



**Minutes of the first joint Academy Committee Board Meeting
held on Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 5.15pm via Microsoft Teams**

Membership	Initials	Governor category	Absence
Mr Alastair Murray	AM	Appointed governor	
Mrs Amanda Palfreyman	AP	Staff governor	
Mrs Christina Wyles	CW	Appointed governor	
Mr David Perry	DP	Appointed governor	A
Mrs Elizabeth Farrar	EF	Appointed governor	
Mrs Fiona Simpson	FS	Appointed governor	
Mrs Jane Gawthorpe	JS	Appointed governor	
Mr Michael Storey	MS	Appointed governor	A
Ms Morag Malcolm – Vice Chair of Governors	MM	Parent governor	
Miss Natalie Ward	NW	Staff governor	
Mrs Rebecca Marshall	RM	Appointed governor	
Mr Simon Baker	SB	Parent governor	A
Ms Siobhan Willows	SIW	Parent governor	A
Mr Stephen Wilds - Chair of Governors	STW	Appointed governor	

In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Mr Gareth Letton	GL	Executive Principal	
Mrs Helen Cawkill	HC	Principal for Bracken Lane	
Mrs Rebecca Hurley	RH	Principal for Thrumpton	
Mrs Rhianne Chambers	RC	Clerk & Advisor	
Mrs Tracy Blacknell	TB	Vice Principal for BLPA&THPA	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/when
AC/40/2021	<p>Update following central training</p> <p>Governors were informed that the Ofsted preparation training slideshow is available on SharePoint for those who were unable to attend the training. The chair questioned when Ofsted may be expected. Mrs Hurley explained that both academies are in the window for an inspection with previous inspections being in 2014 (THPA) and 2013 (BLPA). It was further explained that when a setting academizes there is a 3-year grace and both academies joined the Trust in 2017. Ofsted are not doing full inspections until the Autumn term and will depend on the back log, but it is expected. The governors queried if previous recommendations apply if the last full inspection was prior to academizing. Mrs Hurley confirmed they do still stand however with the change in curriculum some recommendations are difficult to transfer across.</p> <p>It was agreed for the clerk to create a central document on the previous inspections to ensure the academy is doing everything in preparation for the next inspections.</p>	<p>Clerk / RH / HC / SW</p>



<p>AC/41/2021</p>	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and approved from Mr Baker and Ms Willows due to work commitments. Please see agenda item AC/45/2021 for Mr Perry and Mr Storey.</p> <p><i>Ms Malcolm arrived 5.27pm</i></p>	
<p>AC/42/2021</p>	<p>Declaration of interest There were no declarations of interest, or any changes from the start of the year, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p>	
<p>AC/43/2021</p>	<p>Minutes of the last Academy committee meeting on 10th February 2021 The minutes of the meetings, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>AC/44/2021</p>	<p>Matters arising - AC/27/2021 -To note the videos on poverty proofing were shared with the committee on 10/02/21</p> <p>- AC/32/2021 – To note admissions arrangement for BLPA and THPA have been sent to the LA.</p>	
<p>AC/45/2021</p>	<p>Governor admin The chair suggested that moving forward each link governor has an item on the agenda to feedback to the committee on any progress in their duty and what has been done to support the academies and Principal's. The governors agreed for safeguarding to be on the next agenda.</p> <p>The governors asked if they could go into school to complete any link visits to which Mrs Hurley confirmed at this moment, visits are still via Teams and any change to this would come from Trust level.</p> <p><i>Mr Letton and Mrs Cawkill joined the meeting at 5.30pm.</i></p> <p>The governors were informed of Mr Perry's resignation due to work commitments. Clerk to send letter of thanks for his support whilst in role.</p> <p>The Clerk also explained that Mr Storey's term of office has expired and there has been no expression to be reappointed. The governors expressed gratitude for the length of dedication shown the academy and to the Trust. Clerk to send letter of thanks for his support whilst in role.</p> <p>When the academies merged, the board was 2 governors over capacity so following these resignations, the committee is now full. Mr Perry was a secondary link governor in Health and Safety, and it was requested for the Clerk to ask Mr Baker to take this position following a previous expression of interest. Mr Murray added he will liaise with Mr Baker to complete the BLPA H&S audit.</p> <p>The governors were also informed that both the Chair & Vice-Chair are regularly in touch with both Principals and expressed thanks for the great job they are doing.</p>	<p>Clerk / CW / RM</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>



