

## Moorland Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

**Meeting Minutes- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 5.30pm.**

[Held online via Microsoft 'Teams'](#)

### Attended:

**Chair-** Oliver Heathman (OH), **Parent Governors-** Lynda Cooper (LC), Rosie Stamp (RoS), Ewa Ziubryniewicz (EZ), James Gething (JG), **Academy Head-** Alex Waterman (AW).

**Governance Professional-** Charlotte Roe (GP)

**LAC Clerk-** Nicol Bush (NB)

**Minutes:** Nicol Bush- LAC Clerk.

No	Item	Actions
1.	<b>Welcome and apologies</b> The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the new LAC Clerk Nicol Bush. Apologies were made from (RSt-Widecombe) The GP clarified that Academy Heads would need to fill in the Visit note reports if the Governors did not manage a visit, so that every school would be represented at the S&C meeting.	
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b> There were none.	
3.	<b>Approval of meeting minutes from 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023</b> (Circulated with Agenda) The previous meeting minutes were <b>approved</b> as a true record and will be signed by the Chair, Clerk to forward signed minutes over to HR to upload to the Trust website.	Clerk to forward signed minutes over to HR to upload to the Trust website.
4.	<b>Matters arising from 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 (not on the agenda)</b>	
5.	<b>Clerk Update</b> <b>5.1 Appointments/nominations-</b> GP informed the group that the trust was still awaiting approval/chasing paperwork for the new Foundation Governor, Parent Governor for Wolborough and was in the process of recruiting a new Staff Governor. <b>5.2 Training –</b> The Clerk requested that all Governors to email any Certificates for training taken, to add onto the central record along with EDEN forms. The Clerk also informed the group of the upcoming “Introduction to Governors” training session being carried out on Feb 8 <sup>th</sup> online, which the trust encouraged all Governors to attend for an update/refresher for the role. <b>5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues.</b> The Clerk reminded all Governors to ask ‘curious’ questions during their visits, explaining that even if the Governors knew the answers to the questions, it would be helpful to other Governors who might not be confident to ask and would reflect into LAC minutes that questions were being asked.	GP to feedback to the LAC the Gaps of support needed/areas of expertise from the Local Governor Skills Survey back from trustees.

	<p>The Clerk asked all Governors that hadn't already to complete the Local Governor Skills Audit Survey as it would advise the trust on areas of expertise and areas that support would be needed.</p> <p><i>The Governors asked, "Could we have feedback on where the trustees feel we have gaps?"</i></p> <p>Mid-Year LAC procedure survey – The Clerk informed the survey would be circulated after half term.</p> <p><b>5.4 Significant changes within the Trust including key personnel-</b></p> <p>The Clerk stated that the Senior Leadership Structure document had been circulated to Governors following action from previous LAC meeting.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Focus: Wellbeing/PHSE and Safeguarding Audit with a LEARNING WALK to evidence the practice within the school</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Wellbeing – pupils and staff</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Oversight of support for wellbeing – highlighting strengths and plans for schools where this is not yet consistent.</u></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Safeguarding Audit</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Discuss the S175 Audit and have an oversight of the evidence of safeguarding within the school.</u></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Mid-year overview of Attendance</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Islington-</u></b> The Governor noted a great meeting with an in-depth conversation with the AH and 5 members of staff, it had been good to talk to each staff member about the Relational approach, the Lead KS1 teacher would be taking part in NPQ training regarding pupil Behaviours and would be leading that across the trust alongside the AH. The AH was strong on interventions and arising challenging situations were being handled well, noting the school had received good parent support with measures being made. The school found Calm boxes, soft starts, brain breaks very successful, as well as a new woodland school being rolled out for some children.</p> <p>Over the winter months, there had been a nice interaction between KS1 And KS2 sharing the outdoor space, running lunchtime clubs/older pupils having lunch with younger pupils.</p> <p>The school had been facing some difficulties in areas such as staff bereavement and their return to school being tough with some staff health issues arising etc, but the school felt that staff were really banding together through that. There were some challenging issues around Safeguarding and Attendance/Punctuality, but the AH was working closely with the Trust team and were being handled well. Attendance was at 96%- anything below target was to do with exceptional circumstances, for example one family linked to US mass shootings, child illness- chest infections asthma etc.</p> <p><b><u>Moretonhampstead-</u></b> The Governor had a great visit and felt that the wellbeing of pupils of Moreton had always been great and the Governor mentioned that was his experience with his own children attending the school too. As mentioned in previous meetings SEND continued to be an issue and it was a question of managing the impact of the SEN children on the other pupils in class, AH was doing a good job with there being more focus on Forest schools/alternative provision being scheduled in weekly. An issue had arisen where certain SEN children being together had impacted on the wellbeing of the rest of a class, but the AH had arranged for them to attend alternative provision separately which had helped pupil wellbeing.</p> <p>An ex prison officer TA had been recruited who was experienced with the relational approach. The wellbeing of staff had been discussed, particularly staff</p>	

having to teach SEN children as well as teaching the class, the Governor felt they were being supported well.

