

Vale of York Academy
Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Governing Committee held on
held via Zoom on Monday 20th September 2021 at 5:00pm

Present:	Toby Eastaugh (Principal) Patrick Looker (Chair) Jenny Smailes	Helen Todd Jack Martin Paul Clayton
In Attendance:	Gavin Kumar (Assistant Vice Principal: Student Welfare) [to 6.05pm] Liz Hardy (Assistant Vice Principal: Data & Progress) [to 6.30pm] Jess Swarbrick (Governance Advisor and Clerk)	

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome, Apologies & Declarations of Interest</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received, with consent, from Matt Halifax. David Seddon and Andrew Thirlwell were not present. There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Election of LGC Vice-Chair and recommendation of LGC Chair for Board approval</u> Patrick Looker was nominated as Chair of the LGC, and this proposal was agreed unanimously.</p> <p><i>AGREED: Patrick Looker to be recommended as Chair of the LGC for approval by the Board of Trustees.</i></p> <p>Andrew Thirlwell was nominated as Vice-Chair of the LGC. It was noted that Andrew was not present at the meeting, and the Chair agreed to check that he would be happy to stand. Subject to this, the LGC unanimously approved his appointment.</p> <p><i>ACTION: Chair to check with Andrew Thirlwell that he would be happy to serve as LGC Vice-Chair.</i></p>	PL
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 7th June 2021, Action Plan & Matters Arising</u> Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record.</p> <p>With reference to the Action Plan:</p> <p><i>1. Governors requested a discussion paper from the Principal ahead of the next working group meeting for review, outlining pros and cons of a two year Key Stage 4.</i> The Principal reported that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had begun to discuss the prospect of a two year Key Stage 4, and had started to look at modelling how this would look in terms of curriculum. He advised that curriculum leaders had been informed that this was something that was being explored, but no further consultation had taken place at this stage. The Principal also noted that SLT had discussed whether there was a case to implement this with the current Year 8 cohort, which would mean there would be no options schedule this academic year.</p> <p><i>ACTION: It was agreed that the next scheduled governors' working party on 19th October would be a good opportunity to look at a two year Key Stage 2, and the Principal agreed to produce a paper for discussion.</i></p> <p><i>2. The Governance Advisor agreed to check with the Trust for advice on any Covid specific amendments</i></p>	TE

	<p><i>to the Lettings Policy and forward this information to the Principal. Completed. The Principal reported that whilst lettings had resumed this year, they were nowhere near the levels of previous years. He added that significantly less had been budgeted in terms of income for this year to reflect this.</i></p> <p><i>3. The Principal agreed to provide further information on the proposed skiing trip for governors to make an informed judgement before approving. Not completed. The Principal advised that the skiing trip would not take place this year, but in 2023. Mr Kumar advised that the plan would be to alternative this trip with the sports tour, which the school planned to run in Easter 2022.</i></p> <p><i>ACTION: Governors requested further information on the proposed sports tour, which would take place overseas.</i></p> <p>With reference to the budget, the Principal reported that the 2020/21 year end had resulted in a much more positive position than expected, and was £23,000 in surplus compared to the original budgeted figure of £50,000.</p> <p>With reference to pupil numbers, the Principal reported that the expected 167 in Year 7 had actually reduced to 161 by the start of the autumn term, though this figure was still 38 higher than the previous year. He noted that this meant that the current total on roll was slightly below the estimated figure at 654.</p>	TE
4.	<p><u>Principal's Update</u> Previously distributed. The Principal noted that Liz Hardy, Assistant Vice Principal (Data and Progress) would provide an update on GCSE results later in the meeting.</p> <p><u>Pupil Progress</u> The Principal reported that plans had been drafted to access the National Tutoring Programme, which would be rolled out with smaller groups of pupils in Years 8-10. He advised that an advert was currently out for a tuition co-ordinator, which would be paid for through the Recovery Premium funding.</p> <p><u>Governors noted that £23,000 funding did not seem a large amount.</u> Liz Hardy advised that this figure was based on Free School Meals numbers in school, and criteria for the funding was to have at least 65% of tutees eligible for Pupil Premium. She added that the National Tutoring Programme was 70% funded by the government, with the school covering the remaining 30% out of the funding, so whilst it did not seem a lot, additional contributions were also being made by central government.</p> <p>The Principal reported that baseline assessments were currently being taken by Year 7 and Year 8 students, with the younger year group also undergoing CATs.</p> <p><u>Attendance & Behaviour</u> The Principal reported that there had been a positive start to the school year in terms of behaviour. He noted that children and staff had welcomed not having to remain in "bubbles" this year. The Principal advised that 40 new Year 7 students attended a four day summer school the week before the start of term, and this had been a real benefit for transition.</p> <p>With reference to COVID, the Principal reported that government guidance now meant that masks were not required in school, though in-line with Trust guidance, students had continued to wear these in indoor communal areas. The Principal reported that the school was now seeing an increase in transmission and the number of infections, with 30 children having positive PCR results and a further 13 either waiting for a result and/or having a positive LFT result as of 20th September. It was noted that two members of staff had also tested positive since the start of term. The Principal advised that the school had therefore moved into its contingency plans, and from 21st September (tomorrow) would be reintroducing face masks in classrooms for all students until at least Friday 1st October. Staff meetings had also gone back to being online rather than in person, and assemblies would not take</p>	