AC/46/2021	<p>Return to the academy & testing arrangements</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill informed governors of a successful return to the academy on the 8th of March with only 3 absences. There has been a slight staffing change due to a member of staff transitioning to other academies in the Trust. The vulnerable families have continued to receive additional support including food bags from Morrison’s with deliveries / collections by parents at a mutually convenient time, so they do not feel embarrassed. The curriculum is in the process of being adjusted locally with a focus on communication, language, and wellbeing. The academy is aware that the children being settled is key as when they are settled and happy then they can learn better. The staff who have opted in to do the testing continue to do so twice a week. Mrs Hurley said everything is similar at THPA, with attendance being at 98%. The 3 children who are yet to return are under multi-agency support and are part of a phased return plan. Everything in the academy is going as smoothly as possible.</p> <p>The chair commented how tired the students are, but it has been good to see that the academies are focused on weaning the children back in through conducting events e.g. dancing and tree planting as a way to reintroduce the children in a structured appropriate way.</p> <p>The vice-chair queried what the academy are doing to encourage parents to do the lateral flow tests. Mrs Cawkill explained the academy have shared information on both the newsletter and emails to parents. There is no data on how many people are conducting the tests due to it being voluntary. Mrs Hurley agreed that they academies can only advertise as much as they can.</p> <p>The governors stated that there has been some concern regarding the entrance at THPA with parents gathering outside the reception area meaning other parents struggling to pass at a safe distance and then asked if anything can be done to alleviate congestion in this area. Mrs Hurley explained that the academy staff are always at the entry point in a morning encouraging parents to social distance and continue with the one-way system around site. The academy can continue to give the message of social distancing and ask parents to move on as soon as possible. The Chair added that if the academy is monitoring the situation and ensuring parents are not hanging around for too long then that is all that can be done. Mrs Cawkill added that at BLPA they keep parents on the street which in turn has its own issues as there is always a pinch point. The Chair added that parents have a responsibility themselves and should have a sensitivity to how they are congregating.</p>	
AC/47/2021	<p>Staff wellbeing</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill informed governors that staff are happy to be back in the academy and feel safe. The academy shared concerns prior to opening, as well as regularly since reopening and Mrs Cawkill checks in with staff daily. The wellbeing champion ensures there are healthy snacks available and that wellbeing / mindfulness activities are available to access online. A letter had also been received from the TA team who had run the Hub</p>	



	<p>provision for key workers during lockdown expressing the positives that has come out of the situation. Mr Letton concurred that the TA's have done an amazing job which needs to be celebrated.</p> <p>The governors asked what is being done for the Principal's wellbeing. Mrs Cawkill confirmed that in both academies they have a strong supportive team around them as well as support from within the Trust and each other. It was also noted that Mr Letton is a great support as are the Chair and Vice-Chair. Mrs Hurley echoed what had been said and added that if she was having bad day, she knows there is someone to ring. The Chair added that both Principals are very competent in their work so as a governing body they are always there too.</p> <p>The governors queried the use of face masks within the academy since the decisions made in the academy go beyond the minimum guidance from the government and further asked the impact it is having to the children, staff, and children with communication needs. Mrs Cawkill confirmed the academy made the decision after the 1st lockdown due to the nature of the academy and with how tight the classrooms are as there is not an option for staff to be socially distanced from children in a reasonable manner. A local decision was made following consultation with Mr Letton and a risk assessment was completed which does consider the wellbeing of all involved. Mrs Cawkill has spoken with children from a variety of age groups and feedback has been that they are used to seeing masks with one of the youngest children saying he did not want teachers not to wear masks as he wanted them to be safe from the virus. The only negative feedback Mrs Cawkill received has been from 2 children who said it was sometimes tricky to hear, so all staff have been reminded to ensure they are projecting their voice to ensure children furthest distance away can hear. It was further explained that staff do wear visors for phonics and the nursery & reception staff wear the see-through masks to help the children who find language a challenge. The data is showing that the masks are not causing a problem even in phonics as the children are progressing. From a staff perspective it was agreed that this was the best decision for their wellbeing. Mrs Hurley added that staff are more confident wearing the masks which in turn helps the children be confident in their learning. The governors agreed it was beneficial to know what adjustments have been made and was great to hear there has been no negative impact with any issues being ironed out quickly.</p>	
AC/48/2021	<p>Safeguarding; culture & compliance</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill confirmed to the governors that the academy has 4 children with supervision orders. The safeguarding audit with the Trust is scheduled for the 20th of April. The governors queried what a supervision order meant. Mrs Cawkill confirmed it is a legal order that states what parents can do and is the step in between a child in need and a removal. Mr Wilds explained this order puts the attendance of social workers on to a more formal basis, so parents understand it is more formal than voluntary consent of the social worker to attend. The social workers are made to attend by the court whilst keeping the children at home. Mr Letton</p>	



