastoral and two thirds curriculum. The senior leadership team will guide what the sessions will be about, but it is up to heads of department to shape it to suit their teams.</p> <p>Teaching and Learning champions have been identified, utilising 12 exceptionally strong teachers across the academy, capturing their good practice using Iris and sharing it with other staff members along with exemplar lessons and coaching. Every Monday, the SLT coach 2</p>	

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	<p>people (separately) to help develop them towards their career aspiration.</p> <p>Trust offer links into NPQs, outstanding teacher programme, creative teacher programme etc through the trust for staff development.</p> <p>To ensure that all of this is working, quality assurance is undertaken in the form of:</p> <p>Department curriculum review – the SLT Link will meet with the head of curriculum to discuss their curriculum intent, observe the lessons in view of what the head of department is working on and this is then fed back to identify strengths and areas for development.</p> <p>Twice annual head of department observations and one SLT observations on staff.</p> <p>Weekly pop ins where a member of the SLT will visit 5 members of staff for ten minutes each and then judge on whether they are meeting requirements, not meeting requirements or there wasn't sufficient opportunity to review and strengths and areas for development are fed back.</p> <p>The next Academy Improvement Review (AIR) is scheduled for January whereby members of the trust will come into the academy and look at attendance, and the academy as a whole and will also deep dive on subjects in teaching and learning and they will observe and speak with students to build up QA.</p> <p>Mr Dickinson went on to describe what staff are looking at when they do the pop ins with five areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recall and retrieval activities - Holistic assessment – bringing back things that have gone before in the previous assessments and ensuring that it is understood. - AfL and adaptive teaching as previously described. - Use of exam questions in teaching - Stretch and challenge ensuring that students at the top end are being pushed and stretched. All heads of department have put together documents to show what students should be achieving which can be addressed when performing pop ins to ensure the appropriate level of challenge is being delivered. <p>The academy adopted the 3-part lesson last year and this continues. This consists of 1 third knowledge acquisition and 2 thirds application of new learning. Second third is usually an exam question or method of assessment.</p> <p>Staff will be challenged if improvements are not seen in this area and will be revisited and, if necessary, support, coaching etc will be put in place. Mr Dickinson displayed a chart on the screen showing 'pop in' findings to demonstrate what is and isn't being met. <u>The governors asked</u> what the targets in relation to the slide on screen and Mr Dickinson replied that the target is 100%. <u>The governors then wanted clarity</u> around the recall and retrieval target expressing that it is likely to be different depending on the student. Mrs Widdup clarified the</p>	

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	<p>target is on the strategy being utilised to allow students to recall what they have been taught, rather than the student's ability to recall. <u>The governors wanted to know more</u> about adaptive teaching, suggesting that some teachers will be good at involving everyone and some won't <u>and asked</u> what the class sizes are. Mr Dickinson confirmed that classes generally contain 30 students and said that there is an expectation that teachers know their students. <u>Governors then wondered</u> what information is received from primary schools about the level students are at when they join the academy. Mr Dickinson explained that information is fed from primary schools and also that provision map is used for SEND students in particular, however teaching staff are expected to get to know their students and build relationships to learn how to get the best from each of them. Governors felt this would be difficult for teachers and Mrs Widdup added that when students have chosen options teaching staff will potentially have a mixture of levels of ability to work with and that is why developing these strategies is so important.</p> <p>Mr Dickinson said that Kirsty Simpson, Lead Practitioner for teaching and learning is assisting with the QA work. Kirsty is working more adaptively and reactively with staff whilst Adam is taking a more strategic view. Non-negotiable activities are being brought into lessons using this approach.</p> <p>Mr Dickinson asked if there were any more questions on quality of education and none were raised.</p> <p>Health and Safety Audit summary. Mr Dickinson said that Notts County Council (NCC) have visited for the first health and safety audit in three years. Claire Rank led on this and did a brilliant job. NCC were very impressed with the policies and the way they are upheld, and they liked the analysis around injuries and how behaviour leading to injury is being fed back to pastoral teams and ensuring the appropriate safeguards are in place. Areas for improvement at the end were an advisory on COSHH cupboards and a label to be changed on a folder in the DT department. <u>Governors asked</u> if notice had been given prior to the visit. Mr Dickinson confirmed there had been plenty of notice but added that policies are well ingrained, PE, DT and Science were visited, and it went very well and it was nice to get external verification.</p> <p>Safeguarding Mr Dickinson asked if there were any questions from the safeguarding checklist. There were no questions.</p> <p>Mr Dickinson referred to the Principals' report and confirmed that there are currently two Child Protection cases and one Child in Need case which is very low adding that a lot of cases were closed by the local authority over the summer and that academy staff have remained vigilant. He went on to say that My Concern data shows that staff appear to be over reporting as they don't want to miss</p>	

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	<p>something. The most significant cases on My Concern are Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH), self-harm and child on child incidents. There has been a significant reduction in mobile phone related incidents. <u>Governors wondered why</u> this had reduced. Mr Dickinson said that they have delivered a lot of education around use of phones and impact of social media etc but also said that mobiles have been banned in school now during the day.</p> <p>Data protection 2 Subject Access Requests and 1 police request</p> <p>Complaints 2 complaints this year One relating to a change of GCSE course – now closed One regarding lack of support for a student - ongoing</p> <p>Trip calendar All category C trips have been shared previously and there have been no changes. <u>Governors asked</u> if all trips offered are generally filled and Mr Dickinson confirmed they are adding that the trip day is being offered again this year on 20th June.</p> <p>Annual safeguarding audit The NCC annual safeguarding audit has been shared and all governors confirmed that it had been reviewed.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> if the British Legion had attended the Remembrance Day service at the academy and Mr Dickinson they had attended and some students performed for them, they'd been given some tea and biscuits and then everyone had gone outside for the silence. It was a huge success also attended by the chair of governors. Bracken Lane and Thrumpton year 5's also attended and stayed at the academy for creative writing. Mr Dickinson said that the academy is aiming to invite more year 5 students from local primaries into the school.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> when the deadline for year 6 applications for next year is and Mr Dickinson said it had passed on 31st October.</p>	
AC/19/2425	<p>How have governors held the school leaders to account? It was agreed that the governors held the school leaders to account with discussion and robust challenges on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting regularly and questioning the information and doing the governor link visits. ➤ Andy has been in a couple of times since the last meeting 	
AC/20/2425	<p>How have the VMV of Trust / Equality been upheld? It was agreed that the VMV of the Trust & Equality has been upheld.</p>	
AC/21/2425	Complete report to trustees	

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	The report to trustees was discussed and completed within the meeting.	
AC/22/2425	Determination of Confidentiality Equality Act consideration Nolan Principles Trust mission, vision, and values Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no confidential items discussed. - There had been no Equality Act implications. 	
	Date and time of next meeting: Date 20 th January at 5.30pm at Retford Oaks Academy The meeting closed at 18:30pm	
	 Signed... (Vice chair) Date 11/12/2024 Print.....DAVID CARTWRIGHT	