

The Link Academy Trust

Meeting of the Woodleigh Local Board – Monday 14 February 2022 (via M/S Teams)

Name	Role/Type of Governor	School	
Jo Carter (JC)	Chair - Co-opted/Community		P
Alice Moseley (AM)	Vice Chair - Parent Governor	Yeoford	P
Elaine Clark (EC)	Safeguarding Governor - Co-opted/Community	Cheriton Bishop	P
Robin Scott (RS)	Academy Head	Cheriton Bishop	P
Karen Fletcher (KF)	Staff Governor	Cheriton Bishop	Ap
David Pike (DP)	Parent Governor (pending)	Cheriton Bishop	Ap
Chris Sargeant (CS)	Academy Head	Morchard Bishop	P
Amber Reed (AR)	Staff Governor	Morchard Bishop	P
Joanna (Biddy) Hooper (BH)	Foundation Governor	Morchard Bishop	P
Sherrin Neenan (SN)	Foundation Governor	Morchard Bishop	Ap
Andy Keay (AK)	Academy Head	Tedburn St Mary	P
Andrew Lee (AL)	Staff Governor	Tedburn St Mary	Ap
Rachael Smaldon (RSm)	Parent Governor	Tedburn St Mary	P
Vicki Gillon (VG)	Academy Head	Yeoford	P
Kristina Wright (KW)	Staff Governor	Yeoford	P
Max Thomas (MT)	Community Governor	Yeoford	P
Pam Down	Clerk	Woodleigh LB	P

Present/ Apologies/ Absent

Declaration of Business Interests:	None
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JC welcomed AR, newly appointed staff governor at MB, to her first Local Board meeting. JC is in the process of arranging a date for a face to face meeting with the MB governors and Clerk.

JC and the Clerk checked that everyone was able to access SharePoint. JC outlined how to access. There had been a few login problems for those with more than one Outlook account but most people were happy. AK suggested emailing support@limbtec.com should new logon information or support be needed.

		ACTION
1	MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2021 The Minutes were approved and will be signed electronically by JC and then forwarded to HR.	JC/Clerk
2	SCHOOL UPDATES – JC thanked the four Academy Heads for completing the reports which had been circulated/uploaded to SharePoint prior to the meeting. JC noted it appeared Year 3 had suffered the biggest negative impact due to lockdown. She invited questions from governors and highlights from the Academy Heads. 2:1- 2:5 Tedburn St Mary: AK commented that Yr 2, now Yr 3, had suffered the most disruption due to teacher absence although things are now moving forward. Covid absence is still causing disruption.	

	<p>JC acknowledged the continued disruption due to Covid. The initial focus was to get everyone back but, regarding teaching, she asked if everything was in place as far as possible.</p> <p>Cheriton Bishop: RS remarked getting the relevant information and support is important. CB is exploring good practice with other Schools with planned visits to Yeoford and Tedburn St Mary to look at Maths. Hub groups are a good way of making sure everything is up to date. They are available for each curriculum subject with leaders then able to feedback to other staff. The Academy Improvement Team had been really helpful and offers a good, extensive package. The need for capacity to engage was noted.</p> <p>JC asked about time capacity and how schools were managing to engage with curriculum hubs.</p> <p>RS stated some curriculum hubs take place during the day but the majority are held after school which avoids staff needing class cover. AK added meetings for each subject are held once a term. JC remarked some Hubs are struggling to release teachers. She asked if the pain of being out of the classroom is rewarded by the sharing of knowledge. Overall, this was agreed although staff absences had made this more challenging. Yeoford acknowledged the need to be savvy with the timetable giving the example of year groups mixing for Forest School which enabled focus time for other year groups. KW stated VG had agreed her request for PPA to be more flexible. KW now takes a full day's PPA time every two weeks – working from home for improved productivity. Flexibility has empowered staff to work with their own time schedule.</p>	
<p>3</p> <p>3:1</p> <p>3:2</p> <p>3:3</p> <p>3:4</p>	<p>STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE</p> <p>Curriculum update from Academy Heads on the curriculum being delivered Nothing further to add.</p> <p>ASIP – To be RAG rated and uploaded to SharePoint. This will be covered after half term as part of an annual focus visit. AK confirmed this was reviewed at the end of each term. JC agreed this would be re-visited during the second half of this term.</p> <p>JC asked if MB governors were happy. BH confirmed things looked good during their first visit in January when they had gone through the data. Other visits had been scheduled with the next to take place after half term. BH remarked the visit structure was helpful.</p> <p>JC believed the focussed visit cycle was helpful although changes sometimes had to be made (eg following an Ofsted visit).</p> <p>Data: All confirmed visits had taken place and AK was thanked for the spreadsheets he had provided.</p> <p>Websites: <i>do they cover everything they should?</i> JC noted from the Reports that all websites are as they should be.</p>	<p>RAG rated ASIPS covered during annual focus visits.</p> <p>All visit reports to be uploaded to SharePoint or emailed to the Clerk</p>
<p>4</p> <p>4:1</p>	<p>STAFFING</p> <p>Current staffing had already been partially covered. JC asked staff governors if there were any further updates to report.</p>	

