

East Devon Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Minutes							
Date & Time	6 th May 2025		Location	Otterton C of E Primary School			
Members Present	Initials			Also Present	Initials		
Natalie Clark	MJ	Foundation Gov	On line	Charlotte Roe	GP		
Anne Pelosi	AP	Academy Head		Matt Matthews	FD		
Peter Halford	PH	Director of Improvement					
Louise Jacques	LJ	Foundation Gov					
Martin Jacques	MJ	Work Commitments					
Sam Butler	SB	Academy Head					
Claire Lister	CL	Parent Gov					
Corinna Tigg	CT	Chair/Foundation Gov					
Sam Houston	SH	Parent Gov					

Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence	Absent without Apology	Initials	
Tom Paddon	TP	Work commitments	Robert Pickering	RP	
Nicola Weeks	NW	Work Commitments			
Claire Appleby	CA	Sickness absence			

In Attendance	Initials	Capacity	Minutes to
F Mills	FM	Clerk	All

Ref item	Main meeting agenda item, comment & decision	Action Owner & deadline
1.	Welcome and apologies as above. Anne Pelosi welcomed everyone to the meeting & outlined the format & how school visits feed into information shared during the meeting.	Chair
2.	Declarations of interest. There were no declarations of interest.	Chair
3	Approval of meeting minutes from Spring 2 2025 (April 2025). The minutes were agreed. Clerk to send to Sue Howard for uploading to website.	Action Clerk
4	Matters arising: None	Chair
5	<p>Clerk Update: Where there is nothing to record the acronym (NTR) will be used.</p> <p>5.1 Appointments/nominations: Sam Houston to be parent governor for Drakes. Parent Governors now sought for: Branscome & Farway. SB reported that Rev'd Lewis has been approached to support Broadhembury. Rev'd Tracey is also possibility for the other school. Rev'd Martin & Louise Jacques were welcomed back from their sabbatical.</p> <p>5.2 Training – MM offered that 'Sharepoint' could be used as a vehicle for sharing training information & other information needed for the LAC. Action: GP will look into this.</p> <p>5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues: Matt Matthews shared that Budget./ Finance is a major focus for the Link. Whilst the Trust is currently solvent all aspects of expenditure are being</p>	Clerk

Meeting of the Otterton Parish Council

minutes

Signed

	<p>examined to minimise costs.</p> <p>Q: Is the Trust likely to rationalise number of schools to save costs? <i>Rationalising schools is not on the agenda – partnership schools (this is where an Academy Head is shared between a number of schools) are possibility going forward.</i></p> <p>A discussion followed where it was reported that recent communication to parents had triggered unnecessary concern and that positive messages regarding future plans should be shared. Positive & timely communication regarding the number of schools & structure of the Trust is important to maintain confidence.</p> <p>Q: Asked if there is a possibility of industrial action. <i>It was confirmed that this is a possibility. MM shared that a significant drop in pupil numbers is forecast with 50 less children in September which adversely affects funding & will impact on staffing across the Trust.</i></p> <p>Q: The reasons for drop in numbers was challenged <i>but thought to be a national issue with falling birthrate.</i></p> <p>Q: Are there any concerns following Court ruling over gender recognition. <i>Toilet facilities across the Trust are not an issue.</i></p> <p>5.4 Significant changes within the Trust including key personnel. CEO retires at the end of this term & interviews to replace have taken place. Appointment yet to be made public.</p> <p>Tom Paddon Academy Head at Littleham is also leaving with new appointment yet to be made.</p> <p>Sam Butler has joined ED Group currently looking after Broadhembury, Branscombe & Farway</p> <p>Nicola Weeks remains acting head at Woodbury</p>	<p>CT/Clerk</p> <p>GP</p>
6.	<p>Focus: Provision and impact for SEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends over time of prime needs, pupils moving on and off SEND registers, meeting progress targets and EHCP objectives • Pupil and parent voice <p>Broadhembury: see notes. Q. No EHCP due to lack of identification. Inadequate record keeping. Impacts on staff wellbeing & workload. High level of support from Trust. Staff working hard</p> <p>Farway & Branscombe: Dysfunction of pupils noted which impact of High % of SEND</p> <p>Otterton reduction of pupils numbers has improved overall send provision.</p> <p>Ollie Batson.</p>	

