



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds



Our children will show even greater academic progress, emotional resilience and have benefitted from a wider and richer curriculum

**PART ONE MINUTES
OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING – MEETING 3**

Date	Monday 6th December 2021 at 6.30pm
Venue:	Via Teams

Invited to Attend (Governors):	
Kate Lee (KL) Jon Lenton (JL) Alex Forsey (AF) Rob Herd (RH) Helen Patterson Brenda Rewhorn (BR) James Ferguson (JF)	Co-opted governor/Chair of Governors Principal Parent governor Co-opted governor Parent governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor
Apologies:	
Victoria Roper (VR) Katrina Barlow (KB) Andrew Vaughan (AV) Muriel Breugelmanns (MB)	Co-opted governor Staff governor Parent governor Parent governor
Also in Attendance:	
Anne Lyons (AL) – in part Luci Jones (LJ) – in part Steve Ellis (SE) Debbie Tomkinson (DT)	Academy Business Manager Director of Operations CEO Governance Professional

AGENDA ITEM 1	WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Statutory) AND CONFIRMATION WHETHER MEETING IS QUORATE
Discussion:	KL welcomed all to the meeting. The apologies of VR, KB, MB and AV were accepted.

AGENDA ITEM 2	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL & PECUNIARY/BUSINESS INTEREST (Statutory)
Discussion:	There were no conflicts with any of the agenda items. No new interests were declared.

AGENDA ITEM 3	HR/FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
Discussion	<p>Business Manager’s Report</p> <p>The Business Manager’s report was circulated in advance of the meeting. LJ and AL were in attendance and provided a further update.</p> <p>The report set out the financial position since the end of the previous financial year.</p> <p>The budget was set with an in-year deficit of £4k but the final out-turn as at 31.08.21 was an overspend of £7.5k. This was due to safeguarding issues in respect of the fencing around the school and so it was necessary to incur the additional cost.</p> <p>It was initially expected that the catering provision would generate a surplus of £10k. This forecast was subsequently reduced and the end of year position was a surplus of £4600 –this is a better position than anticipated.</p> <p>The out-of-hours club was closed for all of the spring term because of covid and the final position was almost a net nil position which is lower than had been predicted.</p> <p>It was initially forecast that all of the Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) would be spent. Later in the year it was realised that this would be overspent and the school would need to pick up the deficit. The predictions for the overspend were correct.</p> <p>In May 2019 the budget was set to generate a surplus of £22k and the overall in-year picture was a deficit of just over £5k for September 2020 to August 2021.</p> <p>The school now holds additional funds of £96k to accommodate the in-year deficit. There is a revenue reserve which can be used to balance the budget through the three-year forecast. There is surplus income of £54k from the Heath Club which is available for investment and contingency reserves which are not available for investment as they are protected under the contingency reserve policy.</p> <p>It has been a difficult year and the academy has not been able to generate additional funds but the academy is still holding high levels of surplus balance. There is a very low risk to Boughton Heath (BHA) from a financial perspective in respect of the previous financial year.</p> <p>Q: The capital budget is different to the projected out-turn – is this because of the spending on the multi-use games area (MUGA)? A: The MUGA was funded through a grant. Some money was spent on storage sheds for the Opal programme. The overspend only relates to DFC for the outdoor area.</p> <p>The Business Manager’s report included benchmarking information. There is a lot of benchmarking data from across the country but this is not always useful as the context of the school may not be known. Governors are provided with benchmarking information from schools in the Trust so that governors are able to triangulate information they have received and to raise challenge. The data provided is based on the out-turn figures for all academies in the last financial year.</p> <p>There are no schools significantly out of line. Manor Park (MP) only joined the Trust in January and that is why some of their data is not aligned. The KPIs at BHA are broadly in line with other academies and there is nothing to indicate any risk.</p> <p>The leadership costs are lower at BHA and this is because there have been different leadership arrangements at BHA and there is a newly appointed leadership team.</p> <p>Q: Why do teaching staff and non-teaching costs not equal total staffing costs. A: LJ advised that she would investigate and provide an update.</p> <p>Q: There seems to be a higher pupil to adult ratio than other schools in the Trust – is that a concern? A: There are a higher number of children in the school and this would be a concern if the school</p>

was in a different financial position or if educational standards were impacted. More children at the school means more money and this can be spent on better resources. From the baseline data, the quality of education has not dipped at all.

Budget for Current Year

Governors have previously reviewed and recommended the budget for the current year for approval. The budget was approved in July. At the start of a new academic year, academies are given the opportunity to revise in-year allocations. This is because draft budgets were compiled in May and matters and priorities may have changed. Principals are able to revise the in-year position in any way they see fit but the cumulative total cannot change.

