MINUTES

Meeting:	Governing Board	**Date:**	27 November 2024
Academy/SA	**Wellacre Technology Academy**		
Venue:	School	**Time:**	4.45 p.m.
Governance Professional:	**Trust Governor Services** Julie Lawson (Head of Service)	**Clerk:**	Trust GS

PRESENT:

Mr T Fredrickson
Ms L Hepple-Stokes
Mr C Hinchcliffe
Ms L Johnston
Mrs J O'Connor
Cllr S Procter
Mr S Russell (Vice Chair)
Mrs J Sharrock (Principal)
Mrs J Thirkill
Mr A Young (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Miss P Bailey (Business Director) (BD)
Miss A Evans (Clerk, Trust GS)

1. MEETING MANAGEMENT

In the absence of the Chair at the start of the meeting, the Vice Chair chaired the meeting.

1.1 ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES & APPOINTMENTS

The Principal welcomed Ms L Johnston who was attending her first meeting of the Board as a Parent Governor.

Apologies for absence were received for Mrs L Henry, Mrs M Radhakrishnan and Ms H Rayson.

Resolved:

- ***i)*** ***That the apologies for absence for Mrs L Henry, Mrs M Radhakrishnan and Ms H Rayson be accepted.***
- ***ii)*** ***That the attendance of Miss P Bailey at this meeting be approved.***
- ***iii)*** ***That the appointment of Ms L Johnston as Parent Governor be noted.***

1.2 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS & UPDATES TO BUSINESS INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest, direct or indirect pecuniary interest by members of the Board in respect of any item on the agenda.

1.3 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Resolved:

- ***i)*** ***That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2024 be approved as a correct record.***
- ***ii)*** ***That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024 be approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:***
  - *Page 826 change Q: Last Ofsted, they felt gapping students to Q: Last Ofsted, they felt grouping students*

2. PERFORMANCE REPORTS

2.1 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal proceeded on the assumption that the report had been read prior to the meeting as it had been distributed with the agenda.

The following highlights were noted:

i) **School Improvement**

Focus remains on the areas for improvements identified following the Ofsted inspection. Good progress has been made; work continues with Anne Seneviratne around Quality of Education.

The ambition and vision of the 3-year plan has been discussed at length by the School Leadership team. The ethos of inclusion and belonging have always been at the heart of our development plans. This now strongly features in DfE materials. The Principal reported on a DfE webinar on the importance of attendance and removing barriers to disadvantaged pupils. Creating a welcoming community is key to this.

ii) **Performance Data**

This confirmed data has now been released and will be reported and discussed at the Curriculum Committee meeting in January.

The Principal explained Progress 8 is below average and there is a gender-based outcomes gap in the North West. There are a number of factors which affect Progress 8;

i) Ethnicity – mostly white British
ii) Low numbers of EAL
iii) Boys

iii) **Collaboration and Continuing Professional Development**

Collaborative work continues and staff have taken advantage of free NPQs. Subject Leads from the School are involved in a number of Trafford Subject Networks and in neighbouring LAs. Phil Pemberton had a peer review with Saint Ambrose College as part of the SPP.

Jo Bentley has started the NPQ in Leading Teacher Development.

Jason Shiner, Assistant Principal is leading the Trafford Pupil Premium Focus Group and is working with the Greater Manchester Raising Aspirations group with a focus on ‘Working together to close the GCSE attainment gap for young men’.

Ben Toogood, Leader of Science continues to do the L3 Forest School qualification. Rob Hedge, Assistant Leader of English continues on NPQLL. Grace Cheung, Lead Practitioner of Maths, continues to work with NCETM and the Turing NW Maths Hub.

Wellacre continues to attend the DfE Attendance Hub and hosts Trafford’s Attendance meetings.

Christine Siddall, Assistant Leader in Maths continues to lead Transition work with SEERIH across Trafford.

iv) **Leadership & Staffing**

There have been no Teacher resignations for December 2024. A long-term Supply Teacher has gone through the recruitment process and been offered a permanent position starting January.

v) **School numbers**

721 students in school following a number of in-year admissions. Numbers on roll continues to increase (596 in September 2021).

vi) **Student Voice**

Involved in the Beewell Survey across Greater Manchester. Biannual Student Voice will take place in Spring.

vii) **Parent / Carer Voice**

A sample of responses were shared following a recent survey on Transition. Feedback had been positive. 75% of Parents requested online progress meetings rather than face to face when parents were consulted in Progress Evenings for 2024/25 in September.

There was an inclusion team drop in which 28 families attended.

Q: Do Year 7 Parents still come into school?
Yes, within first 2 weeks every Year 7 parent is invited in to 'Meet the Tutor'.

viii) **Attendance**

Wellacre is part of the DfE Attendance Hub and there is liaison with pupil absence teams to improve attendance. We make effective use of the DfE VYED tools and Principal, VP and Attendance Lead have all attended DfE VYED webinars.

ix) **Safeguarding**

There are 3 pupils on a Child Protection Plan, 6 Children in Need and 15 Young Carers. There have been 6 referrals to Child Social Services and an update was given on pupils identified as vulnerable in the autumn term.

x) **Pay and Appraisal**

All staff eligible were awarded pay progression. A verbal update is on the agenda.

xi) **Budget Monitoring**

The Principal explained this was covered at the Resources Committee meeting and a summary was provided in her report.

The aim is to achieve a balanced budget and it is expected this will be achieved in 2025/26, meanwhile reserves are being used as necessary.

There are 9 students with EHCPs who joined the School in September, the Principal explained the impact in terms of funding and staffing arrangements.

xii) **School Improvement Plan**

Governors discussed assessment of the SIP. The Principal advised all curriculum plans have been reviewed and externally audited.