7.	<p>Focus: PE – A trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the areas of strength and priorities for development across the Trust. • Swimming – time consuming for small schools who have to share mini bus and travel to local pool. • Funding: It was reported that funding was used to enter children into multi school competitions to increase opportunity for competition. Very reliant on parental support. • A query was raised regarding completions for all schools within the Trust. It was reported that a Cross Country coimpetitiin takes place for children across the Trust (stipulation of funding.) <p>Ofsted – not pending for Drakes. Following strong OFSTED performance at last inspection a the staff have now chosed to go back into the pool as the OFSTED framework will now change.</p>	
8.	<p>Focus: Complaints Policy. New toolkit available.</p> <p>The following points were made:</p> <p>Open door policy ensures conversations takes place & reduces escalating complaints. Workload positively affected by tacking issues at the time.</p> <p>SB noted that new head appointment gives the opportunity for complaints. Open conversations with parents has helped. Change in culture gives opportunity for concerns however with open conversations and familiarisation with new culture the number of complaints has been reduced number.</p> <p>Woodbury – matching expectations. Clarity for parent's is key & matching a parents expectation with the reality of a management is an important way forward and example of this is a parent's request for one to one support for their child. All heads agreed that good quality teaching supports the needs of each child.</p> <p>Stage 2 complaints are handled by MM. Usually complaints about Head, often as a result of a breakdown in relationship. Experience of heads helps in maintaining & developing relationships.</p>	
9.	<p>Feedback from Ethos Committees: MJ met with 5 children with the focus on Courage & Trust. The group gave reflective responses.</p> <p>Farway: Effective group. Recent SIAMS inspection very positive. Seeking to share expertise across the 3 schools.</p>	
10.	<p>School Updates</p> <p>Governors to consider and discuss feedback on any issues/successes from their school visits or visit notes completed by AH.</p> <p>Attendance. Attendance policy for the Trust. Consistent for all schools. Key factor to improve attendance agreed as:</p> <p>Changing engrained behaviours.</p> <p>Relationships/High expectations.</p> <p>Trust & parental choice.</p> <p>Cultural issue. Particular families can resist change in habit.</p> <p>Gossip regarding actions can be devisive and should be referred to HT.</p> <p>Risk Register/Accident book:</p> <p>MM volunteered that parent Govs should take a look at RR and ensure that levels of risk are correctly reflected in register.</p> <p>Pre-school update: Branscombe accessed by 1 family – mother & baby.</p> <p>Drakes oversubscribed with preschool children – helps to grow pupil admission</p>	

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	<p>numbers. Across Trust a focus.</p> <p>Wrap around care: Numbers of attendees low & difficult to staff. Danger that staffing of wrap around care can become a negative cycle which must not affect high quality teaching during usual hours.</p>	
11.	<p>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response to draft minutes (please be aware the minutes are draft and remain confidential until approved) <p>GP offered that S&C was lively and reflected that teaching is hard work.</p> <p>Trust aware of issues</p> <p>Feedback on any issues raised from local board Chairs in S&C Meeting</p>	
12.	<p>Next S&C Focus:</p> <p>Focus: Overview of curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Behaviour and relational approach: well embedded & working well. <p>'SB - lovely relational approach'</p>	
13.	<p>Questions for S & C.</p> <p>What are the timescales for recruitment of CEO</p>	
14.	<p>Governance: It was agreed that LAC meetings will take place at each school to help bonding process. Many thanks to SB for invitation to Farway for next meeting.</p>	
15.	<p>Questions to be escalated to S&C for Trustee consideration (Clerk)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Fear of school closure. Level of Trust Recognition that teachers do an excellent job given limited resources. <p>Need to ensure Relational Approach when advertising the school – look positive.</p>	

The meeting finished at 17.54

Next meeting at Farway 24th June @ 4.30