

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



Minutes of the **Board of Governors** hybrid meeting held in Kangaroos Classroom, on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The meeting started at 6.02pm.

#### 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)	
v	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
✓	Peter Elliott	(PE) BTC Trust Leader				

(✓ those present) (v = virtual attendance)

## Minutes

No.	Item	Action
<b>Governor Meeting – Opening Section</b>		
<b>Chaired by Julie Summerhayes (Chair of Governors)</b>		

The Chair welcomed everyone including Peter Elliott to the meeting.

### G70/23

#### **Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust Leader Peter Elliott**

Peter Elliott Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust (BTCT) Leader gave a presentation on the proposed change of governance at Brookside Academy when it joins the Multi-academy Trust (MAT) and answered governors' questions on the subject.

The Trust leader began by saying that the process of Brookside joining the MAT was on track in terms of consulting with colleagues and the Trust's wider expectations. He felt there would be some duplication in workload over the coming months, which would lead to the change of the governing body. The current Governing Body will be dissolved and a local governing body will be formatted on joining the MAT, linked to the Trust Board.

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**A governor asked if there was something interesting to the Local Governing body at Trust level would the local body be able to send someone to represent them?**

The Trust leader said he would welcome representation. The scheme of delegation manages the trust and local governing body workload so there are clear divisions of responsibilities (see Governance Policy Scheme of delegation pp.28-50). That said, the Trust leader felt that issues were discussed at the local level so no one had ever asked to come to the Trust level before. There was lots of discussion of issues before they come to the Trust level so there shouldn't be surprises for the local governing body.

A governor remarked that the existing governing body does a fantastic job as a single academy trust and understands decision making and that has been important to the governing body, for the community.

The Trust affirmed that it likes to work with transparency on its decisions. The Trust will become responsible for the statutory accounts, buildings and compliance. The Local Governing Body should focus on being the custodians of the culture of Brookside Academy. Peter Elliott said that he was diametrically opposed to the hegemony of education and was interested instead in understanding the lived experience of children and adults at the school.

In September, it will be business as usual for the academy as it begins its new academic year. The Local Governing Body should continue to hold the Headteacher to account publicly and the minutes will be publicly available as they are now.

**A governor asked whether the local governing bodies in the Trust get too operational?**

The Trust leader felt that the roles for governance were clearly set out by the BTCT governance policy (circulated to governors before the meeting). If a governor wanted to see the accounts they could speak to a contact on the Trust board. The current Chair of Governors has been invited to join the Trustees of BTCT which would also allow for legacy representation.

**A governor asked what aspects the Local Governing Body would be involved in?**

The Trust leader said that it was difficult to answer hypothetically. He would not come to the Local Governing Body meetings unless asked to. He felt the Head's role was critical to bring issues to the Trust Leader. Local challenge of the Headteacher is integral before it goes up to Trust Level.

The Trust Leader and Headteacher have been working closely for a few months and there is a track record for a high level of engagement and professionalism. The Academy is in a good place currently and there isn't reason to make any immediate changes.

**A governor asked whether they were likely to turn up in October and receive a decision that there would be less Teaching Assistants in post?**

The Trust Leader said that budget setting was an integrated process with curriculum planning and therefore it was the Headteacher's role to develop the sustainable culture. The Headteacher agreed that decisions needed to be feasible.

The Headteacher has been to four or five meetings with the Trust Leader and has seen that the Trust Leader welcomes challenge as part of effective decision making. Collective decision making is superior especially when local knowledge about the school is shared. The Trust Leader did acknowledge that the pay award would likely be late in August and difficult decisions may be needed.

**A governor asked about refurbishment projects and whether the Trust would welcome Local Governing Body views?**

In terms of capital the Trust works on the basis of one plan – working through a balanced score card for each school considering many aspects of school life such as behaviour, attendance and Special Educational Needs (SEN). There are 90-day plans which are urgent lists for issues to be addressed. In January there is a school evaluation where the Trust comes to check how well the issues have been addressed and whether further support and action is needed. Behind the 90-day plans are the two-year local plans for issues that need more time. These local two-years plans should implement, promote or demonstrate something from the Trust's three-year plans.

**No.**

**Item**

**Action**

**A governor asked who would receive and read the minutes of the local governing body?**

Any parent, the general public, stakeholders and Ofsted can access minutes on the local school website. The Trust minutes are also available on the Trust website. As a point of note Trust items that are made confidential are reviewed at the end of the academic year to see if they are still confidential. The Trust company secretary, quality of Education committee would also review the local governing body minutes.

