

Brookside Academy (327) – Board of Governors  
Company Registration Number: 07641618 (England & Wales)



Minutes of the **Board of Governors** hybrid meeting held in the Oak Board Room, on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The meeting started at 6.01pm.

#### MEMBERS

✓	Stuart Clowes	(SC)	-	Julie Summerhayes	(JS)	(Chair)
✓	Stuart Evans	(SE)	✓	Alex Tedford	(AT)	(Vice Chair)
✓	Helen Fisher	(HF)	✓	Brian Walton	(BW)	(Headteacher)
✓	Jenny Moore	(JM)	✓	Adi Whatling	(AW)	
✓	Jonathan Sansam	(JSa)	✓	Lauren Whinton	(LW)	

#### IN ATTENDANCE

✓	Sarah Ashford	(SA) Deputy Headteacher	-	Sandra Cinicola	(SCi)	Business Manager
✓	Jenny Warrington	(JW) Clerk to Governors	-	Nicola Nevell	(NN)	Assistant Headteacher

(✓ those present) (v = virtual attendance)

## Minutes

No.	Item	Action
<b>Governor Meeting – Opening Section</b>		
<b>Chaired by Alex Tedford (Vice Chair of Governors)</b>		
<b>G01/23</b>	<b><u>Safeguarding Awareness Training</u></b>	
	<p>There was a 30 minute awareness briefing on safeguarding covering the specific slides for governors. All staff have received the full version of the cascade pack training, with just a few mop up sessions needed. Across the academy the number of safeguarding issues were down but the issues were more complex.</p> <p>Brian Walton is Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Sarah Ashford is Deputy DSL focusing on KS1, Sandra Cinicola is Deputy DSL focusing on Nursery, Nicola Nevell is Deputy DSL focusing on Specialist Provision and Brian Walton focuses on KS2.</p> <p>All safeguarding concerns are emailed to all four DSL/Deputy DSLs. The online record system is CPOMs and there are weekly safeguarding meetings. The meetings often consider behaviour. Key issues include increasing online risks, a focus on Governors supporting the DSL and online safety monitoring and filtering.</p>	
	<p><b>A governor asked about children using devices with 4G and 5G</b></p> <p>It is important to remember that Years 5 and 6 may be looking online at home and bringing behaviour into school.</p>	
	<p>Absence can be a warning sign for a range of safeguarding concerns. There was a discussion regarding how safeguarding is reported by organisations using the school premises.</p>	
	<p><b>A governor asked what action was being taken in relation to organisations using the academy premises reporting their safeguarding concerns.</b></p> <p>If something happened in one of the clubs would the DSL find out about it? Is it a case of putting it in the hiring agreement? Is it already in the hiring agreement?</p>	<b>BW</b>

No.	Item	Action
	<p><b>Brian Walton will report back on this issue</b></p>	
	<p>There was a recap of types of abuse and the Somerset continuum of needs and services outlining universal, additional, complex and acute needs as a way of identifying and supporting family needs. 9/10 cases will need an Early Help Assessment (EHA) which needs consent from parent/carer.</p>	
	<p><b>A governor asked what happens if you don't get consent for the EHA?</b> If the needs are acute consent isn't required, but the threshold for acute needs is rising and it can be difficult to obtain consent for additional and complex needs.</p>	
	<p><b>A governor asked how many EHA are in place?</b> There are approximately 20 SEN and safeguarding EHAs.</p>	
	<p>There was a discussion about the Low level concerns policy encouraging an open and transparent culture taking pride in professional standards. If you have a concern about a member of staff you report it to Brian Walton. If you are concerned about Brian Walton you report it to the Chair of Governors.</p>	
	<p><b>A governor asked about the low level concern process.</b> Low level concerns should be emailed to BW or given in person. They are recorded and followed up. They are kept to identify whether there is a repetitive situation or behaviour. If there is a repeated behaviour advice and guidance can be sought from the LADO.</p>	
	<p>Normally the LADO is contacted if a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. It reaches back to the Bichard report 2004 and to earlier serious case reviews. Serious case reviews happen when there's been a serious incident such as the death of baby.</p>	
	<p>There was a discussion about staff members being informed if the issue is passed on to the LADO. There should be a positive culture to report concerns not 'dobbing' people in. It's ok to self-report mistakes and there's a management process to deal with it. This results in better outcomes for children. The issues would not be passed on to future employers unless it became a disciplinary matter. Low level concerns should be a supportive conversation. Only if repeated would they become a substantive warning and require discussion with the LADO. There is a process for managing allegations against staff.</p>	
	<p><b>A governor asked how many low level concerns there have been?</b> Less than 5 in the past two years.</p>	
	<p>A number of safeguarding and child protection topics were highlighted including Reactive and harmful sexual behaviour (Two members of staff are trained to use the Brook system, they are Sandra Cinicola and Nicola Nevell), FGM, Preventing radicalization, online abuse Domestic abuse. Really listening to children was a big part of the training. To give children a better chance in life and prevent someone from being harmed.</p>	

No.	Item	Action
	<p>A governor had raised several points about Keeping Children Safe in Education and Brian Walton responded to these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-agency working – the local plan is through Team around school, Team around child, team around family meetings, or child in need/ child protection meetings or through the development of an Early Help Assessment gaining all practitioners views to find the best agency to lead on the child/family</li> <li>• Sarah Ashford is the designated teacher for Children Looked After</li> <li>• There is still no national guidance for primary schools on the area of transphobia. In the meantime, the academy has consulted with parents regarding the best way to develop relationships education. This consultation will be brought to governors at a later date for discussion.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>A governor asked about inter-agency working in practice.</b> It was felt that the support network isn't as good as it was. Funding has ceased and professionals don't always come to meetings.</p>	

### G02/23 Welcome

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**a) Apologies for absence**

Julie Summerhayes sent her apologies for this meeting.