Attendance was at 96.1%- brought down by a small number of families the AH had been working with.

**Widcombe-** (AH asked to complete visit notes as no Governor visit)

**Wolborough-** (AH asked to complete visit notes as no Governor visit)

**Hennock-** Had a lovely learning walk, great to see the new layout and see how it was all operating in practice. The Governor had managed to speak to staff teachers/Head of early years/TA staff/Admin staff and pupils.

In a small setting wellbeing could fluctuate, AH talked through how she had managed this, a constant challenge being recruitment- a vacancy for a reception teacher that had not received any applicants so that then had an effect on other staff particularly any staff absence was then hard to manage.

The AH felt as a new starter, she had been well supported but missed having a direct AH peer that had also recently started in a school setting to support each other, which would have a positive impact on AH wellbeing.

The Governor had no Safeguarding concerns, it felt robust and stronger than it had ever been. The AH had ongoing concern on how electronic monitoring was being handled, at present it was being controlled by over the shoulder monitoring, filters being used but AH felt more was needed with this- Hennock recently had a situation where the filters went down, a staff member noticed after over the shoulder monitoring that a pupil had accessed something inappropriate, the staff member followed the correct procedure by flagging to the AH and it was dealt with swiftly- it showed evidence of safeguarding practice in place but worth noting that something more substantial was needed- AH working with Alex on this.

Attendance was good, a small number of families had been working with AH on improving that area. Over PAN this year had 11 pupils rather than 10 but intake for this year would be way down at 4. The Governor asked *"Was this a picture that anyone else was seeing across the trust, was it a low birth rate year? Was there anything that could be done centrally to make sure if a particularly low year, marketing in place to keep the intake for small schools over for the years to come."*

AW informed that across the trust all 175s flagged filter and monitoring, back in October AW met with Matt and Martin from Limbtec who created a filter and monitoring team who were currently in the process of taking government guidance and unpicking on how to go forward, this was a team from different aspects- Netsweeper/GDPR/safeguarding. Netsweeper were going to try and find ways to give the trust more useful reports, a big issue being pupils don't log on as individuals in school/teachers over blocking makes reporting harder.

AW notes that over the shoulder monitoring was in place and DSL doing spot check half termly which would be recorded- all put in as a starting point, but this would develop over the next year until robust.

GP added that spot checks had been added to summer1 and Autumn 2 Governor visit notes going forward.

AW noted it was a good starting point but that would be reviewed whether more than 2x spot checks per year was needed.

The Governor asked the following questions regarding the filter and monitoring issue at Hennock recently-

*"Was that issue circulated to other AHs?"*

*"Were other schools checked?"*

AW responds that Limbtec visit every half term at present and things had come through to be actioned but in future would be doing on site spot checks.

This area had lots of exploring to be done- AW made sure AHs and all staff know what filter and monitoring is and could start to talk in an informed way.

A Governor asked around the point of the AH wellbeing due to being physically isolated at times *"Were there any suggestions on how that could be changed?"*

	<p>AW commented that AHs could be on different journeys but suggested that sometimes AHs joined other schools for the Tuesday AH meeting and had a coffee each end for a professional offload and emotional support.</p> <p><b>Bearnes-</b> (The Governor gave a verbal update)</p> <p>AH was excited to work with the LAC, she felt welcomed and very supported/taken care of. Staff supervisions were taking place with the inclusion hub, staff providing play therapy/lego therapy.</p> <p>AH had a meeting with parents last week, she felt happy with parent feedback with comments such as -children were happy and eager to come to school. Attendance was 95% Governor did not have chance to ask why.</p> <p>Safeguarding- Bearnes and Wolborough working together on a new system. Due to the town centre location, the school get a lot of safeguarding issues flagged but have weekly team meetings to decide which safeguarding issues require a follow up.</p> <p>The chair asked, <i>"How are things in the school with the changes that have happened, with the executive AH coming in across both Bearnes and Wolborough and how have the parents reacted to it?"</i> The Governor responded that parents were happy and full of hope that they were starting from the beginning and lots of things were beginning to happen. Communication between parents and staff was improving as had previously been an issue. Children were happy to have a daily assembly with various topics.</p> <p>EW offered support with Wolborough visit notes/ support for the new parent Governor for Wolborough once approved.</p>	
7.	<p><b>School Updates</b></p> <p>Governors to consider and discuss feedback on any issues/successes from their school visits or visit notes completed by AH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAN (to include pupils joined/left)</li> <li>• Pupil workload</li> <li>• Staff wellbeing and workload</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Suspensions and permanent exclusions</li> <li>• Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA</li> <li>• ASIP update</li> <li>• Risk assessments/Accident book</li> <li>• Pre-school update</li> </ul> <p>The visit notes covered most of the above, but the chair asked if Governors had any highlights or issues from their visit notes not already discussed.</p> <p><b>Bearnes-</b> The Governor noted that the setting currently cannot facilitate younger children (toddlers) noting that looking at other settings in the area, children are more likely to stay at the setting moving up through the school, if the setting could facilitate lower early years recruitment e.g. 2+.</p> <p>The Chair asked, <i>"Is that the same trend across the other setting pre-schools?"</i></p> <p>The GP mentioned that Pupil numbers is a focus on the trust, parent and toddler groups are being looked at to help future intake.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Current Year's Trust Focus – Relational Approach</b></p> <p>The AH had left the meeting at this point, but the Governors' discussed that the AHs are aware of the Relational approach which would be embedded more within schools over time.</p> <p>A lot of work was going on to embed into the staff but that it was a continual learning journey-which was all positive.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response to <b>draft</b> minutes</li> </ul>	