The Trust Leader discussed the composition of the local governing body and asked the governors to let him know within four weeks (by the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024) if they would like to continue as governor on the local governing body and whether they would like to take the position of chair of the local governing body. The chair of the local governing body is invited to every board meeting and have access to all papers. There is a solid connection between the Trust and Local Governing bodies.

**ALL  
Governors**

There will be four local governing body meetings a year (beginning of the Academic year, November, Spring and Summer) and there can be ad hoc meetings as required. There are seven Trust board meetings plus committee meetings. The Local Governing Body Agenda is set in two parts 1. Items the Trust would like you to discuss such as results and SEN outcomes and 2. Items the Local Governing Body would like to talk about such as quality of the lived experience and teaching and learning. Representation of Local Governing Bodies at Trust Board level is robust. Safeguarding, Compliance and Finance will all be Trust level issues.

**A governor asked whether the Trust handles admissions decisions?**

The Trust will be the admissions authority. The Local Governing Body will be consulted by the Trust and the Headteacher can make recommendations on admissions policies and criteria (See BTCT Governance policy p.41). The local governing body is responsible for the annual arrangements (statutory).

**No.**

**Item**

**Action**

**A governor asked how complaints are handled by the Trust?**

There is a staged and escalating approach for complaints. The policy is on the BTCT website. Complaints are best handled by colleagues on the ground. All schools receive complaints. There are more than there used to be. Local Governing Bodies are important in responding to complaints, in managing local expectations and providing quality assurance.

**A governor asked how are local governing bodies involved in recruitment?**

Governors are to be involved with recruitment of senior leadership positions (full recruitment delegation details are on the BTCT governance policy pp.45-46)

**A governor asked what the quality assurance process was for governance in the Trust?**

The Trust Leader explained that the Search Committee is responsible for evaluating the quality of governance. They will read local governing body minutes, will review terms of office and consider the constitution, composition and skills across the Trust. They respond to governance issues as they arise.

The Trust Leader and Governing body discussed whether staff representation was needed on local governing bodies. The Governing Body felt it was healthy and important, and a great development role, to have staff on the governing body. The Trust Leader reminder governors to email him with intentions to continue as a governor in September on the new Local Governing Body. It was noted that AW wasn't at the meeting. The Clerk would share the Trust Leader's email with governors.

PE noted that the Trust did look to Local Governing Bodies when they had vacancies. The responsibility of Trustees is high.

**JW**

The governors thanked Peter Elliott for his presentation and he left the meeting at 6.49pm.

No.	Item	Action
G71/23	<u>Welcome</u>	

**a) Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Adi Whatling due to work commitments. Jonathan Sansam attended virtually on Teams.

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

**b) Declarations of Interest**

None

G72/23	<b>Head teachers report</b>	
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The Headteacher gave a verbal report to governors. Specialist Provision has had another teacher resignation for the end of the year, as the teacher has been appointed to a new job closer to home. The Specialist Teacher interviews took place and whilst there was a low number of applications, only seven, there was a strong field. Two candidates stood out and one was offered the job. The other has since been offered a job as well due to the increase in number of vacancies. The academy was also keeping the supply teacher on a full-time basis until the end of the academic year.

**A governor asked whether this was the normal ebb and flow of recruitment? Was it different to last year for example?**

The Headteacher felt it wasn't out of the ordinary. Recruitment can be variable due to the time of year and it wasn't an Early Career Teacher applicant time. The applications were from a strong field and a huge amount of experience.

The Head reported on two new issues:

1. The Business Manager has been looking at capacity and is requesting an increase in numbers in nursery up to 129 children. This would be the maximum capacity but would be dependent on staff available to cover ratios. The Pre-school and Baby rooms are currently full. The Toddler room has some capacity. Ofsted need to confirm the increase. And then the Business Team will look at the waiting list. The Nursery Manager is doing a good job in terms of managing consistency and processes and the Deputy Head and Early Years Leaders are supporting development of the teaching and learning experience, especially for the newer staff.
2. The Local Authority is again looking for more Specialist Provision places. The academy has children in Nursery with an EHCP, or in the process of getting an EHCP, who would go to the mainstream reception class, which is already at capacity for September, unless a

specialist place can be arranged. The Headteacher feels it is in the best interests of the children and the academy to accept these specialist places. He suggested a cost in the region of £20,000 to develop new spaces for specialist provision to use on site.

