

Totnes Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Minutes
May 8th 2025
at 6pm

Held online via Microsoft 'Teams'

Attended:

LAC Chair- Richard Jones

Parent Governors: Nanya Coles (Broadhempston)

Caroline Lucas (Sparkwell)

James Buchanan (Diptford)

Helen Hall- (Stoke Gabriel)

Staff Governor- Kate Wilson

Foundation Governor- Kate Burch

Academy Headteacher- Holly Edgington

In attendance:

Governance Professional- Charlotte Roe

DCEO- Matt Matthew

Minutes: Clerk to the Trust- Nicol Bush

No	Item	ACTION
1.	Welcome and apologies The Chair opened the meeting with a warm welcome. Governors introduced themselves to the new Chair and the DCEO. Apologies were received and accepted from LG and CR.	
2.	Declarations of interest There were no new declarations of interest brought to the meeting.	
3.	Approval of meeting minutes from 13th March 2025 The minutes were circulated before the meeting and were approved as a true record and would be signed accordingly.	CLERK
4.	Matters arising from 13th March 2025 (not on the agenda) 4.1 Governors to review the responses to the questions raised at the previous LAC and confirm if any supplementary questions. There were no comments brought forward.	
5.	Clerk Update 5.1 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues- The Clerk highlighted that the GP had attended the Clerks briefing and said the GP would email Governors any relevant information. 5.2 Significant changes within the Trust including key personnel- The GP updated the meeting on the newly appointed CEO and noted that she would be joining the Trust in September 2025. 5.3 The Clerk reminded Governors for any outstanding Governor bio's to be sent over for publishing to the school website/staff information board at the school.	
6.	Focus: Provision and impact for SEND (Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification) <i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i> <u>Stoke Gabriel</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The school planned for pupils' needs to remove learning barriers using classroom adaptations (Wave 1). They operated a "Plan, Do, Review"	

cycle, moving to Wave 2 support if needed. The SENDCO worked one day per fortnight, and the Inclusion Hub was effective.

- EHCP (Wave 3) support included five pupils across different years. The school tracked EHCP targets and challenged unattainable ones with the LA. Since 2023, several EHCP and SEND pupils left, and new pupils were added, with three new EHCPs awarded.
- Progress data showed steady or better progress in maths, good progress in reading, and writing as a focus area. Barriers included local authority finances, recruitment, and the 0-25 team.
- Parents felt well-supported and praised the school's care. Ofsted feedback was strong, noting SEND as a strength of the school.

Landscape

- The recent Ofsted report highlighted the school's effective SEND provision, noting that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well alongside their classmates due to adaptive teaching and careful interventions. Those strategies benefit both SEND and non-SEND pupils, ensuring no one was left behind.
- Specific needs, such as those of a child with autism, were managed with appropriate staffing and space. The school provided TA support for EHCPs, adaptive teaching, and resources for independent learning, with regular staff training sessions led by SENDCo Rosina.
- Despite potential financial constraints affecting staffing, relationships with families were strong, and pupils actively communicated their needs and participated in reviewing SEN targets.
- The inclusion register showed changes in pupil numbers, with individualised EHC objectives tailored to each child's progress.

Sparkwell

- The school ensured that SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provisions benefited all students without negatively impacting non-SEND children.
- Using strategies like cognitive interventions, on-site specialists, and visual timetables.
- Since September, five children had been added to the SEND register.
- Achieving EHCP (Education, Health, and Care Plan) objectives was challenging, due to staffing reductions, but small step progress was positive. Feedback showed the schools SEND provision was good and inclusive.

Diptford

- The school had 21% of their pupils on the SEND register. SEND provision was praised by Ofsted and internal monitoring confirmed it was well matched to pupils' needs.
- Each child had a provision map reviewed termly, with teaching aligned to targets and evidence seen in books.
- Staff received training on adaptive teaching and setting smarter targets.
- Many new pupils had previously been home-schooled, some with SEN or EBSA, creating challenges due to high needs without formal diagnoses.
- The school conducted three formal SEND reviews annually and maintained a watch list for close monitoring.
- Funding for high-needs pupils was limited, and staff shortages added pressure. (See item 15.)

