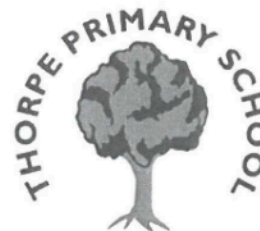




PETERBOROUGH KEYS  
ACADEMIES TRUST



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## ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date *5<sup>th</sup> December 2023*

Time *5pm*

Location *Thorpe Primary School*

Governors (6) *Anne Clayton (Chair)*

Quorum for this meeting: (three *Kathryn Bothwell*

governors entitled to vote, at least *Joanne Fillmore*

two of whom must be Trust *Samia Kenley*

appointed (PKAT) Governors) *Gulfraz Umar*

In attendance:

*Emma Anderson*

*Headteacher*

*Jude Macdonald*

*PKAT Director of SEND*

*Howard Nelson*

*CFOO*

*Rebeka Kirtland-Blundell*

*Clerk*

*Helen Charlton*

*SENDCo*

*Sonia Ahmed*

*Observer*

Apologies:

*None*

Absent:

*Manoj Subudhi*

Item		Lead
1	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair explained to all attending that SA was an observer to the meeting with the view of becoming a new Governor for the Academy Committee.	Chair
2	<b>Declaration of Interests</b> There were no declarations of interest.	Chair
3	<b>SEND Development and SIP Progress</b> The HT introduced JM, Director of SEND for PKAT to the Academy Committee as well as HC, the school SENDCo. The HT explained that updates for the Rainbow Room would be discussed during this item by both JM and HC. Governors were advised that the rooms within the school all have different names and that these names were now displayed on the doors.	JM

*A. Clayton*



In order to ensure inclusivity, the Rainbow Room has returned to the room's previous name of Potter. This room began due to the increasing needs of SEND children who required alternate provision. During the previous academic year, the school had worked on trying to meet each child's needs, working with both their EHCPs and individual needs. The SENDCo had been supporting this in addition to training staff and working with the autism outreach team. The hope is that the children have now progressed and are more able to access an individual formalised curriculum. As part of her role of Director of SEND, JM is now attending the school at least twice a week. The Director of SEND explained that her role is a pragmatic approach from the Trust. The staff within the Primary School are mainstream and therefore learning to adapt to offering a full SEND provision whilst working within the Potter Room. Having the Director of SEND within the Trust, the school has been able to take the room in a different direction than originally planned. Staff have been able to introduce a formal curriculum which had not been in place previously. Originally, the hope was that the same curriculum offered by Marshfields, a local SEND provision, would be able to be used however, this turned out not to be the correct fit. Instead, staff are now using selected areas of the United Learning nursery curriculum. With the room not previously offering a continuous provision, this is being fed in and has meant that the Potter Room feels different as well as looking different and following an adjustment period, the children are engaged with their learning.

How has the engagement with parents been?

Very positive. The majority of parents who have children who access the room are very happy and recognise that their child would or is struggling in the mainstream setting. There remains the odd parent who is slightly resistant to their child being in there, however, overall, it has been excellent. Parents have also visited to observe the classroom and children from outside to see the activities and learning taking place within the room.

SK arrived at the meeting.

Governors commented to say that it is so important and beneficial to have parental support at both home as well as in school.

The SENDCo agreed and explained that the school is working with parents through seesaw, an online programme already utilised in certain year groups. The SENDCo did recognise further development work is needed by staff on fully explaining the images that are uploaded.

Feedback received from recent visits to the room have recommended implementing assessment to document the children's progress. The assessment would require the children evidence the target on 3 occasions before being able to be signed off and new targets introduced. Each child in the Potter Room requires an annual review so these targets and assessment will also help to contribute to these reviews providing validity.

There was a review on the Potter room that took place at the end of October.

Feedback received was that there needs to be consistency in the teaching provision however, this also needs to be balanced with the impact on the budget.

It remains important for the SENDCo to be available and present in the Potter Room. Is the long-term objective to have a designated member of staff specifically trained to be in the Potter Room?

Yes, that is the plan.