**A governor asked about increasing the capacity for specific children, and cautioned that once numbers increase then the academy may face huge pressure not to reduce number again in future.**

The Headteacher felt there was responsibility to the existing nursery children with specialist needs and their families. And that they would benefit from being able to access their current peers in mainstream, as they would be on the same site.

The Headteacher reminded the meeting how inclusive the academy is.

**A governor asked whether the Trust were looking to preserve the inclusive ethos?**

The Headteacher said he believed the Trust were aware of the inclusive nature of Brookside and were looking for ways to develop that aspect.

A governor said that the academy getting bigger was not necessarily beneficial for the quality of learning. The Headteacher replied that getting bigger wasn't the objective, there would be a number of specialist children leaving Brookside at the end of Year 6 next academic year, so there would be space in specialist provision. Specialist Provision capacity is also affected by the number that can continue on to Avalon School, for secondary, next door.

**A governor asked about space provisions for Mainstream, when spaces such as the Sycamore Studio, Community Room and ICT suite, have been repurposed.**

Staff governors said it was difficult to do the two hours of PE. The Headteacher took this concern on board. He was not looking to increase class sizes. He was interested in reconstituting the current spaces.

**A governor asked about the expense of the Oaks Meeting Room refurbishment, if spaces were to be reconstituted again.**

The Headteacher felt the Oaks rooms weren't being used as intended and the space may be more valuable as a class teaching space. The Headteacher said he didn't intend to increase the number of classes in Specialist Provision.



**A governor asked if it was becoming impossible for mainstream to meet the required two hours of PE due to space?**

The hall is booked all week. The Headteacher may speak to the PE team about staggering the gym and dance units across the year groups, so they can be outside instead, to see if that improves things. The academy is aware that space is at a premium.

**BW**

The Headteacher said plans are in place and they would have to meet need without funding, it would be better to have funding if possible. The governors were supportive of the Headteacher.

The governors were shown photos of the current two storey flat roof refurbishment.

The Headteacher updated the governors on action G32/23 – the Local authority covers a two year time period so the home educated number was 4. The brookside data was this academic year only.

The Headteacher said there would be a lockdown drill this term. The Health and Safety governor said he would like to observe the drill.

**BW**

**A governor asked how the academy communicates with staff outside the building during a lockdown scenario?**

Outside staff usually carry radios on them. The Headteacher acknowledged that action during a lockdown was dependent on the situation so it was difficult to have a standard response covering all eventualities. Sometimes it may be safe to stay outside.

## Teaching and Learning Section (TaL)

Chaired by Lauren Whinton (Teaching and Learning Lead)

### TaL08/23 Outcomes and Assessment

The data was shared with Governors before the meeting. The Deputy Head highlighted the key issues through her summary of the data.

#### a) Mainstream overview

Regarding the Mainstream overview:

- The data has moved on since the Autumn Term for Years 1 and 2 and more than 50% are at the expected levels or higher, for Reading, Writing and Maths – except for Writing in Year 2 which is at 38% currently.
- Year 5 Writing looked like it had gone down from 41% to 32% but looking closer in the Autumn there were only 9 objectives assessed when 28 objectives were assessed for



Spring Term. There are more children not secure on increased number of objectives.

- Year 6 is making progress against objectives. No More Marking Greater depth brings the results down.
- Year 6 are expected to be externally moderated this year. In preparation the academy has put in some joint moderation with Bridgwater College Academy which has been really positive. Overall the books look similar and there were some recommendations to help future moderation processes such as evidence of independent editing and using spelling lists for Years 3 - 6 in the front of writing books so the children can choose words they want to use in their writing and check they are there and have been used correctly at the end. Spelling and Handwriting were seen as important for achieving greater depth and that needs to be a focus across the academy. It has been a priority focus in the past and it may be time to bring it to the fore again.

**A governor asked whether there had been good uptake for the spelling programme Emile?**

The Deputy Head said that Gophers had the highest results. It's another tool and was received well with only one concern raised about it being clunky. There's always an alternative approach.

The Year 5 and Year 6 Lead Jenny Moore has been doing the Helen Arkell Spelling Test (HAST-2) single word spelling test with targeted children to identify their gaps in spelling knowledge.

Overall, all classes have made progress from the baseline. Handwriting may have dipped with online writing software being utilised.