With 9 of the 10 Governors present the meeting was quorate.

**b) Declarations of Interest**

None

**c) Appointments and Resignations**

None

### G03/23 Head teachers report

Brian Walton gave a verbal response to questions about the headteachers report.

- The report stated 206 specialist staff instead of 26. Nursery has 29 staff. Mainstream has 40 staff including 3 extra apprentices.
- An Academy development plan is in its draft stage
- There are 3 new team leaders: Jenny Moore Years 5 and 6, Francesca Burge is leading Years 3 and 4 and Zoe Clist leads Year 1 and Year 2.
- Recall, Revisit and Retain are the three r's behind the knowledge-based curriculum
- The key strength for the curriculum this year is that it is embedded and the teachers are able to hit the ground running.
- Senior leadership meetings have a robust conversation. Data is being developed and there are shared questions about the curriculum.
- There is now a staff room again where the old community room was
- There was a staff survey at the beginning of the year.

Brian Walton was positive about the results of the staff wellbeing survey and shared the results on the interactive whiteboard with the governors.

No.	Item	Action
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The results looked positive against the comparison results. For Nursery the Lowest was rating was 3/7, in mainstream 4/7 was lowest. Teachers viewpoints were positive. There were no 7/7 across the board. The office/support staff had some 2s.

**A governor asked whether the results were being measured against the national average? And are the comparative results from similar schools?**

The company producing the survey was responsive to questions about dividing the question sets up into mainstream and specialist and support staff and office staff so it was hoped the comparative results were from similar schools. Brian Walton would investigate this further.

BW

The governors looked at and discussed the internal assessment targets in the headteachers report and looked at what was not on track for 2022-2023 and this years targets. The headteacher feels the data is in a good place and has set challenging but accurate internal targets aiming for 100% of children to succeed with the phonics screening.

**A governor asked whether the internal targets should align with performance management targets?**

It was suggested that internal targets are separate to the performance management targets.

**A governor asked whether it was a statutory requirement for governors to sign off assessment targets?**

The meeting did not know with certainty. JW will find out.

JW

#### a) Draft Academy Development Plan

The governors considered the draft Academy development plan. Spelling has been picked as a key area of focus. The specialist curriculum area point is being written by Nicola. The specialist curriculum for mixed age classes is being embedded with exciting processes. Actions from the School Improvement Partner have already been taken at an operational level. The previous report had been more critical of Early Years but this year's report was positive.

### Mainstream Teaching & Learning Section (MTaL)

Chaired by Lauren Whinton (Mainstream Teaching & Learning Lead)

#### T&L Outcomes and Assessment

01/23

The outcomes and assessment were considered and discussed as part of the Head Teacher's report.

#### T&L Diminishing the Difference

02/23

a) Pupil Premium Action Plan – Review of 2022/2023

The governors discussed the pupil premium action plan. Attendance is still a key issue that's affecting pupil's progress. The academy has successfully sent letters and held meetings opening up an honest dialogue about attendance. There have been some improvements in long term absence issues.

A governor asked whether resources were needed to support pupil premium? KS2 is getting Talk Boost to support pockets of underdeveloped social language. Mrs Moore is on top of the data. We are in a more accountable place with formal interventions. There's also flexible daily and weekly interventions run by teachers.

**T&L**  
**03/23**

**Teaching and Learning**

a) Teams update – verbal

Sarah Ashford gave a verbal update on teams:

- Nursery – Lauren had a tour – developments three distinct rooms – the Hive is baby room has an entry and exit down reducing congestion on the early years side
- Nursery manager is very settled
- Early Years classes are all in full time and have completed baseline assessment
- There are three new team leaders – Jenny Moore, Francesca Burge and Zoe Clist
- Rebecca Foster has returned from Maternity leave
- Megan Thomas has made a positive start in Year 6
- Jasmine Garcia-Perez is doing well as a ECT in Year 1

b) Curriculum update

Last week there were curriculum information evenings for parents.

A governor asked whether the curriculum evenings had been recorded? They were not recorded this year. Slides will go on the website. It was asked whether an email could be sent out with the link to the website for all parents to see whether they had attended or not.

SA

c) Key questions for governors

Sarah Ashford introduced some key questions for governors. The governors asked whether there could be a collaborative response perhaps using sharepoint.