Previously, this was not sustainable due to multiple staff teaching within the classroom and the need of understanding each individual child, being aware of their needs and building relationships with them. Further development has taken place



	<p>since then and the school is now working up to having a fully qualified teacher of SEND.</p> <p>Whilst the school needs to be pragmatic with the budget, the member of staff based in the Potter Room will be more qualified and therefore will require additional pay according to the SEND allowances. A plan is currently being worked upon and is problematic due to budget constraints.</p> <p>There have been 2 additional EHCPs given throughout the year, is the funding allocated with these, able to be used for additional support?</p> <p>Yes. There are 3 elements to the funding. The school has been able to move some of the pupils up the funding levels however, even with this additional funding, this does not cover the cost of a full time qualified teacher in the room.</p> <p>What does the coaching involve and how are the TAs utilising the coaching?</p> <p>Staff are being very proactive and are regularly seeking advice from the Director of SEND.</p> <p>With the curriculum from United Learning being introduced, is coaching taking place with the SENDCo?</p> <p>The SENDCo has looked at the curriculum and it does include an overview of steps however, if one person was to be expected to complete the whole curriculum, it is a very high workload and therefore consideration is being given as to what support can be put in place. The school SENDCo is now liaising with the Ravensthorpe SENDCo and between them, there is a possibility that plans can be shared in order to reduce the workload, once the Ravensthorpe room is established.</p> <p>Is there a maximum capacity of children that can be in the Potter Room?</p> <p>The maximum capacity is 20 however, with the staff currently working in the room, it is likely to already have reached its own capacity based on several factors and the number of resources available. The school has expressed an interest in becoming a Hub of which there are currently 2 within the Trust. If the school is to become a Hub, additional funding is allocated which would further reduce the pressure. Further information should be available on this matter in the New Year.</p> <p>Another factor that must be considered is whether there is any guarantee of getting the number of children requiring the support in and attending the school, and that this included the current Potter Room children. A Service Level Agreement would be put in place and so it is a benefit to the school to already have the Potter Room and additional guidance is given in terms of what the expectations are of this room and what is to look like.</p> <p>JM and HC were both thanked for their contributions and left the meeting at this point.</p>	
4	<p><b>Appointment of Link Governors – to include Safeguarding and SEND (deferred from previous meeting)</b></p> <p>Each Governor was asked to confirm if they remained happy to continue with their current roles.</p> <p>SK confirmed that she was happy to continue with her role as SEND link Governor. GU confirmed she was happy to continue with Safeguarding as her role. Due to the magnitude of Safeguarding, the Chair will join GU as a Safeguarding link Governor having previously undertaken this role. GU advised that the previous visit report had been amended and will be uploaded. Another meeting is due to be scheduled.</p> <p><b>Action: GU to upload amended Safeguarding Visit Report.</b></p>	Chair



	<p>AJC confirmed she is happy to continue as Early Years Link Governor.</p> <p>MS is the Link Governor for Curriculum. This role had previously been shared with JF however, JF expressed that she wished to drop this responsibility due to her current workload. SK will take on Curriculum alongside MS.</p> <p>JF is happy to continue being the Link Governor for Sports Premium.</p> <p>A Governor did express concerns over responsibilities being given out to new Governors without much indication of what their roles entailed. Governors felt clear expectations should be set out from the school on Governors undertaking Link Roles as well as availability and ability to commit being able to be communicated from Governors due to many often having full time job roles alongside their role as a Governor.</p>	
5	<p><b>Headteacher's Report (to include data and evaluation from assessment point 1)</b></p> <p>Governors had been asked to send in questions regarding the report to the HT prior to the meeting, the HT advised that she had received questions from 2 Governors. A Governor questioned the missing data from the Year 6 and KS2 progress and assessment update.</p> <p>The HT explained that this was due to the timing of the recent assessment period which had only just taken place. The Assessment calendar is arranged by the Trust and so the data will be available for the meeting in January however, this will allow subject leaders time to provide a plan of action regarding the outcomes as well as allowing a more detailed overview of what subject leaders will be focussing on.</p> <p>The HT advised that when discussing the SIP, systems in place would be discussed however, there was not yet data available in order to support these.</p> <p>Reading, writing, and maths were all below the national average and therefore further development work is required in these areas. The HT also questioned the accuracy of the end of year targets.</p> <p>A key step is to ensure that Year 6 is not tasked with 'catching up' students who are below target because despite progress being positive, attainment is very low. The school recognises that the children must enter Year 6 in a better position than they have done in previous years.</p> <p>A Governor questioning Safeguarding figures identified within the Leadership and Management section of the report.</p> <p>The HT advise Governors that the figures show low numbers of children for both Child Protection and Child in Need (CP and CIN) however, the school is very aware there are likely many more children suffering abuse however, these children have not been identified or do not meet the threshold, which seems to be consistently rising, in these categories. The HT is confident that safeguarding training is correct. Alongside staff being given weekly reminders, the DSL is always available, and staff are consistently vigilant and address issues.</p> <p>Low level concerns are also analysed. There are high levels of pastoral support and the PSHE curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure that the school is proactive in tackling any specific issues as and when they occur.</p> <p>A Governor requested more information regarding Early Years.</p> <p>The HT explained that the baseline data for this year group is very low. Children within this cohort currently lack the necessary skills to be ready to listen and learn and therefore the current focus is on communication and language, phonics, and fine motor skills.</p> <p>The children within this cohort are children who were born during the pandemic and as a result, did not have early visitors, health visitors nor early socialisation. There are</p>	Head



an increasing number of children who do not have communication skills and are still in nappies.

