



## ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	
Time	5pm	
Location	Thorpe Primary School	
Governors (8)	Anne Clayton (Chair)	
Quorum for this meeting: (three governors entitled to vote, at least two of whom must be Trust appointed (PKAT) Governors)	Kathryn Bothwell Tracey Cheung Joanne Fillmore Samia Kenley Manoj Subudhi Gulfraz Umar	
In attendance:	Emma Anderson Natalie Oxe Rebeka Kirtland-Blundell	Acting Headteacher (AHT) Raising Standards Lead Clerk
Apologies:	Colin Hammond	
Absent:	None	

Item		Lead
1	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>TC informed the Governors that she is stepping down from the role as Chair. AJC has agreed to take on the role temporarily and to consider remaining as Chair for the next academic year.</p> <p>TC is to remain as a Governor on the Academy Committee.</p> <p>AJC discussed the lead roles which now need to be delegated to other Governors. These include safeguarding and SEN. GU is to take over as safeguarding lead and be mentored by JF. JF advised that she cannot complete the role alongside GU due to being employed by the school but advised that there is training available as these are statutory requirements.</p> <p>SK will take over SEND role and was advised that any recent visits regarding SEND have been uploaded to Governor Hub. AJC is to mentor SK in this role.</p> <p><b>Action: GU and SK to complete training on their new lead roles.</b></p>	Chair

	<p>The role of Vice Chair was then discussed. JF expressed an interest in the role but understood that she cannot Chair in AJC's absence due to being employed by the school.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to add Vice Chair Election as an agenda item for the next meeting to allow Governors time to consider the role.</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted, and TC was thanked for her time as Chair.</p>	
2	<p><b>Declaration of Interests</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest in respect of the items on this agenda.</p>	Chair
3	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>The HT explained that this report replaces the school's self-evaluation. The school's development plan is also heavily covered in the report with a lot of information overlapping.</p> <p>Governors were advised that the PKAT Key Action comes pre-populated however, the topics are based on Ofsted framework.</p> <p>An overview of the document was given, and each area discussed in further detail with Governors.</p> <p>Section A: Contextual Information</p> <p>The number for EHCP now stands at 13 rather than 12 when the report was created. This number and that of Pupil Premium students are both similar to the national average. The school has slightly lower numbers of SEND in comparison to the national average but having over 50% of students registered as EAL, this is way above the national average.</p> <p>Section B: Curriculum Planning (Intent)</p> <p>Curriculum is strong across the board particularly in Reading and Maths. Foundation subjects may need to be refined as the school is trying to teach a lot whilst also trying to uphold literacy and maths skills. The aim of refining foundation subjects will allow teaching to be reduced but improved in these subjects. This should also help students with retainment which was an area picked up by Ofsted.</p> <p>Maths is a strong subject within the school and the school has invested in 'Number Sense' alongside well-chosen and sourced resources. The Maths Leaders are very clear regarding the next steps of the curriculum.</p> <p>Within reading, the teaching is strong as is phonics. The progression map makes sure that every teacher clearly understands what the next steps are. This method has also helped to increase continuity.</p> <p>Positive feedback has been received from the English Hub and RWI visits.</p> <p>A progression map is also being used within Writing. The school has completed a lot of work on 'talk for writing' however, they are unsure if this is the best method for all year groups. Whilst it does seem to provide steppingstones, the older years struggle with this method.</p> <p>The school writing leads, and NO are now working with PKAT to identify the positives from 'Talk for Writing' and making sure these are the building blocks for students. This collaboration with PKAT has been very helpful.</p>	



Within Science, students are now 'working scientifically'. They are designing experiments, analysing data, and working very practically which will hopefully help with retention of knowledge.

Maths has become much more practical, there is a hands-on approach to learning with the subject no longer being as abstract. Lots of resources are available for students to use.

Within reading, Destination Reading has been introduced to Year 2 and upwards and the next step is to identify and focus on lower ability children.

The school is hopeful that they will meet the Phonics target or thereabouts. There have been 9 new arrivals to the school of which 5 students are registered as EAL. These students are unlikely to meet target.