For BHA the changes are very limited. The main school budget has increased. There are no changes to catering and a minor change to the out-of-hours provision. There is a slight change to the revenue reserve figure at end of year and Heath Club surplus funds.

It is expected that there will be a surplus of £61239 as against £61510 which was in the original budget in July.

BHA is holding a high level of surplus funds. BHA has a low-cost leadership structure and that is expected to continue for the next few years. The academy has high numbers of pupils on roll and there is no reason why these should reduce. There is no deficit forecast over the next three years.

There have been discussions on how to allocate some of the funds including how this could support staffing and how funds can be used to deliver teaching space to accommodate additional numbers of children on roll. JL will review the areas of most pressing need and will obtain quotes for discussion at the January meeting.

Q: Is there a limit of the amount of funds can be held and is it too early to be planning to spend any surplus?

A: There is a policy that the academy must hold a level of contingency reserve which cannot be spent by governors and would require trustee approval. There is £32k held as a contingency for the main school and £10k for the kitchen. The funds that are proposed to be used is the £54k that the school already holds plus the additional surplus of £61239 which is expected to be generated this year.

The additional surplus has not been generated as yet but the recommendation is that JL to specify what areas need investment and the level of investment required. If surplus income is not spent this means that there are children currently in school who are not benefitting from the money.

Q: Energy costs are one of the drivers for cost increase, what about food prices?

A: Food prices are already increasing and as a result this will be monitored more closely. Catering provision is being reviewed by the central Trust. The only way to control rising costs is to increase the cost to parents. At the moment all catering provisions make a profit – the purpose of the provision is not to generate a profit and it was recognised that any increase may affect some families. If possible, prices will not increase but this will be kept under review.

Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment information indicated that budget control may be a higher risk – this is a risk about too many funds not being available and beneficial for the school. All other financial risks are low.

DFC capital funding

It is anticipated DFC funding will be approximately £6k and there are plans to use this to develop sensory and intervention rooms.

GDPR

	<p>The Business Manager's report included a GPR update. AL is the academy GDPR Lead. As the data protection risk is low at BHA, training has been arranged for AL in the spring term. There are no issues around data protection at BHA.</p> <p>Internal Scrutiny Programme for 2021-22.</p> <p>The plans for the Internal Scrutiny Programme for 2021-22 were shared with governors.</p> <p>Governors approved the budget and risk assessments.</p>
RESOLVED:	Governors received, noted and approved the budget and risk assessments
	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>LJ to clarify the position in relation to staffing costs</p> <p>JL to provide an update on proposals for the spend of the surplus.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 4	CHAIR'S ACTION
	The Chair had not taken any urgent decisions taken on behalf of the local governing body since the previous meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 5	PRINCIPAL'S ACTION
	<p>JL provided governors with a Covid update in light of the new Omicron variant including details of the numbers of confirmed cases of Covid in the school.</p> <p>Q: Are children required to stay at home until they have received a negative covid test?</p> <p>A: No, under the guidance, children can come into school if they do not have any symptoms and JL did not want to keep children off school unless necessary. Families in the affected class have been asked to get a test for their child but the child to child transmission rate is low.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 6	PART ONE MINUTES OF MEETING – OCTOBER 2021
Discussion:	The Part One minutes of the meeting of 13 th October 2021 were circulated in advance of the meeting and approved by governors.
Papers	The Part One Minutes – 13th October 2021 were accepted as a true and accurate record. All agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 7	MATTERS ARISING
Discussion:	<p>Parent governor elections to take place at the beginning of December. JL advised that a communication will be sent to parents before the end of term and it is hoped that a parent governor will be in place by January. ONGOING</p> <p>Staff governor election to take place. One nomination was received for the post of staff governor and Miss Hill will join the meeting as staff governor in January. COMPLETE</p> <p>Governors to email availability to KL re one-to-ones. COMPLETE</p> <p>Governors to complete the annual declarations of personal and pecuniary interest. Clerk to chase if governors have not completed. ONGOING</p> <p>JL to include reference to intent, implementation and impact into the curriculum plans. COMPLETE</p> <p>JL to include numbers of PP children in the school and the national average figure in the PP report. COMPLETE</p>