place for the time being.

Governors noted that in the summer term, this number of cases within year groups would have resulted in whole cohorts isolating and asked what the process was now. The Principal advised that close contacts were now being handled by NHS Track and Trace, and to date there had been no instruction to self-isolate. The Principal advised that there was an increasingly similar picture across York, with cases rising in schools. He advised that Public Health were being kept informed of the situation.

Governors asked what the impact was on children who were having to isolate at home, and asked whether they could still access learning online. The Principal advised that the shadow curriculum remained available through Google Classroom, with resources for students to access.

Governors asked whether there had been any impact on attendance from families who were worried about sending children to school because of risk of infection. The Principal noted that it was hard to gauge at this point in the term. However, he did advise that attendance was particularly low in Year 11. Gavin Kumar, Assistant Vice Principal (Student Welfare) added that this was a group of hard to reach students, and formal meetings had already been arranged with families to discuss attendance and to monitor this closely.

Governors asked if there was any further information about vaccinations for 12-15 year olds. The Principal advised that he had expected to hear more information this week but nothing had been released as yet. He reported that it was his understanding that initially children would be invited to get vaccinated at a centre rather than school, though the second phase was likely to be done through the Schools Immunisation Service. The Chair noted that he had received correspondence from a parent regarding the vaccination process. The Principal agreed to forward a copy of the Trust's standard response to any queries and concerns.

SEND

It was noted that the annual SEND report had been presented to governors in the summer term, and there were no significant updates to report since that point. The Principal advised that the new SEN area in school was now up and running. He also highlighted the identification and support plans for students with SEN being shared with all staff this year, which had ensured that fully comprehensive information was provided to support students.

Staffing Update

The Principal provided an update on resignations and appointments in school, which were listed in his report. He advised that a number of posts were currently out to advert.

12. Behaviour Policy (brought further up the agenda)

Previously distributed. Gavin Kumar outlined the two main changes to the Behaviour Policy, which were being brought for governors' consideration and approval.

- Inclusion of explicit reference to setting off the fire alarm in the list of incidents which might lead to permanent exclusion. (Page 21)
- change to the tariff system.

Governors noted that for review panels, it would be helpful to have clearer information on the reasons for exclusion and also the rationale for the increase in days (tariff) over time. Gavin reported that SLT had reflected on this, and had produced new paperwork from this term. For every exclusion, a FTE request for would be completed which set out the category of behaviour and a description of the incident (taken from CPOMS), the number of days and details of when the subsequent re-integration meeting would take place. Gavin advised that an additional form would provide details of the re-integration meeting, who was in attendance and the targets agreed at that meeting. This would then be signed by staff, student and parents. He advised that this information would be included in

the evidence provided to the governors' panel for any exclusion review meeting.