Writing is now using target setting, ensuring that children are very clear of their next steps of learning.

#### Section C: Behaviour and attitudes

There have been some recent incidences of bullying which have been thoroughly investigated by the school. As a result, students have had educational and protective consequences and parents have also been included in the matter.

**There were 8 cases of bullying during 2021-2022 and 5 so far – are these lower or higher in comparison?**

Higher.

**But there are not many suspensions?**

No. Bullying is unlikely to end in suspension. Suspensions are not always the right consequence and are mostly used for more extreme cases and dangerous behaviour. If the children are sent home, they are not learning and the question is, what happens upon their return.

We are also aware that there are certain students that will behave negatively with the aim to be sent home as a result.

We are working with PKAT with the possibility of carrying at suspensions within school but at different Primary Schools within the trust. This method would be discussed with parents and internal exclusions would not go on to the student's record.

**The children that cause disruption to be sent home, which area are they under?**

These categories are set by PKAT, and these children do not fit in with them. Records are kept on separate programs in school.

**Are there certain triggers for these children?**

School does an analysis and follows the behaviour steps discussed last meeting but for these specific incidences, not particularly.

**Are these children SEND students?**

Mostly not. They are not the high needs children in the rainbow room. There is no real intent there. This chart by PKAT is very much specific behaviours with intent.

**Is counselling offered?**

We do go to a behavioural panel if needed but we do offer a lot of pastoral support in school. There are also referrals to other agencies, and we use the early help process to make referrals. This is for particularly high needs children who are mostly PP. There is a lot of support for emotional and social needs that is taken out of the PP budget. This budget is also used for academic needs, but these children are not ready for this because of their social and emotional needs.

Because a lot of roles have changed for staff within the school, there was previously 4 leaders, so we are working out how to best to fit the roles in to 3.

However, out of 500 children, there are only a small number of children with negative behaviours, but these do take up a lot of time.

Behaviour is overall good; children are delightful and will welcome you in, the majority of students engage well, listen and follow instructions. Governors were encouraged to visit during the day to see and meet the children.

**Do parents acknowledge there are issues at home?**

It is mixed, some parents do but parents may use different strategies which do not work in school.

**Is it evidenced?**

It can be hard to convince the parents.

Attendance figures at the school are low but this is a nationwide issue, not just at Thorpe Primary. The main driver for absence is illness. Persistent absence figures have also increased but again, these have increased nationally.

When illness is present, the school has noticed that children are not only absent more frequently but also for longer periods of time. Illnesses that previously would have caused 48 hours of absence, are now extended. Parents are aware that the school has a limit of 20 days before off rolling students and therefore will return them prior to this date.

**Can you explain why Pakistani children are the highest for absence?**

When analysing the figures, we look at nationalities as one of the categories and for Pakistani children, their absence is most often linked to visits to Pakistan. The school has also improved the coding system which identifies the reasons for absence, and this is what is highlighting this data.

We are finding that most families who travel abroad, want to travel for a month and often feel that the school are not being culturally accepting but this is long absence.

**Do you find this data improves once children have turned 5?**

It doesn't seem to change the figures. We cannot issue penalty notices until the term after children have turned 5 because it is not statutory to attend before this date however, we can and do send warning letters.

**Section D: Personal Development**

The images were displayed and discussed with Governors. The Year 6 performance was a collaboration with Jack Hunt school, the secondary school within the Trust.

Following a previous discussion regarding trips during the last meeting, the HT advised Governors that there have been 17 trips, 4 of which were residential. Out of these trips, 3 were cancelled as well as 2 of the residential trips.

Year 5 and Year 6 residentials are now going ahead. The cost of these trips has been able to be drastically reduced by changing the accommodation.

There are also trips running in Reception and Nursery. The school is working hard to keep costs low whilst including what is taught on the curriculum and making sure the trips are engaging.

A copy of the new newsletter was then shown to Governors. This will likely be issued once a half term and is available for viewing online.

**Will the newsletter be at the beginning or the end of the term?**



It will likely be published at the end of the term to discuss what has taken place and any news we have to share. There were 361 views of the current newsletter, and the school is hoping that it has been viewed positively.