	<p>confirmed that the parents no longer need to consent to the work that the social workers need to do.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley informed governors that the safeguarding audit for THPA is on Monday 29th March with Mrs Wyles and Mrs Marshall being involved. The Chair asked how many looked after children the academy has with Mrs Hurley confirming there is currently 1, with 5 being post looked after.</p>	
AC/49/2021	<p>Integrated Risk Management - Risk Register inc. education risks, Health & Safety, staff & pupil well-being, GDPR</p> <p>Mrs Cawkill confirmed the 2 red risks for BLPA are both covid related which the academy is unable to control. The academy does have several ongoing issues including the soft surface lifting in the Reception outdoor play area and the Reception class toilets / general plumbing with the plumbers being on daily call outs. The new gym equipment is being fixed on Friday 26th following a misaligned fitting which has no impact on safety as it is a soft connecting piece.</p> <p>At THPA, Mrs Hurley informed governors the academy is currently updating the risk register and the biggest H&S issue is with the Nursery roof continuing to leak. This issue is with the Trust Estates Team and the academy are awaiting capital funding to resolve the issue. Within the academy all staff have had an update on email protocol and a reminder on being careful on who emails are being sent to.</p>	
AC/50/2021	<p>Review Development Plans</p> <p>Bracken Lane's development plan was reviewed at the end of the autumn term. Due to the covid lockdown there has been a limit to what the academy can complete due to lack of children and staff in the setting, but Mrs Cawkill confirmed she is going to add more detail as to what was achieved to ensure it is acknowledged.</p> <p>Mrs Hurley confirmed this was similar at Thrumpton as the remote education took over which has now been reflected in the updated AIP. A plan has been created for the staff's benefit to provide strategic direction for the rest of the year. The governors were also informed that both BLPA and THPA, along with Tuxford Primary, are moving to a new Maths curriculum (Power Maths) in September and are conducting all training together.</p>	
AC/51/2021	<p>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification & any audit results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Procedures Manual, Staff Grievance, GDPR Subject Access request form, Governors Allowances, Accessibility, Health and Safety, Covid-19 appendix to Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles statement <p>The above Diverse Academies policies were updated by the Trust on the 8th February & 2nd March 2021 and are available on the Trust website. Governors were informed of these updates on the 3rd March 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEND policy. <p>The above appendix was updated by Bracken Lane on the 22nd February 2021 and is available on the Academy website. Governors were informed</p>	



	<p>of the updates on the 3rd March 2021 and was ratified in the governor meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour Policy <p>The above appendix was updated by Thrumpton Primary in March 2021 and is available on the Academy website. Governors were informed of the updates on the 16th March 2021 and was ratified in the governor meeting.</p>	
AC/52/2021	<p>Finance: Management Accounts including HR staffing report</p> <p>The chair stated that both academies are showing as in the red and questioned will it end up balanced and if not, what happens if it remains in the red. Mrs Cawkill confirmed that most of the staffing costs are covid related so that will remain. It is believed that BLPA will remain in the red but there will be savings elsewhere. By working collaboratively, THPA and BLPA have shared costs which Mrs Hurley agreed this was the same for THPA. Mr Letton added that due to constant changes in staffing due to isolation and illness there has been a requirement at both academies for unexpected cover. The chair added that the committee wanted to ensure the academies will not be under criticism for things out their control and wanted to be reassured everything the academies can control, is being done. Mr Letton confirmed this was the case and that the accounts will balance out but until there is stability the academies can only do what they can. The chair asked if under or overspends get rolled over to the next academic year. Mr Letton highlighted that each year is started afresh. All money belongs to the Trust so if there is surplus in secondary funding then they can help the primaries, but money is unable to be rolled over.</p>	
AC/53/2021	<p>Link governor visit updates / reports</p> <p>There had not been any link governor visits since the previous meeting. A safeguarding update will be provided at the next meeting from Mrs Wyles & Mrs Marshall.</p>	CW / RM
AC/54/2021	<p>How has the AC held senior leaders to account?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee have been supportive and challenging on how the academy have undertaken the reopening. The governors were impressed in the staged return to ease the children back in, in an appropriate way. - Finance – Principal’s reassured governors they are doing everything they can in uncertain times. - Face mask wearing and the impact this could be having. - The congestion around site when social distancing. 	
AC/55/2021	<p>Complete report to Trustees</p> <p>AC members discussed the report and agreed to add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How well the return to the academy has gone. - Praise for the TA’s and how well they have stepped up throughout the last year - The commitment of Mr Storey to the committee. - The concern with the nursery toilets at BLPA with plumbers attending daily when limiting number of visitors to site. 	
AC/56/2021	<p>Determination of Confidentiality</p> <p>Equalities Act consideration</p>	



	<p>7 Nolan Principles AC members considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no confidential items discussed • There had been no Equalities Act implications • Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the 7 Nolan Principles. 	
	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Academy Committee meeting Wednesday 19 May 2021 at 5.15pm</p> <p>The meeting closed at 18.30pm</p>	

Signed by Chair:

Date: