



MINSTHORPE ACADEMY TRUST
MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
10th December 2013 @ 4:30PM

THOSE PRESENT OR ABSENT

Mrs B Semper Chair of Governors	✓	Mrs A-M Spencer Vice Chair of Governors	✓
Mrs T Boughen	✓	Mr J Gregory (Principal)	✓
Mr T Cawthorne	Apologies	Mr N Hawkins	✓
Mrs D Cornwell	Apologies	Mr B Johnson	✓
Mrs D Davis	✓	Mrs S Lewis	✓
Mrs G Earith	✓	Mr S Newton	✓
Mrs W Evans	✓	Mr I Oxley	✓
Mrs V Gilmore	✓	Mr T Rutter	Apologies
13 /16 Governors present. This meeting is quorate.			

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs J Germain	Clerk to the Governors
Mrs E Fairhurst	Associate Governor
Mr B Dickinson	Associate Governor
Ms H Williams	Associate Governor
Mrs C Yates	Assistant Principal, Professional Learning Partnerships

Welcome by the Chair

1 Conflicts of Interests

There were no conflicts of interest.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr T Cawthorne, Mrs D Cornwell and Mr T Rutter

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Chair proposed these absences were consented to, the Principal seconded this proposal.

RESOLVED #6

The Governors resolved to consent to the absences of Mr T Cawthorne, Mrs D Cornwell and Mr T Rutter.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 17.09.13

Governors were asked to confirm they had received and read the draft copy of the minutes from the meeting held on the 17th September 2013. Corrections were requested by the Chair, of which there were none.

All other Governors present confirmed their receipt and accuracy resulting in their approval to be signed as a correct record of the meeting.

RESOLVED #7

The Governors resolve that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2013 be signed as a correct record.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 26.09.13

Governors were asked to confirm they had received and read the draft copy of the minutes from the meeting held on the 26th September 2013. Corrections were requested by the Chair, of which there were none.

All other Governors present confirmed their receipt and accuracy resulting in their approval to be signed as a correct record of the meeting.

RESOLVED #8

The Governors resolve that the minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2013 be signed as a correct record.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes (not included below)

There were no matters arising

6 Correspondence

No correspondence had been received by the Chair since the previous meeting.

7 Chairs Actions

Chair had attended the following events this term.

- Presentation Evening
- Governors' Conference at Woolley Hall
- Meetings with Anthony Smith and Ray Henshaw following Ray's appointment.

The Principal thanked the Chair of Governors for her attendance at all the above events, and also to all other Governors who support events at College. Their attendance is always valued by College staff.

8 Membership Changes

Chair advised the meeting of the resignation of Tim Rutter as a Director of the Academy. The Principal reminded Governors of Tim's relationship with the College through their work with Edge Hill University over the previous three years. The principal also explained how a change in his circumstances and teaching schedule at Edge Hill had resulted in him being unable to attend Governors' meetings. Tim's lack of attendance at meetings was in not any way an indication of a lack of interest in the Academy. A replacement for Tim Rutter will be detailed in the AGM which follows directly after this FGB meeting.

9 Board Changes

Chair advised Tim Rutter had also resigned as a Member of the Academy.

10 Statutory Books and Filings

The Company Secretary was instructed to make all necessary entries into the Company's statutory books and file all returns at Companies House arising from the business transacted at the meeting, including:

- Updating the registers of members and directors;
- Filing form(s) TM01.

11 Admissions Policies

The Principal advised the Governors the two admissions policies provided prior to the meeting followed the same format and content as all previous admission policies since the conversion to academy. During the conversion Governors had taken the decision to agree to the Local Authority managing the admissions application process. These policies referred to Year 7 and Year 12 admissions, including 'in year' admissions for Year 7.

The maximum number for Year 7 admissions was 300, with Year 12 at 400 (this number includes a restricted 25 students from outside the catchment area).

The Principal repeated the policies were same as the previous two years, with no changes made. The admissions policies will be before the Governors for approval each year.

The Principal recommended the policies to governors for the 2015/16 intake.

The Principal proposed the Governors accept the admissions policies along with the admissions numbers for Years 7 and 12 (300 and 400 respectively). Mr Oxley seconded this proposal which was further supported by a full show of hands.

RESOLVED #9

The Governors resolved to accept the proposed admission policies along with the admissions numbers for Years 7 and 12 (300 and 400 respectively).