#### Section E: Leadership and Management

Safeguarding results were discussed with the highest levels recorded being children's mental health and domestic issues. As a result, the school held a coffee morning for parents and some referrals were made as a result.

There are currently no children under protection. The school continues to monitor children with thorough systems in place and very vigilant staff.

A Governor advised that they now have a copy of an anonymised referral that they can share with the school.

With regards to PP, the school is aware that intervention has not occurred as often as they would like due to staff being utilised for children with SEMH needs.

There has been a high turnover of staff however, the school were able to appoint new staff back in the autumn term.

However, despite interviewing on 3 separate occasions, the school is still yet to appoint a school secretary. There is an upcoming interview with a PKAT employee that the school are hopeful for.

#### Section F: SEND

The total number of EHCPs within the school has increased to 13 since the data was collated.

There are currently 7 neurodevelopment referrals, but the process is long and slow.

These referrals include parents having to take courses and then wait 6 weeks to see if there have been any changes.

#### Section G: Staff development and training.

These points also link to the school's priorities.

#### Section H: Compliance.

This has not been assessed since September. Ideally it would happen each half term however, the school is compliant with the majority and are hoping to get it signed off soon.

Data shown on Page 7 was then discussed however, Governors were advised that the data included in this report is from the Autumn term due to the assessment week having only just occurred. NO attended the meeting to give headlines of this recent assessment.

Governors were then shown a separate data document which was then further discussed.

Historically mobility has never been a previous issue however, numbers have increased. Year 1 and Year 4 both have high figures in this area, and this is a new challenge that the school are having to adapt to. This movement also impacts the data within these year groups.

Year 3 are the Year group most affected by Covid. The cohort is boy heavy and has the highest PP numbers as well as students born in the summer months.

Governors were requested to view the year 3 provision due to the provision being different to that of the rest of the school.

	<p>Within the Reading, Writing and Maths blocks, the EXS was explained as expected. Year 5 writing data is missing due to have only just been moderated. Whilst the data is varied, Year 5 and 6 are the strongest year groups who also demonstrate the most progress.</p> <p>There are due to be meetings with each year group. During these meetings, staff will discuss what actions are needed for each cohort and identified individuals. There will also be a particular focus on the children working towards their target. If the school can increase these then most of the targets will be met.</p> <p>Year 3 has moved into different types of learners. These are referred to as green, amber, and red learners and using this strategy, these learners have met progress levels for the first time this term. This method of grouping has had a positive impact across these groups and the school is looking at higher analysis of these.</p> <p><b>What is the difference between the colours of groups?</b></p> <p>The groups are based on attitudes to learning and not ability. Green group is for students who are very engaged. Amber is for those that mostly engage with learning. Red is for students that struggle to engage.</p> <p>However, we would need to look at how we can approach this in other year groups. For example, in Year 4, there are 2 teachers, but these groups cannot be reduced to this number and therefore there would be a financial impact. Ideally, the groups would still be split in to 3.</p> <p>Alongside these groups the school also runs a club for students in the green group. The focus of the club is to build relationships with the learners that do engage well and includes activities such as staff playing games with the children during their lunchtimes. This allows us to focus on all groups rather than just those in the red group.</p> <p><b>Where has the mobility increase come from?</b></p> <p>Mostly from students that are not in catchment area.</p> <p>Basic recall from students is not as fluent as it has been in previous years and whilst the writing progress is good, the attainment is not where it needs to be. The school is working with PKAT to improve this, and the spring term has been more positive with children adapting quicker which is often a struggle after the summer holidays.</p> <p>Writing and Maths in Year 4 require further consideration.</p> <p>For Reception and Year 1, the focus is phonics however, this is only one area of reading. Comprehension also needs time and so this area needs further development.</p> <p>The school is to review roots provision. They are currently working on what provision the children below target need in order to help them achieve.</p> <p>Overall, the progress is good but attainment needs increasing. The children are not meeting national expectations so whilst the progress is good, this also needs accelerating.</p> <p><b>Action: HT to upload assessment data on Governor Hub once completed.</b></p> <p>NO left the meeting at this point</p>	
4	<p><b>Monitoring of School Improvement Plan and Ofsted Action Planning</b></p> <p>This item was discussed in the detail in the January Academy Committee Meeting and new data is not yet available. A lot of points also overlap with those included in the HT report.</p>	Head