Broadhempston

- 13% of the school were currently identified as SEND
- There were also children on a watchlist who were performing just below ARE – monitored at pupil progress meetings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All needs were met in lesson through OAIP – additional teacher and TA support where necessary. • All children had provision maps, outcomed termly, 6-week interventions plans were in place for interventions. Interventions were either filling the gaps (catch up) or overlearning (keep up). Teachers planned interventions and the interventions are led either by the teacher or TA. • Recent parent voice around SEND was positive. <p><u>Harbertonford-</u> Please refer to Governor visit notes for a deeper dive into SEND.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of pupils in the school have SEND need. • The biggest need at Harbertonford was around communication and interaction – ADHD and autism etc. • Not all SEND pupils were working below ARE. Those who were working at below ARE were making progress. • Provision Maps have a section for Pupil Voice. Every time the provision map is updated, then the staff will meet with pupil to include pupil voice. • Having Becky H and the ITH was helpful – the structure that the Trust had in place gave confidence and assurance that the SENDco is getting support (and challenge if needed). 	
7.	<p>Focus: PE (Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification) <i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><u>Stoke Gabriel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust PE lead taught one day a week, providing high-quality CPD to teachers, after-school clubs, and guidance on using the Sports Grant. The school offered adventure days and inter-Trust events, which were well received by children and parents. • Without the Sports Grant, the school couldn't attend interhouse fixtures or offer a wide range of sports to develop teamwork. A significant barrier was the high and rising cost of transport. • MT worked with the teaching team to ensure sport was accessible for all pupils. The Trust held an Inclusion Games last year. <p><u>Landscove</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Grant allowed school to offer a full curriculum including events, CPD for staff and a range of additional sporting opportunities across all ages. School was also able to put funding towards adventurous days out. • All disadvantaged pupils access PE provision. <p><u>Sparkwell</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80/20 trips. • Equipment & enrichment. • Excellent CPD clear vision from PE led. • PE was well attended by SEND & PP children. <p><u>Diptford</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school provided very strong PE teaching through a skilled and dedicated PE team. Pupil feedback showed they felt they had a wide range of opportunities and understood what good progress looked like. Despite a reduced offer, the school continued to access Trust festivals. • PE lead Kate Wilson and staff member Colette Bamber planned the year's provision, including a whole-school outdoor and adventurous trip to build community. The school met all five Sports Premium principles, offering high-quality teaching, CPD, competitive sport, and opportunities to try new activities like cricket and martial arts. • Budget constraints affected transport and equipment purchases made tracking allocations difficult. Nevertheless, the PE team worked hard to ensure inclusive access and used assessments to guide next steps, 	

	<p>supported by strong communication between school staff and visiting PE teachers.</p> <p><u>Broadhempston</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist provider delivered PE/CPD in school one day a week. • PE specialist will occasionally run an after-school club for each key stage. • Majority of the sports premium grant went towards wages/costs. • PTFA supported many of the trips and additional activities. • All pupils access the PE provision equitably. <p><u>Harbertonford</u>- please refer to visit notes for further information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AH for Harbs commented that in his view PE was a strength in the school – and believed it to be a strength in the Trust's approach to PE provision. • The 2024/25 plan had not changed significantly from the previous year and continued to include funding for after-school clubs, sports trips, and a wide range of physical activities. BMX-ing was added to the plan, and an alternative to climbing was being explored, as pupils had already experienced it the previous year. Peripatetic teachers had visited the school to teach cricket and martial arts, which proved to be an excellent use of the allocated funds. 	
8.	<p>Focus: Complaints Policy (Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification)</p> <p><i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><u>Stoke Gabriel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents regularly talk to staff with queries and teachers spend time investing in talking to parents when issues arise to alleviate any concerns escalating. • The school has introduced more opportunities for parents to talk to them and be in school which has had a direct impact on the reduction of low-level frustrations or queries. • The school is often approached with questions or queries and thanked for being approachable (Ofsted feedback from several parents). <p><u>Landscove</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were key parents who offered feedback – listened on the playground and let the AH know if there were any issues bubbling. This kept everyone feeling heard, points of view considered and valued. <p><u>Sparkwell</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No complaints- open door was the standard Parent Forum <p><u>Diptford</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No official complaints made. • Parents are aware there is an open-door policy and regularly discuss both positive and areas where they would like more clarity or unhappy about. This has been through email and face to face conversations, follow up always offered by staff or AH. <p><u>Broadhempston</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No complaints had been lodged in the last year. • Parents were happy to speak to staff about any issues. • However, as there were such large changes happening in the school from next year, this could change, and many questions would need to be escalated to the Trust. <p><u>Harbertonford</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One matter arising in the current 2024/25, the AH felt well supported by the Trust. The Executive Team offered a meeting with the parent who raised concerns, which were then resolved. • Good feedback was given to the recent Ofsted questionnaire. 	
9.	<p>Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups (Reports/minutes were circulated for review before the meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Landscove, RE—referred to as FaB (Faith and Beliefs)—was taught well, with children enjoying their lessons. The curriculum followed the Devon syllabus and included World Views, supported by the well- 	