Yeoford: KW outlined the staff changes, including the addition of a new admin person. There had been a lot of staff sickness which had a particular impact on SEND provision. Staff had regularly been redeployed to cover with everyone pulling together to support in the best way possible. KW stated the general vibe was determined and caring but a few points about lack of collaboration had made things challenging at times. VG remarked KW had explained the situation beautifully: generally the team is strong but with people being pulled in all directions this had created some division. VG is delighted an administrator will be on site five days a week which will ease pressure as a number of staff had been trying to answer the telephone and cover as much as they were able. VG hopes there will now be good SEND support; she is keen to ensure Quality First Teaching (QFT) is in place. VG is incredibly grateful to everyone who had supported during times when there was a lack of staff; Link Academy help had been very reassuring.

Tedburn St Mary: AK reported there had not been office cover for a month. Teachers had been absent due to Covid but fortunately one after another rather than all at the same time!

Morchard Bishop: CS stated Covid/staff absence had been worse in the Autumn term with this term being more solid. AR (Pre-School Senior Practitioner) is studying for a teaching degree and will need release of 20 days. She is being shadowed in readiness for cover by an experienced casual worker. It may also be possible to extend the After School Club to include two year olds due to the availability of qualified casual support staff. CS is retiring at the end of the academic year and the vacancy has been advertised. He had shown a few potential headteacher applicants around the school.

Cheriton Bishop: RS reported two/three staff members being absent at the same time due to Covid which had been challenging. He is looking forward to the next half of term in the hope things will return to a more normal structure.

4:2 Staff wellbeing and workload

AM referred to staff wellbeing and workload observing a lot of staff were feeling very stretched. There is significant need due to the high level of absence. Governors are always concerned and acknowledge the challenge. If there is anything that can be done to support staff she asked that staff would let the governors know. Staff value the Link Academy Trust pay back day. AM asked if there was anything in particular that anyone wished to raise.

RS felt feedback was meaningful and ND had been supportive. He stated positive messages/acknowledgement that when staff were going the extra mile or when anyone notices something they particularly like is really beneficial and appreciated.

JC had received a lovely, positive piece of feedback from AM, Yeoford. JC had read it to the S&C Committee and it had been really well received. She thanked AM for positive parental feedback. AM remarked she had just given honest feedback and wanted to shout about all the good things she had seen.

In recognition of the level of absence due to Covid, the Link Academy Trust had employed a floating Teacher and Teaching Assistant. Both staff members

	are now employed on longer term cover so, unfortunately, are no longer available for cover.	
5	PROCEDURAL	
5:1	<p>Safeguarding: MB CS reported making a MASH call on Friday – not directly related to MB. Safeguarding Audit: Audits had taken place during the second half of the Autumn Term. If not already uploaded, JC asked for the Action Plans (non-child specific) to be uploaded to SharePoint either within individual school folders or in the Safeguarding folder.</p>	<p>Academy Heads to upload Audit Action Plans to SharePoint</p> <p>JC to raise SENDCo workload as an observation with the S&C C'tee</p>
5:2	<p>SEND Updates contained within the Academy Headteacher Reports. JC had attended several SEND meetings in various settings – all say the same thing – there is not enough time! SENDCOs are swamped and it is difficult to manage workload. CS agreed. At MB, ad hoc release days had been offered in addition to the one day a week SENDCo allocation. AK also advocated trying to give additional SENDCo release time when needed, particularly at peak times, eg annual reviews.</p> <p>Agreed JC will raise this as an observation with the S&C Committee.</p> <p>AM advised Yeoford is exploring whether admin will be able to support aspects of the SENDCo role. JC noted the suggestion as a means to reducing the SENDCo workload but feared that as the SENDCo holds all the information, it may take just as much time to explain it to another staff member as completing it themselves. VG highlighted the difficulty in managing the rarity of three EHCPs at one time; a big workload! Solution-wise, a member of staff has SEND experience so maybe that support will work at Yeoford along with some clever logistics.</p>	
5:3	<p>Pupil Premium, Looked After Children & Service Children and Greater Depth – updates: The Gifted & Talented Lead, Alice Eeles, is looking at 'levelling up' - JC stated this is a subject for focussed visits, trying to check the gap is not widening. AK commented G&T is a hard label with no specific criteria. AK believes focus may shift to disadvantaged as a whole, without the PP label. BH stated closing the 25% gap is very difficult. She asked if the Link Academy Trust offers any opportunities in the provision of clubs or workshop days. JC advised workshop days had taken place in the past, pre-Covid. KW asked if schools had links with QE in connection with this. CS stated MB had been considering this prior to Covid. He recommended this is pursued in September. AK advised pupils had taken part in special G&T days in the past but outlined the difficulty of pupils needing a member of staff to go with them. AM assumed that QFT will pick this up and push G&T further. She believed it would be part of general observation and teaching, providing challenging tasks. AK agreed it is a crucial part of QFT - exploring different ways of learning and greater depth.</p>	
5:4	<p>Governor training: JC referred to the training outlined in various email communication. All training to be booked by emailing Sue Howard, HR Officer: hr@thelink.academy</p>	