Governors agreed that this clarity of paperwork for panels was a positive development. They also asked for more information on who could request an exclusion. Gavin advised that only the Principal had the authority to issue an exclusion. Where a request was submitted, usually through progress leaders, these would be considered and discussed with Gavin. He explained that this provided a consistent approach to the process, and if deemed appropriate, would then be submitted to the Principal.

With reference to page 21 and the inclusion of deliberate activation of the fire alarm without good intent, governors expressed some concern about changing the policy as a result of a specific incident which had occurred. Gavin advised that there had already been discussion on a number of occasions about including this in the policy before the incident reference took place. He advised that it was important to stress that this was not an exhaustive list, and stated that incidents would be considered on a case by case basis. The Principal added that the inclusion of this on the list was not a reaction to a specific incident, but had been under consideration for some time. He noted that if governors were not comfortable with this addition it would not be included, but also emphasised that the policy stated this behaviour might result in permanent exclusion, rather than would.

A discussion followed about including examples on a list, and whether this would raise issues in the future where behaviour which was not on the list resulted in the decision to permanent exclude, due to the individual nature of the incident. Governors agreed that linguistically, including the word "might" did indicate that the list was not exhaustive, but argued that this needed to be more clearly explained to avoid confusion.

APPROVED: Governors approved the policy, subject to the addition of specifying that the list was not exhaustive. Governors also agreed that they were supportive of the changes to the tariff system.

It was noted that changes to the policy needed to be clearly publicised to students and parents/carers so they were aware of the updates.

With reference to behaviour in school, Gavin reported that there had been a positive start to term. He noted that the rewards system had been updated, and positive behaviour and incentives for attendance were being strongly promoted.

[Gavin Kumar left the meeting at 6.05pm]

6. GCSE Results Overview – Initial Data

Liz Hardy presented a summary of GCSE outcome data. She noted that students had benefited from the Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) process in 2020 and also the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) process in 2021. Whilst Progress 8 (P8) scores were not published for this year, figures showed a P8 of 0.5, which was a significant improvement on 2019 data. Liz advised that the 2020-21 Year 11 cohort were also a much lower ability group than 2018 to 2020, so these outcomes were very positive.

Targets had been met for Basics 4+ English and Maths, and exceeded for Basics 5+ English and Maths. Liz advised that progress had increased particularly in the higher grades, where students had worked hard on the TAG process and assessment.

Liz reported that the EBacc entry was much higher than previous year at 43% (compared to 22% in 2020 and 34% in 2019). Languages had scored well and above previous years, resulting in a strong P8 of 0.61.

It was noted that the target for Pupil Premium students had not been met, with a P8 of 0.07 not as high as the previous year, though still positive.

