



BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
 Parsonage Lane Bishop's Stortford CM23 5BD
 Company No: 07791971

**Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting of the Academy Trust held at school on
 Wednesday 11th May 2022 at 19.00**

	Name	Category	End of Term
	Ruth Crowland	Member Appointed	06.03.25
	Vacancy	Member Appointed	
	Leigh Lloyd-Warren	Member Appointed	22.01.24
	Jane Mansfield – Vice Chair	Member Appointed	22.01.24
	Vacancy	Member Appointed	
*	Jim Winter	Member Appointed	06.07.24
	Ruth Bamlett	Member Appointed	14.03.23
	Catherine Gater – Chair	Member Appointed	13.07.24
	Charlotte Sear	Member Appointed	22.01.24
*	Richard Townsend	Member Appointed	03.03.24
	John Oglesby	Parent Appointed	07.09.25
	Vacancy	Parent Appointed	
	Gill Turner – Vice Chair	Parent Appointed	04.12.22
	Chris Emery	Parent Appointed	07.09.25
*	Lisa Watkins	Parent Appointed	30.06.22
*	Matthew Free	Parent Appointed	07.09.25
	Chris Ingate – Principal	Principal	Ex-Officio
	Ross Noblett	Member Appointed	01.04.23
	Claire Pressland	Member Appointed	02.11.24
	Kate Byers	Member Appointed	07.12.25
	Vacancy	Co-opted	
	Deryk Bull – Finance Director	Advisory	

* Denotes absence

Also Present

Ivan Shepherd – Clerk

Charlie Gilbank – Deputy Principal

Sam Stopps – Deputy Principal

Jolene Jacobson – Assistant Principal

Deryk Bull – Finance Director

Item		Action
1.	Welcome and receive apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from JW, RT, LW and MF.	
2.	Declarations / pecuniary interests There were no declarations of any new pecuniary interests. There were no declarations of any new gifts or hospitality.	

	There were no declarations of interests that would affect decisions being made at this meeting.	
3.	AOB There was no AOB put forward	
4.	MLM and action points Trustees AGREED that the minutes of the last FGB meeting held on 09.03.22 are a fair reflection of that meeting. Action points from previous meetings Action points AP1 – Clerk to contact the trustees who have not completed and returned a business interests form. Completed AP2 - All trustees to read the NGA 20 questions document and input their responses prior to the FGB meeting due to be held on the 11 th May 2022. Completed	
5.	Summary of March 22 White Paper The education White paper was circulated prior to the meeting to allow trustees to attend the meeting with questions. The Principal summarised the paper and the key points of discussion were as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEN / DA provision and the “levelling up” programme which is designed to ensure that the SEN / DA provision is consistently high in all schools. The Principal told the meeting that Birchwood is proud of the SEN / DA / safeguarding provision offered. In addition the school offers mental health provision for pupils and works very hard on attendance. • The white paper states that all schools will be a member of a MAT by 2030. This has been discussed at BSET meetings where the principle of a Bishops Stortford wide MAT has been discussed. Whilst these are just discussions, schools in BSET agree that they are stronger collaborating than competing. • The proposed starting salary for ECTs was covered. It was agreed that this will make teaching more attractive to graduates. 	
6.	Principal’s report and financial update The Principal’s report and the financial update was circulated prior to the meeting for governors to read and attend with questions and challenge. The key points of discussion were as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exam season is here and Yr.11 are only in school for the exams. Revision sessions across all subjects have been set up both via teams and face to face. Provision has been made for those who prefer to be in school or for those where transport outside of normal school hours could be a problem. Outliers are being supported and the school is working very hard to get them into school for exams. • Assessment of learning has been discussed with the staff council, the outcome was very positive. The Principal added that assessment of learning shows where progress is being made and is useful in a practical sense. 	