12 Principal's Report

i) Student Safety and Wellbeing Update Sarah Adams

The Principal referred Governors to documents presented by Sarah Adams (Assistant Principal – Student Safety and Wellbeing) regarding both on and off site learning activities. The key to the categories were explained (residential, adventurous by external provider, enrichment, course requirement etc). The information provided indicated the extensive range of opportunities and to as many year groups as possible.

The principal then directed Governors to the Safeguarding report, also provided to Governors prior to the meeting. The anonymous information provided detailed the number of students at Minsthorpe currently at the Common Access Framework (CAF), Child in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plan levels. Comparisons were made to previous Safeguarding Reports provided to Governors and key figures were noted. Since November 2012 the information provided had also included which of these students were Pupil Premium students. The 'Ever 6' ruling for FSM was also clarified to Governors.

ii) Quality and Standards Update Helen Williams

Documents had been made available to all Governors prior to the meeting and were referred to throughout Helen's presentation. The documents referred to tonight and presentation slides will be uploaded onto Sharepoint for Governors to access.

Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Following recommendations by the College's Professional Partner, the SEF was now a live document, rather than a static one as previous. Helen referred Governors to the overview grid and highlighted key points:

- the sub-gradings and how College arrives at these (QASER)
- recognition College is not a strong 2
- being able to justify and defend gradings to OFSTED where appropriate
- each team reviews their own sections
- the Executive Summary or 'SEF on a page'

Blank sections will be completed over the course of the year – to tell the College's story.

All 5 sections (Achievement, Quality of Teaching, Behaviour and Safety, Leadership and Management and Overall Effectiveness) are currently judged as grade 2. These judgements were made prior to the Raise Online document being released, which confirms our thoughts.

Helen then explained the purpose and importance of each section, and reiterated to Governors the importance of their knowledge of the SEF's content and gradings.

College Strategic Plan (CSP) Review

The CSP centres around the two priorities taken from the most recent OFSTED Report (March 2012). These priorities are:

Priority 1 : Raise standards & accelerate progress throughout the college including Post 16, particularly in Mathematics

Priority 2 : Strengthen the impact of senior and middle leaders to drive improvement

Governors were directed to the CSP and the new sections of text. These sections indicated the progress identified for each objective during the review in September 2013. This is no longer a static document but responsive, with more targets and objectives added as these become apparent.

The final page of the CSP was referred to which listed all the additional CSP targets, added since September 2013. Further information was provided to Governors regarding these additional targets.

This document should make it clear to anyone reading it College are aware of the work being undertaken and what College is working towards.

OFSTED Health Check

Helen reminded Governors of the OFSTED key areas of focus:

- Progress and attainment (expected - 3LP) & better than – 4/5 LP) over time
- Teaching and impact on learning over time
- Appropriate teaching (differentiation) for each pupil
- Quality and impact of marking on progress
- Literacy and reading and mathematical skills (RWCM)
- SMSC promoted in lessons
- Link between improvements in teaching and appraisal
- Closing the gaps for different groups of pupils – PP key
- Leaders in bringing about improvements

Helen then detailed how College expected the inspection to be carried out and how they had prepared for this. This included:

- The main activities of the Inspector (in the classrooms)
- Documents scrutinised by Inspectors prior to arriving in College, including the website. This has been the focus of a lot of work recently and now includes statistical information and new links to relevant information.
- The Inspectors planning and time in College
- The Action Plan developed by Helen and followed by Leadership, examples of the steps within this were given to Governors.

Helen then informed the Governors of the progress already made for both College priorities, along with the work still to do (detailed list within the presentation)

Helen has also prepared an OFSTED Briefing Sheet for Governors, again available for Governors via Sharepoint. This document summarised key information and included the names of key staff and their roles in College, and links to various documents and information.

Mrs Davies asked why, given the excellent results in the Summer, wasn't the progress made judged to be excellent, rather than good. Helen replied that OFSTED will look at progress over time (3 years), and there are still pockets of students causing concerns (School Action),

resulting in a risk of Requires Improvement. Governors were informed that in terms of the Value Added, College were within the confidence indicator by 0.1%.

Helen was thanked for her succinct review, and acknowledgement was given that this short presentation belied the work involved.