<p>5:5</p> <p>5:6</p> <p>5:7</p>	<p>L2 Safeguarding training will be needed for AR, together with other governor Induction. Babcock training is good and dates/sessions available had been emailed by the Clerk who will make direct contact with AR. AM had been unable to attend the recent online L2 safeguarding training but asked if it had been recorded. JC confirmed sessions are recorded and viewing would be sufficient plus emailing Sue Howard to confirm training had taken place. VG advised that Gemma Martin would be holding a Safeguarding session at Yeoford for the new staff. She invited anyone from any other school who may wish to attend – offering a ‘mini mop-up’. JC thanked VG and also asked all Academy Heads to let everyone know when their Safeguarding L2 Inset sessions would take place at the beginning of term. It would be useful for anyone wanting to pop in for any of the sessions; she acknowledged being on site with face to face training and discussion can be beneficial.</p> <p>Health & Safety: JC informed everyone the Trustees have responsibility for Health & Safety but it is useful to know at Local Board level if there are any issues to be raised at the S&C Committee.</p> <p>AK advised that every school will shortly need to complete a H&S audit. VG believed she would be a guinea pig - Claire Slee, the Link Academy Trust Health & Safety Coordinator, would be supporting her through the Audit.</p> <p>Sports Premium Grant – update on swimming Swimming: JC advised that Matt Tanner, PE Teacher, and Nicky Dunford are looking at the whole swimming issue. All supported the goal of pupils being able to swim 25 metres before leaving primary education but there are no magic solutions to facilitate achieving this. Funding to transport pupils, pay for the lessons and time within the curriculum are obstacles. Vouchers do not always work due to limited booking availability at the swimming baths. AK believed learning to swim is fundamentally important but in reality if parents are charged for this it may cost approximately £10 per session so it is possibly cheaper for parents to take their children. AM raised concern from a governance point of view as there currently seems no way to be able to offer swimming opportunities for pupils particularly as the PE Grant is not able to be used as a source of funding. AM believed this should be highlighted with the S&C Committee. JC will ask the S&C Committee what the party line is. This may, at some point, be something Ofsted will raise with schools so answers are needed. AK suggested the party line is the lack of availability of swimming bath facilities.</p> <p>Communication with Parents (parent forum meetings/PTA/areas for concern or complaint) Yeoford : VG reported she had not received any complaints but lovely comments from parents and the PTA had been incredibly supportive. The PTA makes a huge, positive difference to the school and has recently built an outside shelter. The support and passion of the parents shines through; they are open to anything suggested. It is hoped to soon be able to get more people back on site and offer phonics, reading and mathematics workshops. A parents’ forum will be held after half term.</p> <p><i>RSm left the meeting due to a prior commitment</i></p> <p>Cheriton Bishop: RS reiterated VG’s comments about Cheriton’s PTA. RS outlined the issues for staff and parents in connection with the poor standard</p>	<p>Clerk to contact AR re induction training dates</p> <p>VG to confirm date of SG session at Yeoford Academy Heads to let everyone know when their SG sessions take place during beginning of term Inset.</p>
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of school dinners. In addition, there had been nobody to serve the meals since October half term. RS is aware that Matt Matthew, Link Deputy CEO, is exploring other options and providers.

Morchar Bishop:

- CS hopes that in the future it may be possible for Morchar Bishop to cook meals to be distributed to the other local Link Academy schools. A kitchen refurbishment would be needed before this could happen. He promoted the good meals cooked and served on site but realised delivering to other schools and time/distance/keeping meals hot and fresh would need to be investigated. MM will research whether this is a viable option.
- CS reported an ongoing complaint – ND has met with the parents and it is hoped the matter has been resolved.
- Parent Power – the parents provide an enormous help with about thirty parents and children recently planting trees. This was the fifth day in the last year that parents have helped on site. JC remarked how fabulous this was and that it must be some sort of record.
- The family services on Sundays had resumed in January; one per month.
- FOMBS (Friends of Morchar Bishop School) provide much support and feedback. CS wishes to broaden feedback by circulating a parents' survey before Easter.