The governor commented that it was a good approach to work with Bridgwater College Academy for the internal writing moderation.

**b) Early Years data**

The Deputy Head commented that the Early Years looks positive compared to last years data with more children being nearer to achieving for the Good Level of Development (GLD) the prime Early Years areas.

**c) Y1/EYs phonics and Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MCT)**

77% of Year 1 have already met the pass mark of 32 for the Year 1 phonics Screening. This is backed by 85% of Year 1 being on phase 5 phonics learning. There are still some children at phase 2 and 3. Teachers are targeting attention on those that need to progress further. The Teachers, a more experienced teacher and an Early

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	<p>Career Teacher, are working together effectively to target their teaching. There are 6 children in Year 2 who will need to retake the Y1 phonic screening this year (two of them have passed already, one is close).</p> <p>Regarding Timetables, 72% in Dolphins have passed the practice checks, 59% of Orcas have also passed the practice checks. Teachers are focused on those that need additional support.</p> <p>d) No More Marking Year 6 Writing was discussed above in the mainstream overview, and noted that the internal moderation was positive about progress and standards. Year 2 will be doing the Year 2 optional SATs assessments. Year 4 and 5 will do the non-fiction writing assessment during the window in May (1<sup>st</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>).</p> <p>e) Groups data The Deputy Head said there were no areas of concern in the groups data. Assessments were positive and moving forwards.</p>	

**TaL09/23**      **Diminishing the Difference**

a) Pupil Premium Data

The mainstream pupil premium data was in the Mainstream Data Overview document which was shared with governors before the meeting.

The Deputy Head has met with the link governor for pupil premium recently and she is looking into the data for him.

**A governor asked whether pupil premium children were making progress.**

The Deputy Head said that even with additional vulnerabilities the pupil premium cohort were overall making progress.

**TaL10/23**      **Teaching and Learning**

a) **Learning conversations / Teacher to Teacher Observations, Sharing and Improving practice**

The Deputy Head explained the process of learning conservation within the academy. She said there was a place for formal top down observations to impart knowledge, context and quality assurance. There was also space in the development of teachers to allow practitioner led practice-based improvement. The peer to peer observations have been set up between the

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two teachers in each year group in mainstream with a specific and narrow focus for example:

- looking at those children in Year 2 that were working at 1.8 in Year 1 and how they've demonstrated their learning their recent Year 2 SATs assessments, the observer looking at those children and what they are doing and how they are engaged and then sharing ideas.
- Or in Year 3 focusing on children who are distracted or slow to get started, looking at what's in place and what can be done to support them, ensuring enough engagement and challenge.

Teachers are given release time to observe their colleague and time is arranged to meet afterwards to discuss ideas. This practice of sharing ideas and adding to our toolkits will come back to a staff meeting to share what has been learnt. The academy is mindful of how is it impacting on teachers practice and provision and children's outcomes. The Trust has an extension of this looking at a single teachers' standard across the academy as an ongoing termly focus.

**b) Spelling update (Academy development plan action)**

Review of this action from the Academy Development plan is due this term. As discussed in the Headteacher's report from the last meeting, the academy is focusing on improving spelling outcomes. The Emile online spelling programme has been introduced for school and home use and has been well received. There are a variety tools in use across the academy to support spelling.

**c) Governor visit**

The governors who attended said it was a really useful session looking at how the three rs – revisit, recall and retain - are built into lessons. The governors appreciated mainstream access to see how things were being done. They reported that they had a chance to talk to children about it and the children understood the benefits of the strategy. There was a sense to the governors that subject leaders were unhappy with a lack of subject leader time, though staff were reluctant to discuss the issue. The governors wanted to pass huge thanks to the academy team for their time. There was hope for a visit to specialist provision in future.

**TaL11/23**

**Themed Policies**

**a) Policy Grid 2023/24**

The policy grid was shared with governors before the meeting. There were no questions about this.

**b) Policies for approval**

There were no policies submitted to be approved at this meeting.