SA/JW

Sarah Ashford suggested a walk through based on one of the areas from the questions, perhaps the curriculum, meeting with the subject leaders. Sarah would contact the governors with some suggested dates.

SA

Sarah Ashford left at 19:25

**T&L**  
**04/23**

**Themed Policies**

a) Policy Grid 2023/24



The governors looked at the policy grid for 2023/24. A number of policies need reviewing this academic year.

b) Policies for approval

The online safety policy was amended to change the sections on the use of mobile phones. The governors then voted in favour of approving this policy.

**All approved.**

**For: 9 Against: 0**

The complaints policy was reviewed based on the recommendation of Governance Services and is adapted from the DFE model policy. The governors voted in favour of approving this policy.

**All approved.**

**For: 9 Against: 0**

The governors voted to approve the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy with minor changes to resolve the issue that the Head teacher is the DSL.

**AW proposed and BW seconded.**

**All approved.**

**For: 9 Against: 0**

Children with health needs who cannot attend school was approved by governors with no change.

**JM proposed and LW seconded.**

**All approved.**

**For: 9 Against: 0**

**Governor Meeting – Final Section**

**Chaired by Alex Tedford (Vice Chair of Governors)**

**G04/23 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**BW proposed that Governors approve the minutes of the meeting 17 July 2023.**

**Seconded by AW and approved by all present.**

**For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0**

*[Governors not present at the meeting abstained from approving the minutes]*

**G05/23 Papers for Information**

**a) School Improvement Report**

The Deb Wring report was a positive report.

**b) Organisation Chart 2023-2024**

The organisation chart is a working document and becomes out of date quickly. It details the subject leaders. Emma Ollier has now taken on leadership of RE from Jenny Moore.

**c) Governors Contact Details**

The governors contact details were shared for information.

**d) Register of Business Interests 23-24**

The register of Business Interests was shared.

**G06/23**     **Matters Arising**

**MAT update**

MAT talks are going really well but they are not happy about two Requires Improvement (RI) judgements that Bridgwater has received recently. The decision will now go to the November board rather than the October board. It has been asked whether governors have considered the new position. The board want to continue with due diligence and want to look at the data and results. Brookside data is a lot more than SATs and includes 14 Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). We are reminded that there is a good local area and ACE are coming to the area. Whatever choice is made we can add capacity to a MAT and the exchange should be beneficial for Brookside.

The governors noted that there was a material change in the situation, and although **AT** disappointing it is important to the community to pause and reflect. Alex Tedford will ensure that a course is determined to consider the situation.

**G07/23**     **Governors Visits and Training**

**a) Governors Visits' to School**

Lauren Whinton – Mainstream and Specialist visit  
Alex Tedford – agenda meeting and review of safer recruitment checks on 14<sup>th</sup> September  
Adi Whatling – Visits during the summer holiday for a complaint process  
Jonathan Sansam - attended a hearing for a complaint in August

To book individual visits to the school contact Sarah Morris (see contact sheet).

**b) Governor Training**

Safer recruitment in education – Alex Tedford  
Safeguarding training – Jonathan Sansam and Jenny Moore  
Safeguarding awareness briefing today for all in attendance.

**G08/23**     **Procedural matters**

**a) Keeping Children Safe in Education part 2**

The governors have read KCSIE part 2 and raised some questions (see G01/23).

**b) Governance Handbook – including Code of Conduct**

The governors approved the governance handbook for 2023-2024.

**For: 9    Against: 0**

**G09/23**    Any Other Business

There was no other business.

**G10/23**    Date, time, and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors will be on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023

6.00pm

Oak Board Room Brookside Academy

– Brookside Academy

(There will be the option to join this meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams)

All meetings will start at 6.00pm

	<p>Signed on behalf of the Governors of Brookside Academy</p> <p></p> <p>.....</p> <p>9 October 2023</p>	<p>Signed on behalf of the Area Lead</p> <p></p> <p>.....</p> <p>9 October 2023</p>	
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With no further business, the chair declared the meeting closed at 8.08pm.

**Action List**

Agenda Item	Action	By Whom	Due Date
G100/22	Headteacher's report for leadership and management/safeguarding to be completed on a half termly basis after the meeting.	BW	Ongoing
G100/22	To investigate whether there is a required evacuation time for Fire Drills	BW	By next BUS Meeting
BUS 23/22	Look at previous year funding by government for pay increases	BW	By 17/07/2023
BUS28/22	Contact Bridgwater to see how they manage risk	BW	By 30/09/2023
G109/22	Publish official figures with the adjusted figures with commentary	BW	
G111/22	Look into capacity and needs preference issues for Specialist Provision	NN	



## Minutes

G01/23	Report back on how organisations using the site are required to report safeguarding concerns to the DSL	BW	
GO3/23	Wellbeing survey - Investigate what types of schools are in the comparison data set	BW	
G03/23	Find out whether there is a statutory requirement to sign off internal assessment targets	JW	
T03/23a	Send link with slides of curriculum evening to parents	SA	
T03/23c	Questions for governors – collaborative response	SA/JW	
G06/23	Course of action regarding MAT decision	AT	

Any business for the next Board of Governors meeting should be advised to the Chair of Governors.