A combination of these factors has meant that the learning behaviours are not there in order to begin learning. As a result, the Early Years curriculum has changed, and the classes work on whole class work with a continuous provision.

Only 31% of children currently are on track with their fine motor skills, this then impacts on their learning as they cannot write if they cannot hold a pencil.

Focus on learning behaviours include learning the skills of being able to concentrate, listen and be in a room with many other people.

Governors were advised that the nursery children coming into Reception in 2025 are also very low.

Is this solely down to Covid?

It is likely that the lack of socialisation has had an impact.

The number of children who have separation anxiety in Reception has increased.

Parent separation anxiety has also increased, and this has further impacted on attendance. High levels of work are required to resolve the issues within this cohort.

HN left the meeting at this point.

A Governor questioned the use of the Behaviour Panel.

When children are displaying challenging behaviour, they go to a panel attended by the Local Authority and Head of Richard Barnes Academy, an alternate provision within Peterborough. A presentation of the strategies already implemented is given and support and recommendations are given. Funding may be provided to help support further strategies which could involve observations or an outside resource working with the child. Support can also be provided in the homes of the child for behaviours.

Within the wellbeing section, staff wellbeing has previously been RAG rated as green but is now at amber? Has this come from staff responses?

This rating was not decided by a survey but from conversations with staff. It is rare for a school to have 100% of staff feeling fully supported at all times however, the general feeling lately has not been as positive. Changes within the school have happened quickly and as a result, staff have been concerned not only about themselves but also the consequences to the children.

Some of these changes have been with regards to assessment and SEND. An assessment calendar had been designed with Martin Fry, the previous Director of Primary Education and there was no awareness of this still needing to be changed. Whilst the new dates may appear simple when viewed on a calendar, much more workload is involved.

There have been incidences of some staff experiencing physical harm from children and there have been changes made in the way staff can physically touch the children which has caused some upset. Very often, with wellbeing, a small group can be affected but a change in attitudes can quickly spread.

What has changed with regards to physical touch between staff and students?

The school has clarified with external providers and staff accepted levels of touch whilst reviewing the code of conduct. There have also been changes to the code of conduct for intimate care. There are many children within the school who have physical or emotional needs and as an example, may often hug the legs of staff members. The school does not want to become an environment where this is not possible.

Do the TAs feel more supported now with Director of SEND visiting?

The morale has increased as time has gone on. There is now a good structure in place and staff are clear on what they need to be doing.



	<p>The school has previously worked with Autism Outreach and received very good feedback following a visit they made last year. However, this feedback has not married up with recent feedback within the Potter Room and this has also impacted on staff.</p>	
6	<p><b>Analyse School Performance (ASP) and Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR)</b>  The IDSR report contains information regarding the school characteristics and compares data over the last 3 years.  Whilst the school remains well above average for the number of students on roll, these numbers are decreasing. Categories which continue to rise are children with free school meals (FSM), SEND, Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP), and English as an additional language (EAL). The stability of the school is also decreasing.  Whilst the context of the school is considered with the low ability of the children attending, the school still must meet the national averages. For progress and attainment in KS1 and writing in KS2, the school is significantly below average meaning 90% of schools achieve better results.  The data shows the school is in a similar position to last year however, over a 4-year trend, the data has 'weakened slightly'. The school is aware that further development is needed in writing to increase the data figures.  The ASP data is a comparison within the Local Authority meaning school across Peterborough. Within this data, Thorpe Primary School has achieved just above the LA average in Reading and Maths however, the figures are still below national. The school is aware of what needs to be done in order to improve results.</p>	Head
7	<p><b>School Improvement Plan Monitoring</b>  A new Trust format is being used for the SIP and these areas are RAG rated.  The HT explained to Governors that there are no reds now on the report as the report is laid out for the whole year and any items that would have been coded as red are those that have not yet been actioned and this was therefore deemed to be unfair.  The yellow and green colours identify the progress that the school has made. Green identifies actions that are completed and yellow is for those that are still in progress.  As Reading Lead, KB gave an update to Governors to explain that most items identified in yellow for reading are not due for completion until the summer term and outcomes will be supported by the assessment data.</p> <p>Governors discussed that they preferred the new template and felt this was more beneficial to the school with short, medium, and long-term planning.  The HT agreed and felt the template offers a more realistic plan with clear targets that can be easily assessed.</p> <p>High levels of monitoring of writing have taken place with both the CEO and Director of School Improvement over the half term. The school's own monitoring has been used to inform training across the whole school.</p> <p>The United Learning Curriculum is now being trialled. There are a group of teachers who are currently trialling areas of the curriculum with the aim of bringing it in next September. However, the school does not yet want to fully commit to the new curriculum if it is not deemed to be correct for the children at Thorpe therefore areas are being specifically selected and adapted to ensure that it is correct.</p> <p>Currently attendance is just below average. Persistent absenteeism is 16% which if maintained, will be at national average. However, the focus is currently on reducing the number of children who are absent for illness but not ill. These absences are often</p>	Head



