

**MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF OAKFIELD LODGE
SCHOOL, HELD VIRTUALLY ON 9TH MARCH 2022**

PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Members Present: John Edmonstone JE Chair
 Gemma Bailey GB Headteacher
 Dawn Podmore DP
 Claire Howarth CH
 Pat Smith PS Vice Chair
 Mike Taylor MT

Also Present: Sue Lambeth SL Clerk to the Governors
 Sian Nixon SN Bursar (part)

The meeting was quorate and commenced at 15:36.

Item	
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies, Any Other Business The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies received from Su Turner were accepted. Emma Thompson was not in attendance.</p> <p>Other items of business requested: Benchmarking (under Finance)</p>
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest No conflicts of interest with the business to be discussed at this meeting were declared.</p>
3.	<p>Membership <i>The Instrument of Government (dated April 2018), which forms the constitution of the Management Committee, sets out the following categories of membership of the committee:</i></p> <p>1 Parent – currently vacant 2 Staff (including the HT- GB and ET) 2 LA (DP, one other) 6 Community (1 vacant: JE, PS, MT, ST, CH) Total: 11</p> <p>There were currently three vacancies: one Parent Governor, one LA Governor and one Community Governor.</p> <p>Discussion on the changes to governance structure post conversion would be carried forwards.</p> <p>ACTION: To add discussion on the changes to governance structure post conversion to the agenda of the summer 1 meeting. (Clerk)</p>
4.	<p>Approval of the minutes of spring 1 Management Committee meeting,</p>

	<p>matters arising and action log review</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 12th January 2022 were agreed to be a true and accurate account and would be signed electronically by the Chair.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> <p>The action log from the previous meeting was reviewed and updated. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All annual declarations of interest were now up-to-date on GovernorHub. • Governors were requested to complete the Flick safeguarding training as soon as possible and record completion in the training section of GovernorHub to evidence compliance. • Mike Taylor would contact Andy Souter to discuss Pupil Premium as soon as possible. • Pupil Voice had now taken place and outcomes would be uploaded to GovernorHub. • Further discussion on contact with school links would take place in the link governor reports agenda item.
5.	<p>Chair's Action</p> <p>The Chair reported that he had approved a change to the holiday dates for 2022/23. An extra INSET day has been added on 21st October 2022 and an INSET day moved from 16th December to 3rd January 2023. This had taken place outside the meeting as the information had been requested urgently by Cheshire East (CE). The impact would be a more equal spread of inset days throughout the year. The school was still compliant in terms of teaching days.</p>
6.	<p>Finance</p> <p>Budget summary document <u>Budget matters</u></p> <p>A meeting had taken place with CE to discuss the predicted end of year position and that in Years 2 and 3. Overspends and underspends were annotated in the document.</p> <p>SN reported that CE had had difficulties in their move to a new financial system, which had resulted in confusion around financial claw backs and a backlog of invoices not yet paid. CE were unable to advise the school the value of invoices and purchase orders outstanding. As a result there could be some additional underspend which would in turn come out of next year's budget and be shown as an overspend. Close down procedures had been late received late from CE.</p> <p>Governors questioned the value in the information presented. However, SN advised that a view of the spreadsheet in its entirety gave greater clarity, and a scrutiny by a financially-minded governor would be a beneficial to the board.</p>

Governors agreed it would be prudent to have a finance governor in place. Post conversion the budget would be managed very differently, with one twelfth of the annual budget received by the school each month. The mechanism for monitoring would also take place a month by month basis.

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The school had submitted an SFVS for the previous year despite it not being compulsory and support with the document had been obtained from Manor Hall Academy Trust (MHAT). The return had been submitted in March 2021 and feedback received in February 2022. The outcome was once more 'limited assurance' as it had been in the two previous years, and feedback gave no indication of how to improve. Despite GB's request for improvement suggestions, there had been no response to date from finance team. The submission date for 2022 was 31st March. The school had advised that whilst it was happy in principle to complete the document, it would only be submitted on the receipt of further feedback on previous SFVS documents.

SN advised that the issue was that the document did not have a category for alternative provision and the result was the comparison against other schools was not possible. This return was a governance responsibility and, should governors feel the current approach to the issue was inappropriate, the school would comply with the governors instructions and submit the document.

Q What are the consequences of having a limited assurance judgement?

A: The school will remain on the CE watch list for schools causing concern.

Governors **agreed that the form should not be completed** in view of the amount of time involved and the potential proximity of conversion.

Benchmarking

[Benchmarking Report Card](#)

Whilst this was for information only, it showed a comparison with similar local schools to give governors greater awareness. The data forming the basis of comparison was 18 months to 2 years old, and ratios and budgets had changed over time. It was noted that the Getting Information About Schools (GIAS) website had shown incorrect school data for approximately 11 years based on 30 to 40 pupil places. Finally CE had updated the system which would now allow more meaningful benchmarking and which would have a positive impact on the Headteacher report. GB felt the comparison was pleasing, and the school was no longer an outlier.

Staffing structure costing for 2022/23

See part 2 discussions.

3-year budget plan

Governors approved the three year budget plan based on the discussions in Part 2.