	<p>A review of the school's development plan was given out to Governors in the meeting and an overview was given.</p> <p>Attention was drawn to 2 areas in the development plan. The school is to facilitate the meeting of support staff and teachers to help with planning. The school has also taken on board feedback from Ofsted regarding student's retention of information. The school highlighted to Ofsted that the curriculum is too heavy and therefore is trying to refine the whole curriculum in order to help support retention.</p>	
5	<p><b>Feedback from Governor Visits</b></p> <p>AJC volunteered and supported a Year 2 visit to the museum. This trip was very positive and tied in with the children's learning of Florence Nightingale. AJC felt the museum staff were brilliant.</p> <p>JF and MS visited the school to review Phonics. The report of these visits is still to be completed. JF is also to complete a report on the recent visit for Sports Premium. T JF advised Governors that there has been lots of positive feedback regarding swimming starting at Year 3. These students have already achieved 10 metres and are working towards 25m. The progress is outstanding when this Year group were so heavily impacted by Covid.</p> <p><b>Action: JF and MS to complete the report regarding the recent visit for Phonics.</b>  <b>Action: JF to complete the report regarding the recent visit for Sports Premium.</b></p> <p>The HT encouraged Governors to volunteer for trips. Support staff numbers are low within the school and these staff were previously often used to help run trips. There is now a minimum number of TAs within the school and these staff are needed for high needs support and so it is often difficult to meet the required ratios on trips.</p>	All Gobs
6	<p><b>Stakeholder Surveys – including WelBee and plan for 2023-24</b></p> <p>The wellbeing leads with PKAT have been working on a wellbeing survey. The recent launch was not as successful as PKAT would have liked but there has been a further re-launch since. The school is facilitating staff to complete the survey and is actively trying to encourage staff to complete the survey.</p> <p>Governors commented that it will be interesting to see how this feedback will be used by PKAT.</p> <p>There is also to be a new survey for staff, parents, and pupils so that all stakeholder's have an opportunity to provide feedback.</p>	Head
7	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>The new Chair is to undertake induction meetings with new Governors and start informal appraisals.</p> <p>PKAT email addresses for GU and SK are in progress therefore there are some skills audits still outstanding.</p> <p>Governor biographies were discussed, and email issues were again, highlighted as causing a delay of completion.</p> <p>Governors were encouraged to access and complete training and continue to upload this on Governor Hub.</p> <p><b>Action: AJC to undertake induction meetings with new Governors and start informal appraisals.</b></p>	Chair
8	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting held 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes of this meeting were AGREED</p>	Chair
9	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of Previous Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AHT to discuss with writing leads the inclusion of further written tasks in homework activities.</li> </ul>	Chair