	<p>Liz reported that the P8 for SEN students was -0.59. She advised that there were eight students in this group, three of whom had not attended much of the school year, nor completed assessments. She advised that opportunities had been provided for them to do so.</p> <p>Liz reported that teachers had worked extensively on the assessment process and meeting the stringent requirements set out in the Trust policy. She advised that care was taken to ensure that grades were not inflated, but also that no student was disadvantaged. Liz advised that Trust moderation was returned with high praise for the accuracy of teachers' assessment, and no issues were raised from moderation of English Language and Food and Nutrition, which were selected for scrutiny by the Exam Board.</p> <p>Liz advised that three appeals had been received, and these had been dealt with through the agreed process. Two English Language grades had been moved up as a result of investigation into the appeal.</p> <p>Governors agreed that outcomes were very positive, and noted their appreciation to staff for all the work which had been done in operating through a difficult system.</p> <p>Liz shared a summary of results by subject. As above, she noted that there were no subject specific P8 scores, but the analysis showed a residual score based on students' overall results in all subjects.</p> <p>It was noted that Dance outcomes showed a negative residual. Liz advised that this subject was taught at Manor CE Academy, with the cohort of five students travelling across for two hours per week. She noted that as the lessons were off-site, students did not have access to the extra level of intervention and support which would usually be in place in school.</p> <p>Governors noted the positive outcomes in Design Technology. Liz noted that the TAG process removed the requirement for students to make and complete a finished product, which had benefited students nationally, not just at Vale of York. She advised that higher marks in the exam assessments raised the average, as well as assessment of research and design.</p> <p>It was noted that German was showing a negative residual of -1.22. Liz reminded governors that this was not a P8 score, but a figure in comparison to students' results in other subjects. She noted that outcomes in German were actually higher than previous year, and the equivalent P8 would be closer to 0.</p> <p>Governors asked how the school was intending to use this data to plan teaching and learning moving forward. Liz advised that a key lesson for a number of subjects was the importance of preparation for exams, and the inclusion of more regular assessment in the programme of study. She explained that where subjects already had this built into their planning, they had been much better prepared with material for students' portfolios from the start of the process.</p> <p>Governors remarked on the breadth of opportunities in terms of curriculum, including GCSEs in native languages for EAL students. Liz advised that these subjects were not taught in school, but practice exam papers were provided and these were sent off for external marking to support students.</p> <p><i>[Liz Hardy left the meeting at 6.30pm]</i></p>	
5.	<p><u>Academy Development Plan / Self-Evaluation Framework</u></p> <p>Previously distributed. The Principal advised that the commentary section had not yet been updated, but proposed to do this for the next meeting to allow governors to review progress against priorities and bring key questions for discussion.</p> <p>In response to a question from governors, the Principal confirmed that a number of priorities had been carried over from the previous year.</p>	

	<p><i>ACTION: Update commentary on ADP and circulate in advance of the next meeting for governors to review and raise questions.</i></p>	TE
7.	<p><i>Governance Matters</i> Governors noted the updated Code of Conduct which had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>With reference to the skills audit, the Governance Advisor noted that this would be circulated to governors before half term for completion.</p> <p><i>Link Governor Roles and schedule for the year</i> The Chair reported that governors had met to discuss and plan link governor roles and monitoring visits for the year, at their working group meeting in the first week of term. A copy of the planned schedule had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>With reference to link governor roles, the following were noted: Safeguarding – Jenny Smailes Pupil Premium and SEND – Helen Todd Whistleblowing – Patrick Looker</p> <p><i>Training</i> The Governance Advisor reported that a list of required and recommended training was currently being developed and would be circulated to all governors in the Trust before half term. Governors were also reminded of the training opportunities available through the City of York Council Governance Service and also online via NGA Learning Link.</p>	
8.	<p><i>Admissions – PAN for 2023/24 and policy changes (2021/22 and 2022/23)</i></p> <p><i>AGREED: Governors agreed the proposal to retain the Published Admission Number (PAN) at 150 for 2023/24 admissions.</i></p> <p>The Principal reported that pupil numbers in the current Year 6 in catchment were 185, which was 60 fewer than the current Year 7. He advised that the school had budgeted for an intake of 140 in September 2022 but this was a challenging target. Governors noted that numbers in catchment were expected to be lower for the next few years and recognised the challenges for the school in terms of pupil recruitment which would arise from this.</p> <p><i>Policy Changes (2021/22 and 2022/23)</i> The Principal reported that changes to statutory regulations from 1st September 2021 had been introduced, and the current and next year’s admissions policies had been updated accordingly. He explained that the changes related to ensuring that placement of at risk children happened within a much tighter timeframe than previously.</p>	
9.	<p><i>Safeguarding</i> Governors were asked to ensure that they had read the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, and to then complete the Trust form to confirm they had done so. Links to both the guidance and the Google form had been included on the agenda for reference.</p> <p>Governors were also reminded of the safeguarding training which was being provided by the Trust on 28th September, 30th September and 7th October and were asked to book onto this if they had not already done so.</p>	
10.	<p><i>Premises Update, Health & Safety monitoring</i> The Principal reported that the COVID risk assessment continued to be a key working document which was updated on a weekly basis in response to the situation in school. He advised that updates continued to be published on the school website, as well as shared with governors.</p>	

