



AN 'OUTSTANDING' SPECIALIST PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE
Ofsted 2009

THE LANGTREE SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY ("THE ACADEMY TRUST")
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**MINUTES of a Meeting of the directors of the Academy Trust held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, Reading, RG8 0RA, on Thursday 13th July 2017 at 7.00 pm**

Governor challenge is recorded in red.

Present:

Alan Broomhead (AB)	Neil McDonald (NM)
Jesse Cleverly (JC) – item 3 onwards.	Val Nowell (VN)
Regina Grosier (RG)	Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)
Vicki Hamilton (VH)	Dennis Rocks (DR)
Rick Holroyd (RH)	Tracy Sedwell (TS) – Chair
Antony Ketteridge (AK)	Mark Vitty (MV)

In attendance:

Helen Batten, Clerk
Dawn Challis, School Business Manager – items 1 & 2 only.

Quorum was confirmed.

1. Introduction

- Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Ambler, Geoff Braham, Will Bromage, Brian Davies and Graham Webber. JC had notified he would be arriving late.
- No substantive items were notified for AOB.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.

2. Approval of budget: The recommended budget submission, which had been scrutinised by F&P committee, had been circulated.

- DC and RH presented key points as set out in the accompanying summary, noting that much may be expected to change but this budget is a cautious approach which will enable the building of the financial reserve that will be

Signed (Chair) Date

necessary to sustain the school. However it will also be necessary to plan reduction of the significant future deficits which are also anticipated.

- *Are there any specific concerns relating to the proposed budget?* AB confirmed that it represents a prudent outlook and he is therefore confident that the school can operate successfully on this basis. No specific concerns were identified in detailed F&P committee discussions.
- *Has the expected RHI income in respect of the boiler been included in the budget?* AB confirmed that RHI payments are now being received, albeit not at the level expected and this discrepancy will be taken up with the consultant who provided initial figures. Payments are currently offsetting the cost of wood pellets which has fallen.
- *What steps are being taken to maintain the quality of school meals in squeezed budgets?* RH explained that a student survey has been completed and there is a clear picture of what is required from the new contract. Meetings with contractors before tendering will ensure that any necessary changes are included.
- Governors agreed that the recommendation clearly shows good progress from the difficult position in 2016 and approved the budget for submission.
- Governors thanked DC for all her work in managing the school finances and also congratulated her on the excellent Responsible Officer rating recently achieved.

3. ATB meeting, 5 June 2017

3.1 Minutes which had been circulated were agreed to be an accurate record and signed by TS for filing in school.

3.2 Review of Actions/matters arising: Unless noted below, all agreed actions had been completed or would be covered in discussion at this meeting.

- **Exclusions policy** (item 8.1): The policy has been completed and the final version will be circulated for information. **Action: RH**

4. Election of Chair & Vice Chair

- JSR had previously indicated she would be willing to serve as Chair and withdrew from the meeting. Governors agreed to appoint JSR as Chair for a period of one year with effect from 1st September 2017. JSR returned to the meeting and was given this decision.
- DR stated that he would be able to take the Vice Chair role and duly withdrew from the meeting. Governors agreed to appoint DR as Vice Chair for a period of one year with effect from 1st September 2017. DR returned to the meeting and was given this decision.

- Governors acknowledged the impact of her work and thanked TS for steering the governing body successfully during her three years as Chair.

5. Committee reports

5.1 Minutes: Minutes of recent committees had been circulated and noted:

- Finance & General Purposes – 20th June 2017
- Curriculum & Standards – 27th June 2017
- Pastoral & Community – 10th July 2017

5.2 Database of parent skills: Following discussion by C&S and P&C committees, JC presented a proposal to create a live resource, listing parent interest and expertise, for the school to use. Following discussion it was confirmed that this will have no impact on staff workloads but will be developed to support them where possible. It was agreed to proceed on this basis, to be led by JC. The first action will be to send a request to all parents to register. **Action: JC**

5.3 Pupil panel

- *VH presented key points from the report circulated with the P&C minutes, noting that students are most concerned by a perceived lack of consistency in marking and in the application of sanctions.* RH acknowledged that more work is required around achieving consistency of approach, and explained that the September staff inset will focus on compiling standard operating procedures to cover all things that happen in school, with a view to creating a single guidance sheet for each item. *How will pupils know about these procedures?* A new student booklet will be produced, to replace the older planners, and which will work alongside 'show my homework' online. The booklet will include key procedures students need to know about and this will be reinforced with regular coverage in classes and assemblies. *How will parent sign-off of homework be achieved with the new system?* RH clarified that the online system enables comments to be made by email. *Governors thanked RH for this information and requested a progress report on this work to the October FGB.* **Action: RH**
- Governors discussed the ongoing problem of low-level classroom disruption which has been raised again by students. RH reminded the meeting of the steps previously taken in response to this concern and explained that it is hard to address since it is not generally being seen by staff. Ofsted were asked to question the children about these aspects and identified no concerns. Governors acknowledged that this is a disciplinary issue in a very small number of classes. It is also an issue of perception, whereby an individual will consider that something that disturbs them is a problem, however minor the incident may be in reality. MV and RH explained that different approaches are used depending on individuals or