	<p>a result of parent or child anxiety or extended leave. For safeguarding reasons, if there are children with unexplained absences, the school must carry out house visits. Declines in attendance can also be a result of children being late in the morning and registers already having been closed. There are now several Year 1 students who are on their final warning.</p> <p>Do the registers close at 8.40am?</p> <p>The gates are closed at 8.40am however, there is still a 5-minute allowance, so registers do not close until 8.45am. After that, if a child is late, it is classed as a half day absence.</p> <p>The school has found that in-person meetings are the most beneficial to tackle this issue and the school is working with parents to try and increase attendance. If the school is already aware of the child having a difficult history, pastoral staff are asked to join to support.</p> <p>Attendance levels are slowly increasing, and postcards are being sent out to acknowledge this.</p> <p>For persistent absenteeism, if children miss 10% of the school year, it has been proven that these children do not have as many life opportunities. And for those children who have extended periods of absence, they are missing a large portion of their learning. Those who are late not only miss teaching but also the time period for settling in and preparing for learning. Many starter activities are run in the first 5 minutes of the lesson, particularly in year 6 in order to help prepare children for their SATs and if children are late, these are missed.</p> <p>Is attendance discussed in parents evening?</p> <p>Attendance is highlighted on reports and colour coded to ensure simplicity. The school has found when discussing with parents using the child's own absence data more effective because it becomes very clear to the parent, the impact that persistent absence is having on their child.</p> <p>The school has now provided an improved learning environment. There is a new reception area and logos are visible around the site. The aim is to achieve more of a corporate colour whilst reducing overload and distractions. Within classrooms, displays are minimised, particularly at the front of the class.</p>	
8	<p><b>Pupil Premium Strategy Statement</b></p> <p>This document had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting. There were no questions regarding this document.</p>	Head
9	<p><b>Admissions policies for 2025-26</b></p> <p>This document had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting. There were no questions regarding this document.</p>	Head
10	<p><b>Plans for Stakeholder Surveys – Pupils (set parameters / questions)</b></p> <p>This document had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting. Governors were advised that both the parent and staff surveys had been completed and that the survey due to take place in the spring term with students would be completed on the computer. There were no questions regarding this document.</p>	Head
11	<p><b>Equality Information Report (deferred from previous meeting)</b></p> <p>This document had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting. There were no questions regarding this document.</p>	Head
12	<p><b>Risk Management – governor contribution to identifying top five risks for this school</b></p> <p>The Chair reminded Governors that the CFOO had previously attended and completed a presentation in which risks, based on Thorpe Primary School, were identified, and discussed in order to be fed back to the Trust. Since this meeting, work had been completed and so each risk was discussed to ascertain whether it remained relevant.</p>	Chair