	<p>Following discussion, homework provision will be reviewed in time for September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair to discuss PKAT strategic plan 2023-26 with CH.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: AJC is to follow this up with CH.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerk to check that Governor's roles are listed on Governor Hub</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Clerk to further update Governor Hub following changes in this meeting.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AHT to check and further advise who SK will need to contact to review marketing and GDPR.</li> </ul> <p>The school business manager the contact regarding GDPR.</p> <p><b>Action: The HT will further advise SK with regards to marketing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MS to contact JF to co-ordinate a curriculum visit.</li> </ul> <p>This is on-going.</p> <p><b>Action: MS and JF to co-ordinate a curriculum visit.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MS to attach certificate of Safeguarding training to Governor Hub</li> </ul> <p>MS is aware this is outstanding. MS is in the process of requesting a copy of the certificate to upload this to Governor Hub</p> <p><b>Action: MS to upload certificate of safeguarding training to Governor Hub.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SK to complete Safeguarding training.</li> </ul> <p>This is outstanding and GU also needs to complete this training. Governors were reminded that this is a statutory requirement.</p> <p><b>Action: SK and GU to complete safeguarding training.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors to complete the Self-Evaluation, 360' review of the Chair, Governor Appraisals and Skills Audits by 19/02</li> </ul> <p>This item was further discussed in Governance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair to check if SK and GU have completed the Governor Training</li> </ul> <p>SK remains outstanding.</p> <p><b>Action: SK to complete Governor Training.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerk to request emails to be re-sent to SK and GU to set up their PKAT email addresses.</li> </ul> <p>These have been requested and are now with IT. This is ongoing.</p> <p>All other actions have been completed.</p>	
10	<p><b>Feedback to and from the Trust</b></p> <p>Governors were advised that PKAT is increasing in both strength and depth. In the recent meeting, policies that have to be reviewed by Governors were discussed and is now being streamlined to make it easier for Schools and Governors to understand which policies need to be reviewed and when.</p> <p>There have been significant changes to the finance system which have all been very positive.</p> <p>There are now SEN and Safeguarding leads that have been employed by PKAT who will visit schools, monitor, and support in their respective areas. The aim is to make sure that all the schools are working uniformly. These leads have been employed since early in the Autumn term and whilst there has been one meeting, they have not yet visited Thorpe Primary.</p>	Chair
11	<p><b>Feedback from Governance Conference</b></p> <p>Governors who did not attend the recent meeting were advised that there were 2 speakers in attendance at the recent Governance Conference. The first speaker was CEO of Pixl and Governors felt that this presentation was very engaging. The premise of the presentation was allowing thinking time as the focus in schools is often what they believe Ofsted expect which is often not needed.</p> <p>The second talk was very different but provided useful information. The focus of this presentation was regarding complete quality assurance visits.</p> <p>Governors felt that it was beneficial to meet Governors from other schools within PKAT and going forward, would request more notice of any upcoming Governance Conferences to try and encourage increasing attendance.</p>	Chair



	<p>Governors did feel that the information shared during the conference was overloaded and therefore not all completed.</p> <p>Following a discussion at the meeting regarding building relationships between staff and governors through Saturday morning meet ups, the feedback received was not positive.</p>	
12	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The chair presented a finance report from CL. Previous budget concerns have very quickly changed as the school was able to find additional funding that they were not aware of.</p> <p>However, when submitted to PKAT this was not accepted as admission figures are based on actual figures rather than estimated figures.</p> <p>There have been further changes with losing the additional leadership role and therefore another budget has been submitted. This has resulted in a minus figure going forward, however PKAT are aware and not concerned regarding this figure. Projected figures are also not currently considered a concern.</p> <p><b>The specialist equipment discussed in the previous Academy Committee Meeting, has this been purchased?</b></p> <p>The equipment has been quoted but not yet purchased as the school needs to have 2 quotes to present to PKAT. AJC did not find support from local charities; however, GU is aware of a charity that may well support this need and so will share the details.</p> <p><b>Action: GU to share details of charity that could provide funding for specialist equipment.</b></p>	Chair
13	<p><b>Confirm Date and time of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – 5pm to take place at the school.</p>	Chair

The meeting closed at 7.01pm

#### Actions:

Item	Action	Due Date
1	GU and SK to complete training on their new lead roles.	April 2023
1	Clerk to add election of Vice Chair to next meeting's agenda.	May 2023
3	HT to upload assessment data on Governor Hub once completed.	ASAP
5	JF and MS to complete the report regarding the recent visit for Phonics.	April 2023
5	JF to complete the report regarding the recent visit for Sports Premium.	April 2023
7	AJC to undertake induction meetings with new Governors and start informal appraisals.	May 2023
9	AJC is to follow up on discussion of PKAT strategic plan 2023-26 with CH	April 2023
9	Clerk to further update Governor Hub following Governor role changes in this meeting.	March 2023
9	The HT will further advise SK with regards to marketing.	April 2023
9	MS and JF to co-ordinate a curriculum visit.	ASAP
9	MS to upload certificate of safeguarding training to Governor Hub.	ASAP
9	SK and GU to complete safeguarding training.	April 2023
9	SK to complete Governor Training.	April 2023
12	GU to share details of charity that could provide funding for specialist equipment.	ASAP