	<p>A Governor asked for feedback on individual school discussion during S&amp;C meeting minutes, The Chair gave verbal feedback and the GP confirmed it was under part 2 of the S&amp;C meeting minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on any issues raised from local board Chairs in S&amp;C Meeting</li> </ul> <p>The Chair fed back to the group, that it was evident during S&amp;C meetings that both visit notes and LAC minutes were read and fed back on how valuable these were, also noting that the level of scrutiny applied during those meetings was phenomenal and the understanding of the issues raised within the individual school needed to be addressed was good to see. Other points raised within the meeting being, the cost of living crisis and what the link could do around that, such as breakfast clubs, funding pots. Another point raised on recruitment and how difficult that had been, flagging how it could be supported making the role more attractive. The Chair added that the Trustees appreciated everything being done by the Governors and thanked the LAC.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Next S&amp;C Focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A detailed analysis of nationally reported data on EYFS, Y1 Phonic check, Y4 multiplication check, KS1 SATS and KS2 SATS, SEND and PPG analysis.</li> <li>Broad overview of other groups on their progress and expectations to targets.</li> <li>Progress on the ASIP.</li> </ul> <p>The GP reminded Governors to ask “curious” questions and to leave the visit with a good understanding. Regarding the ASIP (school improvement plan) the GP reminded the governors to ask the following questions: <i>“How was the school improvement plan going?” “Were there any changes?” “Was there anything the trust could do to help the schools achieve?” “Were there any barriers?”</i></p> <p>The GP also informed the LAC about an upcoming email containing a glossary of acronyms which would be circulated once completed/approved.</p> <p>A Governor asked, <i>“Would there be a data drop?” “Was nationally reported data available for all of us to check how are we performing against it?”</i></p> <p>The GP responded that upon organising the focus and checking the data with AK that now would be the right time for it, and informed they would get clarification from S&amp;C meeting and email everyone a response about it.</p>	<p>The Chair/ GP to clarify nationally reported data at S&amp;C meeting and feedback to LAC.</p>
11.	<p><b>Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups</b></p> <p>The Governors noted that there had not been an ETHOS meeting yet, but it was on the AH’s radar.</p> <p>The Chair informed of Sharon Lord coming in and providing a thorough and detailed review of the Vision and Values- particularly the Christian distinctiveness within the CofE schools throughout the Link academy and she had gone into individual schools and met with Governors and AHs, talking about how different each school was.</p> <p>The GP reminded it would be good to get evidence that ETHOS groups were working, showing that the ETHOS group was feeding into LAC’s which then fed into the Trustees meetings.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Evaluation of governance impact</b></p> <p>The Chair raised that having the Focus as a separate point within the meetings on the Agenda, enabled the LAC to really discuss points and for the Focus to not get</p>	

	<p>lost within the meeting. The Chair asked Governors if they had any suggestions on <i>“how we could be more effective, how we could better serve the schools?”</i></p> <p>The GP thanked the Governors for taking time out of their busy schedules to visit the schools and for completing the visit note reports, she understood this term was a tight turnaround.</p> <p>The Clerk thanked all of the Governors for the visit notes she had received and noted that she had really enjoyed reading through them all.</p> <p>The Clerk went on to say that as she was a member of staff that did not visit the various schools, it was an in-depth insight into how the schools work and added that the visit notes were very valuable and informative.</p> <p>The Governors raised that they were open to pointers/positive criticism and asked <i>“Is there a way in which we can summarise better, to keep things short and sweeter?”</i></p> <p>A Governor added that they felt having the GP role was important and that the Trust had resourced a great position to make a connection the LAC to the S&amp;C etc. the Governor also thanked the Chair for attending the S&amp;C meeting, and went on to thank the new LAC clerk for joining, adding that they thought it had been a very effective meeting.</p> <p><b>The next meeting will be on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 5.30pm.</b></p>	
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The meeting ended at 7.20pm.