The Principal informed Governors the Inspectors will ask them what evidence they have, in addition to the reports presented, of the work undertaken in College. Were they shown or did they know through other methods? How much do Governors challenge College? The information is easily gained, and Governors were asked to consider:

- When were they last in College?
- When did they last visit their linked Curriculum Area?
- When they last had a conversation with a teacher?
- When did they last check policies were being implemented?
- When did they last attend an event they were invited to? Some Colleges require a Governor to attend every Parents' Evening

The Principal added he did not intend to put Governors off and appreciated it was an unpaid 'job' and their support was invaluable, however he needed Governors to be aware it was no longer simply a honourable role to take on, it had clear responsibilities. Staff in departments will be most appreciative and welcoming should Governors wish to arrange a visit into College, via the clerk.

iii) Quality of Teaching

Liz Fairhurst

To enable Governors to be as informed as possible Liz delivered a presentation to Governors to inform them of the work being undertaken and the current grades for the 'Quality of Teaching' which included a demonstration of the College tracker, where all lesson observations are recorded and analysed.

Teaching staff are to be judged 'in the round' for appraisal purposes and this includes the College Strategic Plan, the QASER, Curriculum Area QA and 3 formal lesson observations (1 per term).

Liz used the tracker to demonstrate the current percentage of good or better lessons as 81% across the College. The lesson observations and their gradings have become more rigorous following OFSTED guidance.

Liz then demonstrated the tracker overview pages.

All the information recorded and the analysis taken feeds into the College QASER and SEF. The seven sub categories listed below are also graded, analysed and so give a good picture of strengths and areas for development, giving the opportunity to focus on specific areas.

The sub categories are:

- climate for learning,
- teacher's expectations,
- planning, strategies, intervention and support including TAs
- teaching of reading, writing communication and Maths
- Assessment
- Marking, feedback and homework
- SMSC

Leadership and Middle Leaders can confidently talk to Governors and OFSTED about the percentages for their department and the College as a whole, noting where improvements can be made where appropriate.

The Securing Good Programme is another key strategy employed to improve the quality of teaching, with staff from across the board involved. This gives College a story to tell regarding the improvement in our quality of teaching.

Liz suggested Governors look at the curriculum areas they are linked to and note the percentage of good or better lessons.

The information taken from the tracker enables Leadership to plan the Professional Learning Time/INSETs, with marking and feedback continuing to be a focus.

Liz reminded Governors OFSTED will ask them 'How do you know?' these grades are correct.

In response to a question from a Governor Liz informed the meeting the areas of development identified by OFSTED previously held no surprises and College were addressing them all.

College had produced support packages for Support for Achievement Mentors (SFAs) who spend time in lessons, a professional learning programme which is for teaching and support staff, SFAs, HLTAs and TAs have particular sessions available to them.

A further discussion took place regarding the non-observation SFA, TAs, volunteers and other support staff.

Governors thanked Mrs Fairhurst for her presentation, adding the tracking of teachers and the learning and teaching standards was phenomenal.

iv) Professional Learning Report Chrissie Yates

The Principal explained the changes in Chrissie's role to collaborating with a range of Professional Learning Partnerships (eg professional learning), with Cath Green taking over Chrissie's HR responsibilities. The number of employees at Minsthorpe has resulted in the HR workload being comparable to a medium sized company.

Chrissie's role includes the marketing of the School Centered Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) on behalf of the Yorkshire Three Counties Alliance (YTCA). Chrissie works two days per week for Edgehill University, two days for the SCITT and one day at Minsthorpe.

Prior to the meeting Chrissie had provided Governors with a detailed report regarding the professional learning expenditure and this was referred to during Chrissie's presentation to Governors. This presentation detailed the staff names and numbers attending development courses during the 2012/13 academic year.

Governors had also been provided with a copy of the Professional Learning Programme detailing the content of the INSET sessions and other training opportunities for the current academic year. These sessions link into the appraisal objectives and milestones of college staff.

Yorkshire Three Counties Alliance (YTCA) SCITT

Chrissie spoke further about the development of the SCITT. Governors were informed at the summer Governors' meeting of the success of the College's bid resulting in the YTCA receiving accreditation to award Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to its trainees. This was a difficult process and not a forgone conclusion, with the OFSTED grading of 'Satisfactory' complicating the situation.

Chrissie detailed the process for applicants, the involvement of UCAS, timescales to turn applications around and the marketing being undertaken.

The YTCA is currently interviewing candidates to fill the 50 places for September 2014. The subjects the current applicants are seeking places for were detailed (mainly English and PE). The YTCA had a target to recruit 8 Maths and 8 Science teachers.

The huge involvement and backing of Edge Hill University (EHU), and in particular Robert Smedley, was reiterated to the Governors. Courses and qualifications already supported by EHU include:

- Two Early years Foundation Degree cohorts
- Preparation for a degree in education which will feed into the SCITT
- Continuing Undergraduate courses (CUGS)
- Tomorrows Teachers with Post 16 students
- Schools University with Year 7-11
- Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE)
- Schools Direct

The Principal thanked Chrissie for her update and reminded Governors of the relationship College already has with numerous other establishments with early outreach programmes. He repeated the confidence EHU had shown in the College over the previous three years, which was more than any of the other establishments, and their vigorous fighting support during the bid process. It is imperative this excellent relationship continues after the current Principal's retirement, Chrissie will maintain this. The Principal designate knows this relationship exists and that it is a symbiotic relationship. EHU work with over 4000 establishments yet have supported only three to SCITT status, one being Minsthorpe.

EHU have recently appointed a member of staff to work with Chrissie and the SCITT and during the selection process it was made clear that the successful candidate would be expected to be a College Governor.

Chair thanked Chrissie for her presentation.

v) Skills For Learning Pilot Programme Liz Fairhurst

Skill for Learning (SfL) has been introduced into College following discussions at the Leadership Conference in January 2013, and forms part of the positive ethos coming from the Climate for Learning programme.

Year 7 will take part in the programme for the whole of this academic year. John Gregory has appointed Leanne Bradley who will coordinate the programme through Technology lessons, with Liz as strategic support.

Liz referred to the document provided prior to the meeting and informed Governors of the aim and detail of the programme, the planned events and the involvement of the remaining curriculum areas. A key aspect to the programme is the reference to the 6 R's:

- Respect
- Reflective
- Resourceful
- Responsible
- Resilient
- Reasoning

Liz informed the Governors the hope was to have timetabled lessons for the subject (currently delivered through Technology) and ensure our students become good learners. For example students may be asked to revise, but some may not know how to revise.

Chair thanked Mrs Fairhurst for her presentation. Mr Oxley requested the principal passed on the Governors thanks to staff for their continued hard work.

Chair also added one of the sessions she had attended at the Governors' Conference in November, was regarding being prepared for OFSTED. Chair advised the meeting she had sat through the session and left feeling happy that College and Governors were well prepared with additional OFSTED training sessions for Governors planned. College are keeping Governors as informed as possible.

13 Reports of Committees

Prior to the meeting Governors had been provided with minutes for each committee meetings held during this term. The Chair gave the Governors the opportunity note each of the separate committee minutes and raise questions or discuss matters arising.

- i) Behaviour and Discipline Committee 17.07.13 (Over 5 Day Review)
Questions were requested, of which there were none.
- ii) Pay and Personnel Committee 17.09.13
Questions were requested, of which there were none.
- iii) Behaviour and Discipline Committee 13.11.13 (Over 5 Day review)
Questions were requested, of which there were none.
- iv) Behaviour and Discipline Committee 22.11.13 (2 Perm Ex)
Questions were requested, of which there were none.
- v) Resources Committee 26.11.13
At this meeting and noted within these minutes, the members of the Resources Committee had recommended the Full Governing Body ratify the audited accounts of Minsthorpe Academy Trust. This will be referred to further in agenda item 14.
- vi) Standards and Students 03.12.13
Due to the lengthy meeting and the tight turnaround of these minutes, these are unavailable at this time. They will, however be made available prior to the next meeting of Governors.

14 Ratification of the MAT End of Year Accounts 2012/2013

Governors had been provided with electronic copies of the audited accounts and associated reports prior to the meeting. The Business Manager explained the detailed process the accountants and the Finance Team undergo to enable the accounts to arrive at this point. The Accountants in question had delivered a detailed presentation to the Resources Committee and the Business Manager highlighted salient points to additional Governors.

Confirmation was given that the structure of the accounts was based upon the Education Funding Agency (EFA) model. The first section of the accounts was the Governors Report, which included details of appointment process and Governors, their activity etc. with the second section being the Governance Report informing of how the College was run on a day-to-day basis.

Page 10: The change of wording from Governor/Director to Trustees will not affect the report in any way. This simply reflects the charitable trust activities; hence 'Trustees'.

Page 15: It was pointed out that although the Trustees delegate the actions to the Principal and Business Director, Trustees cannot delegate the responsibilities. It is vital Governors are aware of College's actions and that the Governors act as a critical friend. Documents will be signed off by the Principal as the Accounting Officer and by Mrs Semper as Chair of Governors and as Trustees they have responsibility for the accounts.