situations and that, although consistency of approach is important, incidents are best managed by professional judgement rather than rigid procedures. Heads of department are aware of areas for improvement and are working with staff to address these. Governors agreed RH's recommendation that the best way forward will be to complete the planned work with staff around consistency, alongside refreshing the student code of conduct. These actions would then be followed up by talking again to students later next year to see if they think things have improved.

6. Headteacher's report: A report had been circulated.

6.1 Chiltern Edge: RH provided a verbal update on developments. OCC has indicated an intention to keep Chiltern Edge open, which will require academy conversion under the guidance of a sponsor academy. The potential impact of this change will need to be monitored.

6.2 Admissions: Although the situation is currently rather fluid, RH confirmed he is confident that school will open in September with a full complement of 120 Y7 students.

6.3 Exit interviews: RH thanked GW for undertaking staff exit interviews to date. NM agreed to complete remaining sessions.

6.4 Staff survey feedback: *Governors were concerned that non-union staff members may have missed the opportunity to take part in these discussions.* It was agreed that MV will email the small number of staff involved individually. **Action: MV**

6.5 Activities Week: TS observed that it is very pleasing to receive so much positive news and governors thanked all staff for their work in providing such a wide range of enrichment activities. RH confirmed that Activities Week was extremely successful and students really made the most of the opportunities presented.

7. School Improvement Plan update

- A rag-rated 2016-17 SIP, including monitoring updates, had been circulated. RH explained that it has not been possible to complete a number of actions, especially those affected by the SLT changes and loss of key staff members. However good progress has generally been achieved and, where appropriate, activities will continue in next year's plan. RH also thanked JC for his support which will enable the drama studio plan to move forward next year.
- *Are there any specific concerns about progress at this stage?* RH explained that exam results are not currently shown green because they are not yet available, but there have been positive signs that work completed will deliver improvements. Some areas also remain amber

because changes need to become embedded so that improvements are consistent over time.

- TS noted that committee agendas should include the relevant SIP areas on a regular basis, so that progress is discussed by governors in detail. This could usefully be supported by focussed visit to look at the implementation of specific actions in school.

8. Governing body business

8.1 Committee arrangements & individual responsibilities

- It was confirmed that a P&C committee needs additional members. It was agreed that C&S and F&P Chairs will email their members to agree one governor to move to P&C. **Action: AB, TS**
- It was confirmed that SLT input will be provided to C&S by Simon Bamford and to P&C by Sarah Burman.

8.2 Policy reviews: The current policy schedule had been circulated. RH recommended that all existing policies should be assumed to be necessary, with reviews to be scheduled as necessary in order to keep them current, following the current process.

8.3 Code of Conduct: Governors agreed that no changes are required to the previously adopted Code of Conduct, and this will be reviewed again in July 2018.

8.4 Declaration of interests: Paperwork had been circulated to update the register of governors' interests.

8.5 2017-18 meeting schedule: The confirmed schedule of FGB meetings will be circulated, and committee chairs will organise their meetings accordingly.

8.6 Governor visits & activities in school

- The Open morning on 16th June was attended by GB, JC, RG, VH, NM, DR and GW.
- JC, VN and TS will attend the parents' welcome evening on 17th July.
- It was agreed to set up a governors' sign-in book, to record all governor visits to school. **Action: TS**

9. AOB

- On behalf of the governing body JSR acknowledged the enthusiasm and expertise which had enabled TS to lead the governing body so successfully. Her efforts have ensured that the governing body is now a strong and effective team, which is fully engaged in supporting the school. TS replied that it has been a challenging but rewarding task and she is pleased to be leaving the governing body and the school in such a strong position. She also thanked all governors for their hard work.

- Governors were also delighted to acknowledge the success that the school has achieved this year and thanked RH and all staff and students for their hard work.

10. Next meeting: Thursday 12th October 2017, 7.00 pm

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Signed (Chair) Date

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 13th July 2017:

Minute	Action	By whom	When
3.2	Circulate final Exclusions policy	RH	Asap
5.2	Write to parents to introduce database of skills and expertise.	JC	Autumn term
5.3	Provide update on implementation of standard operating procedures and new student booklet.	RH	October FGB
6.4	Contact non-union staff members individually for staff survey feedback.	MV	Asap
8.1	Agree one member from C&S and F&P committees to move to P&C.	AB, TS	Asap
8.6	Set up governors' sign-in book in school.	TS	Asap

Signed (Chair) Date