	<p>regarded RE Today resource. Spirituality was embedded across all subjects. Staff considered how to improve feedback and help pupils understand their next steps, with a suggestion to share learning via Sways on the school website. The school achieved the Global Neighbours Silver Award following a rigorous assessment shortly after Ofsted, with children performing impressively during interviews. Landscope was also preparing for a SIAMS inspection in the next academic year and felt confident about the upcoming assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Harbertonford, PEGs (Pupil Ethos Group) helped improve Collective Worship, which had already seen progress from earlier ideas. The school considered renaming RE to "RE and World Views" and planned to invite visitors from different faiths. The RE lead used Trust links to find good resources and joined the Ethos Group, which helped drive improvements. The 5* pledge was updated to include visits to various places of worship and was seen as a strong feature. Although the school was not selected for SIAMS this year, they felt well-prepared and appreciated having more time. The RE Today resource continued to be well used and valued by staff. At Diptford, work was underway to create a two-year rolling programme for Collective Worship, with support from Rev David. The school was also exploring holding worship in different venues, such as the church or outdoors, to show pupils it can happen anywhere. The role of PEGs was being reviewed. Diptford used the Devon RE curriculum, which staff liked. Plans were in place for Sharon Lord to deliver Spirituality training in the autumn, and there was consideration of adding reflection into the RE syllabus. Children expressed interest in having more visitors and opportunities for debate, which the school planned to develop. 	
10.	<p>10.1 School Updates (Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification)</p> <p><u>Broadhempston</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAN (to include pupils joined/left)- 54 (1 Y5 joined in April) Pupil wellbeing Staff wellbeing and workload- Please refer to Gov visit notes for further clarification. Attendance- 97.9% Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA- Please refer to Gov visit notes for further clarification. Risk Register/Accident book- Regularly monitored-1 high risk item: failure to recruit sufficient pupils. <p><u>Landscape</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAN (to include pupils joined/left) -15 (3 new joiners at the end of last term and 1 child returned) Attendance- 95.63% Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA- Ofsted inspector read AH parent view notes from parent feedback in the playground which was very positive. ASIP update- Progress on track. Risk Register/Accident book- All reviews were up to date. <p><u>Stoke Gabriel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAN (to include pupils joined/left)- 86 (70 excluding pre-school) Pupil wellbeing- Pupil voice was an important thread and the schools eco council had been driving this, this year. Staff wellbeing and workload- Staff meetings and INSET support workload and therefore wellbeing. Attendance- Spring term 2025- 95.04% Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA- Stay and Play had a direct impact on the preschool numbers and Sept 25 figures were the healthiest they had been for several years. Risk Register/Accident book- all reviews up to date. Pre-school update- Pre-school thriving. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Safeguarding- Issues with teachers' access to videos, sign in blocked etc. <p>Sparkwell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PAN (to include pupils joined/left)- 105 & 86 (2 joined) – Attendance- 96% – Risk Register/Accident book- All reviews were up to date. <p>Diptford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PAN (to include pupils joined/left)- PAN was 12 (Pupils on Roll 57 Pupils left 2) – Attendance- 95.9% – Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA- Parent Engagement through very active FODS. – ASIP update- Writing – good progress. Very positive monitoring and support visit from Trust lead May 2nd. Praised positivity of teachers and excellent subject knowledge and agreed with Subject Leader View of next steps for the school. – Pre-school update- The pre-school situation (lack of numbers) was critical and causing a large deficit which is affecting the whole budget for the school, it was currently being investigated by the SLT team. – Safeguarding- Main and most significant Risk – pupil numbers at lower end of the school. Viability of school due to pupil numbers dropping. (In year admissions strong) <p>Harbertonford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAN (to include pupils joined/left)- (see visit notes) • Staff wellbeing and workload • Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA- The PTFA can/does act as a channel for comments, queries or concerns to be raised with the AH – through proximity and close working. The Chair of PTFA is an educational PR specialist and her skills have been very valuable to the school – writing bids, supporting the school's media coverage etc. • ASIP update- Most of the actions as listed in the ASIP were on track, if not necessarily being undertaken within the time period specified or in the order as listed. The Harbertonford AH was happy with the direction of the ASIP and the improvements that have been made. • Risk Register/Accident book- (see visit notes) • Pre-school update- There was a strong team in nursery. 14 pupils were coming up from pre-school into Reception in 2025/26. Numbers coming through next year were not so strong. This may lead to staff reduction • Safeguarding- A spot check was undertaken last term which flagged up the use of a generic password which LIMBTEC had resolved. A spot check was due to be completed this term. <p>10.2 Staff Governor update</p> <p>The Staff Governor gave a brief update; she raised that the recent staff structural changes had been impactful within staff and morale had been affected. The SG commented on the value and self-worth individuals bring to their roles, particularly in small schools. She noted that everyone worked extremely hard to do the best they could. She also acknowledged, as another Governor had mentioned, that the communication challenge could have affected how some staff feel in their roles.</p> <p>The Governors had a robust discussion around staffing, structural changes and recent central communications from the Trust.</p> <p>The Staff Governor raised that it could be useful to carry out school visits to try and get the staff views across and added that she didn't feel that was as well represented as it could be.</p>	
11.	<p>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting</p> <p>(Minutes were not available for review before the meeting, but were circulated on 08.05.25)</p> <p>There were no comments brought forward to the meeting.</p>	