	<p>Governors to advise JL of when safeguarding training has taken place along with details of the training provider. ONGOING</p> <p>Governors to complete the NGA Safeguarding training and to send completed certificates to JF ONGOING</p> <p>Review the skills audit to identify a plan on any gaps in training needs COMPLETE</p> <p>The writers for governor blogs were agreed as: KL January RH – February KL March JL April VR May AF/MB June HP July</p> <p>Sample Ofsted questions to be included on the agenda for the next meeting. COMPLETE</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 8	EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Discussion	<p>Curriculum Update - Priorities and Targets</p> <p>A Fischer Family Trust (FFT) document was circulated in advance of the meeting. FFT predict the attainment of children in Y6 based on their KS1 data and this enables teachers set attainment targets based on data from across the country. Boughton Heath (BHA) uses the FFT 20 document which is high challenge and this predicts that 83% of Y6 pupils should meet at least the expected standard in the combined subjects of reading, writing and maths. 27% should be achieving the higher standard.</p> <p>Current school data shows that 78% of children are 'at' or 'above' when the baseline assessments were made and this is a positive picture. Children have returned to school well. Four children in the cohort were lower attainers.</p> <p>A further update on progress and attainment will be provided at the January meeting as this will provide a more accurate picture and will include teacher assessment.</p> <p>Q: Is FFT live data and is it benchmarked against other schools' data from the same year? A: Yes, the report takes into account the impact of Covid. All schools input their data and FFT uses this to create targets for children who have achieved similar outcomes based on their context.</p> <p>SE advised governors that the school has had an exceptionally strong start to the year particularly as Y6 children generally make accelerated progress. If the FFT 20 targets are hit the school will be performing very well.</p> <p>The baseline data for maths was shared with governors and this shows that 79% of children are working at or above the expected standard for their year group. JL advised that the autumn data is looking strong and the data will be analysed alongside the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and subject leaders. Staff and children are doing a great job.</p> <p>Records of Visit</p> <p>The School Improvement Record of Visit and Peer Review report was circulated in advance of the meeting and governors were invited to ask questions.</p> <p>Q: Was the support offered impartial?</p>

	<p>A: Yes, a decision was made to appoint the Principal at Mill View to undertake the school improvement visit. She is an experienced leader and offers constructive challenge and feedback. A peer review has also taken place this term and the team included an external advisor as the lead reviewer.</p> <p>SE advised that the school improvement report has changed for this year. The report now includes an abacus judgment so governors are clear how the school is evaluating itself.</p> <p>All schools in the Trust have universal support which consists of six school improvement reports and six safeguarding visits across the year. If there is an area where the academy is 'Requires Improvement' and the Trust needs to provide some focused additional support this would be classed as Tier 2 support.</p> <p>Q: Why is EYFS graded as Good? A: The Early Years had some inconsistencies because of staffing. Covid has also had an impact as children were not able to attend nursery. It was JL's view that the provision is good and this gives the opportunity for there to be a focus on the early years and to divert resources for extra capacity as outlined within the SDP.</p> <p>Q: Has there been an Inset day for Assessment for Learning? A: Active learning opportunities are a top priority and assessment for learning opportunities are woven into lessons so teachers are able to use the research based practice to move learning forward. The next step will be to evidence this in children's work. There have been staff meetings on assessment for learning, staff share good practice and this will constantly be re-visited.</p> <p>The peer review referred to didactic teaching and some fidgety children? Is it more difficult to have an interactive teaching style in an open plan school? A: This depends on what the active learning styles and as a result of internal monitoring and visits from other schools that is why the decision was made to include more Kagan techniques and assessment for learning.</p> <p>SE noted that the school has adopted a mastery approach to teaching and one of the reviewers wanted more differentiation in the lesson.</p>
	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>Progress and Attainment update to be included on January agenda.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	OFSTED
	<p>Governors identified the following areas as strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum - Outcomes - Opportunities within school <p>Governors identified the following areas of development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To embed the curriculum - The leadership structure is new and still developing - More personal development opportunities for children and seeing their place in the community - EYFS <p>SE was of the view that Leadership and Management is outstanding which has had an impact on the quality of teaching which is outstanding. Governors know that the quality of teaching is Outstanding because outcomes are outstanding. Children leave BHA in the top 10% of the country. It was suggested that the academy should be focusing on making marginal gains and EYFS.</p> <p>Governors considered the following questions</p>