	<p>The first risk identified was the number of children for the reception intake and the falling roll numbers. This risk remained relevant, and the Trust were now considering reducing the school's PAN for which a paper had been submitted earlier in the week although if the PAN was to be reduced, this would not be until 2026.</p> <p>The second risk was that of mobility. The school had averaged 19% mobility. With the current intake availability of 90, the school has capacity for 630 children but currently only has 515. There have been many demographic changes with building work taking place which have led to increased movement. The issue is that mobility affects academic attainment.</p> <p>The third risk was that of support being given to the reduced numbers of SLT which has seen a reduction from 4 members of staff to 3. This risk continues. Phase leaders are released for longer than they have been previously in order to support with some of the higher needs. This includes children who require additional support in the day as well as some of the tasks that were previously undertaken by members of SLT. The SENDCo is also now being used and the school has had to take on supply staff. The school acknowledge that these solutions are not sustainable.</p> <p>SEN provision had been previously identified as a risk. If the school can employ a designated SEND teacher for the Potter Room, the number of TAs can be reduced. If the school is to become a Hub, additional funding is provided however, the school cannot rely on this.</p> <p>Both overall recruitment and late recruitment were previously identified as risks. The school has had one teacher resignation for the staff member to leave at Christmas. Whilst attempts were made to recruit temporarily until the end of the academic year, there were no applications. The supply teacher has been recognised as being a very solid teacher who has loved her time at the school and although being UPS1 and therefore higher in cost than the school would have expected, the school feel the member of staff is value for money due to being a good teacher. An agency cost would also be incurred. The Chair questioned whether the risk remained. The HT explained that there is retirement due to take place in the admin team and the closing date for applications is in the week following the meeting. The HT confirmed that prior to the summer holidays, recruitment was difficult however, applications seem to have changed and stronger candidates are now applying. The HT advised that the new risk will be over 3 form entry groups leaving the school in Year 6 but only 1 or 2 form entry in reception, and therefore the greater risk will be the school being overstaffed.</p> <p>Budget planning was previously listed as a risk with in-year balancing being a concern. The school continues to balance the budget. The school is broad about budgeting.</p> <p>The Academy Committee was listed as a risk due to being a very young committee. This risk remains and increases due to JF moving on later in the year which will leave the Vice Chair role vacant. 3 Governors remain fairly new to the role and so there is a lack of persons to take on the Vice Chair role. The Chair discussed that this may be a matter of consideration for the Trust. Governors discussed the possibility of connections through both the National NGA and Governance for Schools in which more experienced Governors may be available for collaboration across schools. The Chair reminded Governors that extensive training is available.</p>	
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	The CFOO expressed concerns regarding the budgeting because of the unknown pay rise increases of the next year.	
13	<p><b>Governance:</b> Governor declarations were discussed, and Governors were requested to update their confirmations on Governor Hub.</p> <p><b>Action: Governors to update their confirmations on Governor Hub.</b></p> <p>Governors confirmed all biographies had been completed. GU advised she has submitted her photograph to the School Secretary.</p> <p>Both AJC and SK advised they had completed the PKAT SEND training. This training will need to be added to Governor Hubby SK, AJC had already completed this action prior to the meeting.</p> <p><b>Action: SK to upload PKAT SEND training to Governor Hub.</b></p> <p>Governors discussed the Academy Action Plan and the informal appraisal form.</p>	Chair
14	<p><b>Feedback from Governor Visits (Safeguarding, SEN, and others)</b> A SEND visit is due to take place. Due to time constraints prior to Christmas, the visit will likely take place in the new year although SK is keen for this to happen early in the month.</p> <p><b>Action: SK to contact the SENDCo to arrange a visit.</b></p> <p>A Sports Premium visit is in progress.</p>	All govs
15	<p><b>Feedback from Trust Board</b> Governors are asked to ensure they are familiar with the school's documents and monitor progress towards improvement priorities throughout the year in their meetings and through Governor visits to the school.</p>	Chair
16	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2023</b> The minutes of this meeting were agreed.</p> <p>With regards to the PTA, a Governor advised that there are still several parents keen to be actively involved. Following Covid and with the current living crisis, these parents have not wanted to put too much pressure on other parents regarding activities. However, the HT confirmed that the school is wanting to offer more opportunities to the children and because of this, there are a number of teachers in school who are currently taking on the role. The Academy Committee discussed putting an advert out to parents to join the PTA. The HT advised that the new DSL will also take on the role as parent engagement lead and so could help support this.</p>	Chair
17	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> The Chair discussed with GU regarding her appraisal. All other matters were completed. Governors were reminded to send apologies if they cannot attend meetings for any reason.</p>	Chair
18	<p><b>Any other Business</b> The Chair had met with the School Business Leader and was informed that PKAT has introduced a new budgeting tool across the Trust. The new tool makes it easier to view the budget and once embedded, the school will be able to forward plan much more efficiently using it.</p>	Chair



	The updates to the premises have been agreed and budget is to come from central funding. These include the refurbishment of KS1, fencing around the front car park and a new fire door in KS2.	
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Meeting closed at 6.57

**Actions:**

Item	Action	Due Date
4	GU to upload amended Safeguarding Visit Report.	ASAP
13	Governors to update their confirmations on Governor Hub.	January 2024
13	SK to upload PKAT SEND training to Governor Hub.	ASAP
14	SK to contact the SENDCo to arrange a visit.	January 2024