	<p>SN confirmed that the budget had been increased by 50% to address the potential rise in energy costs. The current 3 year fixed energy rate with SSE ran to 2023, and then the school would move to the MHAT fixed rate for five years. Other budget increases had been made for staffing and petrol.</p> <p>There were no further financial updates.</p>
7.	<p>Headteacher's Part One Report Headteacher Report Part 1</p> <p>The report had been uploaded to GovernorHub and the meeting discussed two significant issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academisation • Pressure on pupil places <p><u>Academisation</u></p> <p>GB summarised the situation around conversion as stated in the report. (See link above). The school had now agreed in principle a new land boundary which did not include the former building, and which would include responsibility for one entrance only. There would be no shared boundary with Cornerstones Academy. It was now thought that the academy conversion decision would need to go to committee. The length of time required the by LA payroll department for offboarding staff, was felt too great a risk to proceed with conversion without decision certainty. Staff understood the delay was not down to school or MHAT.</p> <p>Discussions had taken place with Mark Bayley and Mike Harris at CE around the lack of communication with the school and trust. As a result conversion could be delayed until June 1st. School had been assured there would be no bill for the inadequate legal services provided.</p> <p>The difficulties over the payment of the £25k conversion grant had been resolved and the total cost would be covered by MHAT. There is no loss of enthusiasm on the part of MHAT and support had continued.</p> <p>Governors appreciated the support of the MHAT during a difficult time, particularly due to the lack of capacity within CE.</p> <p>Governors approved GBs actions and had no further questions.</p> <p><u>Pupil places</u></p> <p>Governors were directed to page 5 of the report, and GB explained the difficult situation which had arisen due to the lack of Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and specialist Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) places in Cheshire East and the lack of available places at Oakfield Lodge. An urgent meeting had been requested by Jacky Forster, CE Director of Education. Ultimately, the school was unable to manage more than 60 pupils on site, and the increased damage and graffiti could lead to an unpleasant atmosphere.</p>

	<p>Q: What will be the relationship with CE around admissions after conversion? A: CE have agreed to commission 60 places. After that the school will be under no further obligation to accept pupils. Currently the school is having to admit SEND pupils and is unable to accept permanently excluded pupils which is the purpose of the PRU.</p> <p>Governors supported GB that they should not become a SEND school. An increased number of SEND admissions also placed the school at the risk of requests for additional SEND salary points of approximately £3.5k.</p> <p>Q: What is the next step? A: A meeting with Jacky Forster.</p> <p>Governors agreed the impact on the culture of the school, the staff and the Headteacher was unacceptable. JE offered to support GB at the meeting with the Director of Education.</p> <p>A visit by the School Improvement Partner (SIP) was scheduled for 16th March, and a request would be made that the impact on school improvement due to the varied needs of the pupils was recorded.</p> <p>SN left the meeting at 16.51.</p>
8.	<p>Cheshire East Director of Children’s Services Report Spring 2022 Governors were requested to read the document available on GovernorHub with particular reference to areas of responsibility.</p> <p>Further discussion took place under item 10 of the agenda.</p>
9.	<p>Policies Governors were requested to review the following policies by Friday 11th March and feedback comments via GovernorHub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers Policy (DP) • Critical Incident Plan 2021 (ST) • Disciplinary Policy (DP) • Disciplinary Procedure 2022 (DP) • Domestic Abuse Policy 2022 (ST) • Dress Code (PS) • ICT Acceptable Use Policy 2022 (MT) • Inclusion Policy 2022 (DP) • Induction Policy 2022 (PS) • Medicine 2021(PS) • Mobile Phone Policy 2022 (DP) • Paternity Leave Policy 2022 (CH) • Pay Policy for School Teaching Staff 2021(JE) • Provider Access Policy 2021 (DP) • Shared Parental Leave 2022 (CH) • Vehicle Policy 2022 (ST)

	<p>ACTION: To clarify the list of policy reviewers / policies and monitor reviews and comments. (GB)</p> <p>ACTION: To review allocated policies by Friday 11th March and feedback on GovernorHub. (All)</p>
10.	<p>Part 1 Reports from Link Governors There were no reports for this meeting.</p> <p><u>Link Roles</u> JE proposed that the Community Governors on the Management Committee should meet to discuss the roles and the way forward around developing relationships with staff and pupils in various areas. A face to face meeting at school one evening would be organised and dates circulated.</p> <p>ACTION: To circulate dates for a governor meeting to discuss link roles. (JE)</p>
11.	<p>Governor Training / Development Governors were reminded that all training should be recorded on GovernorHub for evidence purposes. The Clerk offered support to do this if required.</p>
12.	<p>Future Meetings The next meeting of the Oakfield Lodge Management Committee was confirmed as Wednesday 4th May 2022.</p>
13.	<p>Any Other Business There was no further business to discuss.</p>
14.	<p>Impact Statement <u>What is the impact of this meeting on the pupils of Oakfield Lodge School?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academisation and pupil place discussion had raised the awareness of governors and given a greater understanding of the implications for the school moving forwards, including the impact on the existing pupils and progress of having additional numbers of students with complex and specialist areas of needs. • Governors expressed their commitment to support all pupils and protect the core business of provision for permanently excluded pupils. • The meeting had made good strategic decisions around safeguarding and the use of the budget to improve safeguarding and the provision for the nurture group. • The commitment of link governors to moving forward the relationship with staff post pandemic and monitoring of areas was confirmed.

The Part One meeting closed at 17.05.

Signed.....

Date