	<p>The Principal told the meeting that assessment of learning will be taken to the parent council to be discussed.</p> <p>A trustee asked about the focus group and if it was drawn from a wide pool of educational abilities.</p> <p>The Principal told the meeting that it was.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The English department is looking much more positive, recruitment has taken place and there is lots of high quality support for all students including Yr.11 during exam season. <p>A trustee asked about the recruitment of staff for the English department and the rationale that supported that recruitment.</p> <p>The Principal told the meeting that the pandemic had caused a big literacy gap, therefore the school needed to attract high quality English staff.</p> <p>A trustee asked if the school made sure that the recruitment offering was what was required to attract the right candidate.</p> <p>The Principal told trustees that in his opinion and in the opinion of the SLT the school needed high quality teaching and the recruitment process was designed around that.</p> <p>There will be an English “deep dive” in November / December 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and learning walk throughs have been well received, there is a focus on the “how” and “what” of teaching. <p>Faculty and subject specific teams are being given time to develop their curriculum. This time is very productive and is crucial in delivering teaching and learning objectives that focus on student outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance teaching remains a focus and the school continues to drive this forward. QA is linked to the performance management process. Arbour is now live in school. There have been some teething difficulties but nothing significant. Students continue to make use of the library. The atmosphere around the library is incredibly positive and vibrant. The communication of the change to the Yr8 / Yr9 curriculum was good and the change has been very positively received. The school SENCO and the SEN / DA department continue to work hard. The Principal added that the team, the provision and the leadership is excellent. <p>A governor asked if the SENCO / SEN teams meet with their colleagues in the other BSET schools.</p> <p>The Principal told the meeting that these meetings do happen and that they are very useful for exchanging ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance. DB told the meeting that the overall position is very positive. The desktop purchase was approved by trustees at and EGM. There is a review of the phone system, quotes and specifications have been sought. Quotes for a cctv system are in the process of being reviewed. The school will stay with Price Bailey for this year’s external audit. 	
7.	<p>Committee updates</p> <p>Curriculum RC told the meeting that curriculum was covered in the Principals report. RB will take over as chair of the curriculum committee from September 2022</p> <p>Personnel JM told the meeting that the personnel committee had discussed the Lead Practitioner role in depth and had reviewed both the pay and staffing structure.</p>	

	<p>The committee had received an equalities report.</p> <p>Finance GT told the meeting that the committee has reviewed and agreed the use of £387k reserves for identified capital projects. The decision was informed by forecasts which did not demonstrate a need for reserves to fund current expenditure. It was noted in particular that the projections included relevant staffing assumptions and the latest estimate for energy costs. Procurement decisions over £50k will need to be approved by FGB, this will also give FGB the opportunity to retest affordability of key projects. Lettings is doing well against budget</p> <p>Estates A third project manager has been found to quote for the development of the detached playing field. Quotations for the car park have been received and are being processed.</p>	
8.	<p>Link governor update Safeguarding (RB) RB told trustees that she has carried out a check on the Single Central Record.</p> <p>SEND & DA (RC) RC told the meeting that she has had a meeting with the SEND and DA department. They are working very hard and have plans in place to continue to improve support. RC added that SEND and DA had been covered comprehensively during the Principal's report</p> <p>Health & Safety (RT) RT did not attend the meeting. CGk told the meeting that RT carries out regular health and safety visits to the school and has sent a report which was circulated prior to the meeting.</p>	
9.	<p>Membership of the board of trustees LW will leave as a trustee at the end of her term. RC will leave the board of trustees after FGB meeting in July 2022. Recruitment for trustees continues and it is hoped that appointments can be made in the near future.</p>	
10.	<p>GDPR CGk told the meeting that he has received two SAR requests, both have been dealt within the time limit.</p>	
11.	<p>Policy management CGk told the meeting that the policies for the upcoming committee meetings have been loaded onto Teams.</p>	
12.	<p>Chair's Report The chair of trustees told the meeting that trustees did not attend the Parsonage Lane Residents Association meeting. A statement was sent to residents giving an update on the project and requesting them to send back additional questions to be addressed at a future meeting with residents.</p>	
13.	<p>Dates of future FGB meetings. All start at 19.00 13.07.22</p>	

Meeting closed at 21.00

Signed:

Date:

Catherine Gater – Chair of Trustees Birchwood High School