SA left the meeting at 7:40pm

No.	Item	Action
<b>Governor Meeting – Final Section</b> <b>Chaired by Julie Summerhayes (Chair of Governors)</b>		
<b>G73/23</b>	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b>	
	<p>The minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were proposed for approval by Alex Tedford and seconded by Stuart Clowes and were approved without amendment. The confidential minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were also approved.</p> <p><b>All approved.</b> <b>For: 9 Against: 0 Abstain: 0</b></p> <p><i>[Governors not present at the meeting abstained from approving the minutes)</i></p>	
<b>G74/23</b>	<b><u>Papers for Information</u></b>	
	<p>There were no papers for information in this meeting.</p>	
<b>G75/23</b>	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b>	
	<p>a ) MAT update</p> <p>The Governing Body was delighted Peter Elliott could attend this meeting and the time with him was valuable. The current Chair of Governor is looking to move to the Trust in September.</p> <p>The Headteacher will begin meetings with the three elected staff representatives tomorrow to communicate regarding the TUPE consultation. Next Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May the Trust will start the consultation at Brookside. There are a few confidential changes regarding staff, that will be discussed with staff first. There are a number of measures that BTCT are proposing and these will be communicated to staff very soon. There are no planned redundancies from the Trust. The academy doesn't want to lose good staff through this process. On September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024 it will be academy work as usual, with transparency and responsiveness. We need to continue to have a stable school. The transfer process is challenging but is moving along.</p>	
<b>G76/23</b>	<b><u>Governors Visits and Training</u></b>	
	<p>a) <b>Governors Visits' to School</b> 26 February - Lauren Whinton, Stuart Clowes and Stuart Evans visited for the mainstream learning walk. Stuart Clowes came to see Sarah Ashford regarding Pupil Premium and children looked after Julies Summerhayes had a teams call with the Headteacher</p>	

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Lauren Whinton visited the Deputy Head on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and also visited Jenny Moore on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

To book individual visits to the school contact the Head teacher's Personal Assistant.

- b) Governor Training  
Governors didn't report any training at this meeting.

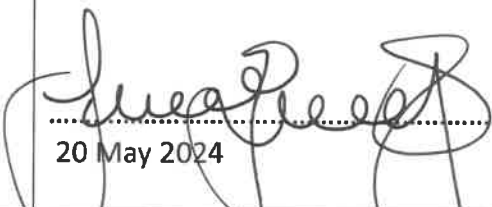

### G77/23 Any Other Business

The Headteacher commented that awards season was approaching and that he had been invited to the NEC in Birmingham to be considered for Education Establishment of the Year. It was a corporate experience and we weren't the winner of this occasion. There are three nominations in for the TES Awards for most Inclusive school, Best Academy and Best Headteacher.

No other business was raised.

### G78/23 Date, time, and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors will be on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6.00pm **Kangaroos Classroom**, Brookside Academy.  
(There will be the option to join this meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams)  
All meetings will start at 6pm.

	Signed on behalf of the Governors of Brookside Academy   ..... 20 May 2024	Signed on behalf of the Area Lead   ..... 20 May 2024	
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With no further business, the Vice Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.08 pm.

### Action List

Agenda Item	Action	By Whom	Due Date
G32/23	Elective home education 2 not 4 in LA data analysis Dec 2023	BW	29/04/2024
BUS11/23	Head teacher to consider carrying out a lockdown drill.	BW	01/07/2024
SPI07/23	Consider how to evidence LA SEND in Mainstream bullet points	NN/HF	20/05/2024

G62/23	Statutory Assessment targets in Headteachers Report needs colour coding	BW	20/05/2024
BUS08/23	Business Manager to check Specialist Provision non-staff costs for month 5 and 6 to confirm the alternative provision costs are in that cost centre.	SC	01/07/2024
BUS10/23	Capital Projects approved by governors to action – Melhuish and Saunders quote for works to flat roof above KS2 corridor (2009 Main Building extension side).	BW/SC	29/04/2024
BUS10/23	Costs for purchasing vehicles to be brought to the next Business Meeting	BW	01/07/2024
G67/23	Headteacher to find out the process for Members to hand over responsibility to the Multi-Academy Trust	BW	29/04/2024
BUS13/23	Annual Internal Scrutiny Report to next Business Meeting	SC	01/07/2024
BUS14/23	The Headteacher will find out the costs of the leak for the Risk Register.	BW	01/07/2024
G70/23	All governors to email Peter Elliott by 31 <sup>st</sup> May to say whether they would like to continue as a governor in the new Local Governing Body in September 2024.	All Governors	31/05/2024
G70/23	Clerk to let governors have the Trust Leader's email address.	JW	03/05/2024
G72/23	Head to think about Hall bookings. Can PE Team stagger dance and gym units to be outside instead?	BW	15/07/2024
G72/23	Lock down drill this term. Invite H&S governor to observe.	BW	15/07/2024

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