	<p>The Principal reported that the Site Manager had secured a position within the Trust’s Central Team as Facilities Lead. Governors expressed their congratulations and thanks to him for his work with the school. The Principal reported that an advert was currently live for two Site Manager positions.</p> <p>With reference to repairs and maintenance, the Principal reported that the older part of the school had been fitted with new radiators over the summer, which would bring a saving in energy costs over time. He reported that work was currently being undertaken on the flat roof, as part of a continued schedule of improvement and investment through funding from the Trust.</p> <p>The Principal reported that CYC had begun a consultation on the development of the old primary site adjacent to the school, to create a new library and community facility. He noted that part of the development would be the movement of the pupil pedestrian entrance to the centre of Fairway, and this work was being project managed by CYC.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Risk Management – school-level risk register review</u> Previously distributed. Governors noted the high risk items on the register, and asked for assurance that these were being actively managed. The Principal confirmed that they were.</p> <p>With reference to critical incidents, it was noted that the Crisis Management Policy and Procedure had been included on the agenda for governors to note. The Principal reported that a fire drill had already taken place this term, and there would also be a lockdown drill before half term.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Policies</u> <i>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</i> Updated and approved by the Board of Trustees. Noted. <i>Crisis Management Plan Policy and Procedure.</i> Updated from Trust template. Noted. <i>Behaviour Policy</i> Discussed and approved earlier in the meeting.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Items for escalation to the Board of Trustees</u> There were no items to report.</p>	
14.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u> The Principal reported that the school’s open evening would take place on Wednesday 13th October from 6pm to 8.30pm. He advised that whilst the event would be in person, controls would still be in place in light of the ongoing pandemic. The event would be open to Year 6 children only, with a request that only one parent/carer accompany them. Demonstrations would take place but these would not be interactive due to COVID. The Principal asked that if any governor was available to attend on the night, their support would be welcomed.</p> <p>Jack Martin reported that field trips for Geography were planned for the week commencing 8th November, and he asked if governors were able to support these.</p> <p><i>ACTION: Jack agreed to circulate details of the trips via email for governors to respond to.</i></p>	JM
15.	<p><u>Dates of 2021/22 Meetings</u> Monday 15th November 2021, 5pm Monday 24th January 2022, 5pm Monday 21st March 2022, 5pm Monday 13th June 2022, 5pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 6.55pm

These minutes were approved by the Vale of York Local Governing Committee at their meeting on 15th November 2021

Vale of York Academy LGC – Action Points from the Meeting of the Local Governing Committee held on 20th September 2021

	<u>Action Point</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
1	<i>Chair to check with Andrew Thirlwell that he would be happy to serve as LGC Vice-Chair</i>	2	<i>Patrick Looker</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
2	<i>It was agreed that the next scheduled governors' working party on 19th October would be a good opportunity to look at a two year Key Stage 4, and the Principal agreed to produce a paper for discussion.</i>	3	<i>Toby Eastaugh</i>	<i>12/10/2021</i>
3	<i>Governors requested further information on the proposed sports tour, which would take place overseas.</i>	3	<i>Toby Eastaugh</i>	<i>12/10/2021</i>
4	<i>Update commentary on ADP and circulate in advance of the next meeting for governors to review and raise questions</i>	5	<i>Toby Eastaugh</i>	<i>08/11/2021</i>
5	<i>Circulate details of Geography trips via email for governors to respond to if they're able to support.</i>	14	<i>Jack Martin</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>