12.	<p>Next S&C Focus:</p> <p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview of curriculum ○ Attendance ○ Behaviour and relational approach <p>The GP explained that question cards would be circulated with the next visit note template, so support the Summer 2 school visits if needed.</p> <p>There were no issues brought forward to the meeting.</p>	
13.	<p>Evaluation of governance impact</p> <p>The GP thanked Governors for feeding back honestly and openly, so that information could be fed back to the Trustees.</p> <p>HH highlighted that she would be stepping down at the end of the summer term.</p> <p>The GP thanked HH for her hard work in her role as Parent Governor over the past 2 years, noting that she had been conscientious.</p> <p>The DCEO said that he would take on board points that were raised, specifically the concerns around recent communications.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to explore whether the Trust could produce a communication or publication to share and celebrate successes across all schools with parents. It was felt that this would have a positive impact.</p>	
14.	<p>Questions to be dealt with at LAC level (Governance Professional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SATs support needed for Stoke Gabriel. • Diptford would like to arrange a Q&A for parents/carers and staff. • What support can be offered to help the schools manage their after-School Clubs, given the ongoing staffing issues, inconsistent pupil numbers etc? 	DCEO GP
15.	<p>Questions to be escalated to S&C for Trustee consideration (Clerk)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What was the Trust's solution to the issues raised around the recent central communications to parents/carers?</i> • Staff Wellbeing- Given the current financial challenges within the Trust, how is staff wellbeing supported? • SEND funding and level of support/ level of SEND pupils in schools. <p>Successes across the LAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.E was strong across the LAC. • Landscope achieved the Global Neighbours Silver Award. • R.E was strong in the LAC Schools. • Sparkwell and Stoke Gabriel had high pupil levels in their EYFS. 	CHAIR

The meeting ended at 7.30pm

Signed by the Chair of the Committee..... on Thursday 26th June 2025