Page 19: This is the Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity, and although phrased as a double negative, is a confirmation that this is a 'clean' audit report. The changes introduced recently places more responsibility on the Principal, Business Director and the individual accountant involved in the audit.

Page 20 onwards consists of the accounting figures and follow the 'Charity' format as they did last year. Plans are underway to change the format to make it more 'user friendly'.

Explanations were given for a number of areas with further information available in the supporting numbered notes (pages 23 – 38). These explanations covered:

- Explanation of the terms 'restricted' (specific conditions) and 'unrestricted' (any purpose in line with charitable aims)funds
- Factoring in the depreciation of assets and buildings
- A sound net cash footing (£1.395m). This is as good as any other academy the accountants deal with and Trustees should be reassured.
- The Reserves Policy for the Academy has been set extremely high at £2.5m (3 months expenditure) where this is normally 1 month. This could be reflected upon with a view to reviewing this amount in future.
- 80% of expenses are for salaries
- Page 29: Staff Trustee remunerations over £30k are disclosed within £5k bands.
- Page 37: Pensions Information. The information contained in this section is provided by the College's actuaries. The Government has assured those affected that any deficit in funding will be 'backstopped' by the Government.
- Page 38: Subsidiary Undertakings -Transactions relating to Minsthorpe Charitable Trust have not been consolidated into the accounts. Despite the issues around control, influence and management of the Charitable Trust by the Academy Trust, the accountants felt comfortable that the small amounts involved would not affect the overall £10m budget. MCT was incorporated in June and this will no longer be an issue going forward.

Allotts had concluded their presentation to the Resources Committee by confirming this was a 'clean' audit and the College was on a sound financial footing.

The Management Report produced by Allotts was also made available prior to the meeting, and was referred to at this point. This report is submitted alongside the accounts and refers to the financial management of the College. Five areas were noted in this report and then responses provided by the Business Manager were noted in the minutes of the Resources Committee and also in a separate document provided for all Governors tonight. Despite these noted yet not substantial areas, the accountants had confirmed the Academy's financial controls were in good hands.

The Principal informed the Governors the Business Manager had undersold the Academy's position. The Academy was actually in an extremely healthy financial position with the accountants stating previously that these accounts would be the envy of many other academies. The Reserves Policy can be reviewed in the future, and the Principal advised he was aware the levels set were as a result of the 'rough ride' received from the Local Authority during conversion to academy status.

The previous Principal had left the College with a £1.2m balance and 250 employees, with the current Principal leaving the College with a £1.4m balance and 334 employees. The budget will tighten in the 2015/16 academic year with the introduction of the new funding formula, including for Post 16.

The Principal thanked the Business manager and her team.

The Business Manager requested questions regarding the accounts.

Mr Oxley requested confirmation the individual accountant would be held liable for errors, rather than the accounting firm and this was confirmed. A discussion took place regarding this issue and whether any claims made against the individual accountant could be settled appropriately and with compensation. This discussion concluded with the Principal confirming the processes undertaken and aims of the audited accounts, in addition to the work of the Responsible Officer.

The Principal proposed the Governors accept the audited accounts and refer these to the Members for approval. Mrs AM Spencer seconded this proposal. This proposal was supported by a full show of hands.

Resolved#10

The Governors resolved to refer the audited accounts for Minsthorpe Academy Trust to the Members for approval.

15 Governor Training and Development

The Clerk to the Governors gave details of an upcoming course in York and requested interested Governors contact her for more details.

A folder has been prepared to detail governors' attendance at any courses, meetings, events and open morning.

16 Confirmation of Time and Date of Next FGB Meeting – Tuesday, 8th April 2014 at 4:30pm

Governors were requested to note the date of the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

Governors noted the date of the next meeting of the Full Governing Body (Tuesday, 8th April 2014).

17 Other Business

A document comprising the relevant 'G' pages of the Raise Online report had been made available to Governors, one Governor requested a full copy of the report. This will be emailed out by the Clerk.

18 Identification of Confidential Items.

There were no confidential items.

As this was the Principal's final meeting before retirement, the Chair took the opportunity to thank John for his support and dedication, and the time and effort he put into ensuring the success of the students and College as a whole. Chair closed by saying it had been a pleasure to work with him.

The meeting closed at 6:40



Signed as a correct record
Mrs Beverley Semper
Chair of Governors