	<p>Q: How often do you meet as a Board?</p> <p>A: At least nine times per year.</p>	
	<p>Q: Does the Trust commission external audits and evaluations of processes and procedures?</p> <p>A: The Safeguarding Children in Education team evaluate the work of SE, the Trust is undertaking an external review of governance, peer reviews, external audit, external health and safety audit.</p>	
	<p>Q: How often does your Director of Learning come into the school? And what is shared with governors after those visits?</p> <p>A: A total of at least 12 times per year – six school improvement and six safeguarding visits plus peer reviews and other organic collaboration. Local governors receive reports on the visits.</p>	
	<p>Q: Can you give me an example of when you advised / suggested on the strategy of the curriculum and the impact that had? What direct impact have you had on the curriculum as governor?</p> <p>A: Governor visits where there were discussions around the curriculum.</p>	
	<p>Q: How are you reacting to these challenges around the changing cohort with an increase in SEND children? Are there other groups of vulnerable pupils the school is working with?</p> <p>A: Governors receive SEND report, there is an appointed SEND governor.</p>	
	<p>Q: What do these children need? Is it emotional, physical, social, behaviour support?</p> <p>A: There are a range of needs</p>	
	<p>Q: How do you measure impact of the work being done with these groups?</p> <p>A: Through link governors, anonymous case studies, staff and pupil surveys.</p>	
	<p>Q: What do you think are areas of challenge for the school and what needs to be done most urgently?</p> <p>A: This was discussed in previous discussions above.</p>	
	<p>Q: How do you keep focused on the strategy?</p> <p>A: Governors have detailed discussions on strategy and have received a detailed presentation on the curriculum and KPIs are reviewed at the end of the year to ensure that the strategy is working.</p>	

	<p>Q: How do you ensure as governors that children get off to the best start at the school?</p> <p>A: Information on the curriculum and the transition programme. Governors receive outcomes data to show how children are progressing.</p>	
	<p>Q: Do you have an induction programme for new governors? What is highlighted to them about the school?</p> <p>A: All new governors are invited to an induction session with the Chair where the expectations of governors are explained, along with information on the school vision along with the safeguarding duties of governors.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM 11	COMPLIANCE AND SAFEGUARDING	
Discussion:	<p>Website Compliance</p> <p>JF agreed to review website compliance in accordance with the CAT website compliance document.</p> <p>Quality Assurance Document</p> <p>The autumn term Quality Assurance document was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Q: Have staff surveys taken place this term?</p> <p>A: Yes, they have been carried out by the Trust. The results will be discussed with the SLT and included on the next agenda for discussion.</p> <p>Operation of Policies</p> <p>Governors to receive a verbal report on operation of the following policies:</p> <p>GDPR Policy</p> <p>All staff receive training towards the end of summer term. There is a robust Trust-wide policy which all staff are aware of. Staff will regularly ask if they can share personal data and any issues are reported to AL. There is a section on the Quality Assurance document which includes details of any breaches that may have occurred.</p> <p>Termly update on Children with Additional Medical Needs Attendance Policy</p> <p>There are some children with additional medical needs and all have bespoke place. Attendance is monitored by the office staff and spot checks are also carried out – attendance for those children with additional medical needs is not an issue once the need has been identified. The policy runs very effectively and there is always a handover at the end of the year to a child’s new teacher.</p>	
	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>JF to review website compliance</p> <p>Staff survey included on agenda for next meeting</p>	

AGENDA ITEM 12	GOVERNANCE AND RISK
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Discussion:	<p>Skills Audit</p> <p>The results of the Skills Audit was circulated in advance of the meeting. The lowest scores were around compliance. The additional comments from governors had a focus on continuing professional development and a greater awareness of governor training.</p> <p>It was agreed that in addition to safeguarding training governors would complete the following the NGA Introduction to Governance and Compliance courses by the end of the spring term. It was also highlighted that there was a module on Ofsted Inspection.</p> <p>Governor Vacancies</p> <p>This was discussed under agenda item7.</p> <p>Governor Visits</p> <p>At the termly meeting of Chairs one of the LGBs has appointed an assessment link governor who would review the attainment and progress data with JL and ask detailed questions which would be brought back to the LGB for further discussion. This will ensure that outcomes data is robustly scrutinised. It was agreed that RH would undertake this role as it complements his existing role as curriculum link governor. RH and JL to meet in January.</p> <p>It was agreed that the safeguarding governor would attend the three main safeguarding visits. JL to advise HP of the dates of the next two meetings.</p> <p>Impact Statement</p> <p>An alternative Impact Statement from another trust school was circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors were asked to consider the format of the report for the current academic year. Governors agreed that the format that had been used for the previous academic year was a useful document and KL agreed to populate this with information from the previous minutes.</p> <p>Blog</p> <p>The content of blogs was discussed under agenda item 7.</p>
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<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>Governors to complete Introduction to Governance and Compliance courses by spring term.</p> <p>RH and JL to complete Assessment Link governor visit</p> <p>KL to update Annual Impact Statement</p>

AGENDA ITEM 13	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
Discussion:	Wednesday 19 th January 2022

Further discussions took place under the Part Two agenda