Tedburn St Mary:

- AK reiterated what VG had said about the PTA.
- Parent Forum – only two in attendance. AK is planning to continue holding online forums as attendance was better.
- It has been reluctantly accepted there will be no new building (for an onsite Pre-School). However, there are plans to revamp the area and turn it into a productive space.
- School dinners – a work in progress – same issues as outlined above regarding absence of staff/time/distance/freshness of food.

School Meals: JC thanked EC for her extensive research into school meals contained in her Report which the S&C Committee had been really pleased to receive. CS stated that should Morchar Bishop provide meals to other schools in the future, the Kitchen Manager had already said the current menu would need to be changed to ensure it contained food that during transit did not become soggy. EC stated when transporting meals, maintaining the temperature should not be a problem as meals are heated to 80° and using the correct heated containers should keep food hot for three hours. EC advised meal temperature should be 63° but testing proved meals served at only 40 plus degrees. Moreover, it is the poor quality of the food that is disturbing, including lots of carbohydrates. EC concluded it is definitely doable to transport and serve meals to a better standard. Devon Norse, Exeter is used as a food provider with Yeoford meals being cooked by Devon Norse from Copplestone School. However, VG reported that recently Copplestone School had been flooded which had resulted in Yeoford receiving no provision of food. She had hoped that Devon Norse would have made alternative arrangements in an emergency. Instead, staff had hurriedly provided jam sandwiches for the children. JC agreed a solution should have been found and there needs to be a change in the standard of food being provided. JC vouched for the good food cooked at Morchar Bishop – CS offered an open invitation for anyone to try it. Quality produce is used with meat sourced from

5:8	local butchers. CS advised the next staff Safeguarding training session will take place on 3 March 2022 – an opportunity for a safeguarding mop-up and sample of a school meal at the same time!	
5:9	<p>Update on Pre-Schools: All schools except Tedburn St Mary have on site Pre-Schools. AK will continue to do the best possible regarding transition. There was nothing further to add.</p> <p>Trustees Standards & Curriculum Committee – (means of Local Boards reporting to the Trustees). JC reported the recent meeting included discussion on: swimming, dinners, Safeguarding (EC had met with other SG governors and Alex Waterman), G&T, GDPR, Data and other schools that may potentially be joining the Link Academy Trust. The Trust had also been sharing best practice in Cornwall. JC advised further detail will be contained in the Minutes provided by the Clerk to the Trust which will be uploaded to SharePoint in due course.</p>	
5:10	<p>JC asked if there were any questions. AM reported parents had been asking when schools would be physically opening their doors, particularly for new children/ parents and school productions. AK advised there is general guidance but schools make decisions at local level to some extent depending on the Covid situation. Some schools revert to bubbles when it is felt necessary or a closed door period of a couple of weeks when infection rates are high. RS highlighted the difficulty of ambiguity and in organising anything when it is subject to change. AK is looking towards the summer term to be able to resume a more usual way of schools functioning. JC suggested Academy Heads continue to keep updating parents and carers about whatever is current via the Newsletter in order to keep everyone informed as best as possible.</p> <p>Local Board Working Group – Policies had been a topic of conversation at the recent meeting. Trustees have the responsibility for producing and agreeing policies but Local Boards are involved at a practical level. It had been agreed the Local Board Working Group would set aside a day to look at policies and the role of the Local Board. JC invited anyone to attend – all are welcome and it is very useful to see how other Hubs work.</p>	
6	<p>GOVERNOR FOCUSED VISITS/LEARNING WALKS It was agreed this had been covered sufficiently and is ongoing with reports to be uploaded to SharePoint. JC had recently undertaken training on the role of the SEND Governor which is significant.</p>	<p>Governors to upload visit notes to SharePoint</p>
7	<p>ETHOS COMMITTEE UPDATE FROM MORCHARD BISHOP/COMMUNITY UPDATE FROM NON-CHURCH SCHOOLS All covered in the Academy Headteachers’ reports – nothing further to add.</p>	
8	<p>DATES OF FUTURE LOCAL BOARD MEETINGS – via Teams – all starting at 5 pm Monday, 16 May 2022 Monday, 4 July 2022</p> <p>JC asked if everyone was happy with the content of the Agenda: is it too long/too detailed or not detailed enough? This had been a point of discussion with other Hubs. She asked for feedback.</p>	<p>Governors invited to feedback on Agenda items/length/detail</p>

Meeting closed at 6.27 pm

Next meeting: Monday, 16 May 2022

Signed as approved copy by Chair, Jo Carter



Handwritten signature of Jo Carter, with the name 'JCARTER' printed below it.

..... 16 May 2022