There has been a focus on the clear identification of and acquisition of knowledge and the Principal advised she was very pleased with the progress made with curriculum planning.

The CPD meeting schedule has been revised and 16 meeting slots have now been given to curriculum Middle Leaders to continue with this work. An hour a fortnight has also been allocated for curriculum team meetings. Several links provided within the report provided Trustees with information about the impact of the additional time.

The School has invested heavily in Seneca, an online app for knowledge, as a result of this there has been more engagement in independent learning.

Flixton Girls School has asked to look at the Wellacre knowledge guides. Sale High have expressed interest in the MFL approach.

Cllr Proctor commended the school's engagement with the Beewell Survey and the inclusive approach.

Resolved: That the Principal's Report be received and noted.

2.2 **FINANCE & OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Miss Bailey advised that the monthly management accounts are shared every month via GovernorHub.

Trustees were advised there had been some changes since the Budget Plan was submitted in July as follows; the NJC settlement was agreed, the removal of performance related pay, the loss of the Stegta money, and changes to student numbers (163 to 156) due to late successful appeals and movement out of area. A business offering printing and copying equipment will b letting out the ground floor from 1 January 2025, and first floor rental is being considered

The Finance Report shows a year end carry forward of £316k, less the allocated transfers, the actual carry forward was £236,277 which is almost £14k more than previously thought.

The In-year deficit is £121,601. Next year will be in a surplus however the following year will be in a deficit of £18,111.

Q: What is the cash flow situation?
Miss Bailey advised the Cash Flow report is reviewed every month.

Resolved:
- ***i) That receipt of the Monthly Management Accounts be noted.***
- ***ii) That the Finance report be received and noted.***

2.3 **FINANCE MANUAL**

Miss Bailey presented the Finance manual. In accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook this should be reviewed and agreed by the Trust Board.

The Resources Committee has been through the manual and anything in green is an update from last years.

Q: What is the impact of the rise in NI?
The increase in NI is being funded by the Government but isn't in the budget yet as it is not known when the funding will be received.

Resolved: That the Finance Manual be noted and approved

Cllr Procter left the meeting.

3. COMPLIANCE

3.1 RISK REGISTER

Miss Bailey reported the Register is reviewed by the Resources Committee annually. The most recent risks added were Russia and Ukraine and Cyber-attacks.

Q: How are scams (cyber) linking into students?
There are 2 filtering systems. One called Smoothwall and the other called Impero.

It was decided that Miss Bailey would continue with the Cyber Security update at this point in the agenda.

i) **Cyber Security**

BD explained the filtering systems in place and explained that she had done a lot of work with the DfE Filtering and Monitoring standards and also taken a lot of time to work on this with DataSprire.

The school is confident that they are where they should be. The Server will be replaced next year and updates to windows 11 installed. This will improve the Schools' cyber security. The School complies with all requirements for risk protection insurance.

The Principal added that all staff have had the necessary training and the students do lots of work around this issue.

Filtering and Monitoring checks are completed on a monthly basis.

Resolved: ***That the Risk Register and Cyber Security updates be received and noted.***

Action: **Trustees will watch the NCSC cyber training at the next meeting.**

3.2 ANNUAL REPORT & AUDITED ACCOUNTS

A Governor noted a possible discrepancy for attendance on page 14 for Cllr Procter and noted the 'going concern' comments. A discussion took place.

Resolved:

i) That the Annual Report and Audited Accounts be received, approved and submitted to ESFA by 31 December, published on the Trust's website by 31 January and filed with Companies House by 31 May subject to PB checking the going concern and checking for consistency.

Q: Have the fees gone up or remained flat?
The fees have gone up.

Resolved:

ii) That the proposal to continue with external auditor DJ Mitten and internal auditor Redrambler be noted and approved.

3.3 **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Internal Audit report was presented in the agenda pack and PB advised the report from Redrambler is now shared with the financial statements.

BD explained there are all level 5 risks until page 182 where there are a couple of 2's due to the budget, which is out of their control due to the deficit and needing to use reserves to prop it up.

There was a recommendation that the date the Board approve the manual and the due date of the next review are published in the manual. Also that the Board should formerly approve the finance manual.

There was a level 4 recommendation and Governors considered the practice of deleting orders at year end should be reviewed.

It was recommended that the Monzo travel card should be included in the Finance Manual.

It was recommended that the checklist used for new suppliers is detailed in the manual, similarly with the procedure on how bank details are obtained are also put into the manual.

There is a level 3 due to a bank account with no activity being reconciled annually. It is recommended that this be done on a monthly basis.

It was recommended that the Finance Manual be amended to detail the procedure for checking employee bank details.

There is a level 4 recommendation that the procedure for changing bank details, and the use of a guidance checklist is added into the Finance Manual.

Resolved: ***That the Internal Audit Report be received and noted***

3.4 **SCHOOL WORKFORCE CENSUS**

Resolved: ***That submission of the School Workforce Census be noted and approved.***

3.5 **GOVERNANCE REPORT**

i) **Training**

The Vice Chair mentioned that GDPR and Safeguarding training is required. Miss Bailey added that all Governors/Trustees are required to watch the cyber security training.

The Principal reminded Trustees of training available via Trust GS, details and booking via GHub.

A skills audit is coming up in January 2025.

ii) **Visits**

There have been no visits this term and it was noted that this should be rectified on a biannual basis. Mrs Thirkill; Pupil Premium and Mr Russell and Mrs Henry; Safeguarding, SEND & LAC have dates in the diary for spring visits.

Resolved:

i) That Ms L Johnston be appointed to the Behaviour & Personal Development Committee

ii) That Mr A Young will join Miss P Bailey on H&S and ICT

iii) **Declarations**

All declarations have been completed apart from the new Parent Governor.

3.6 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Resolved:

- ***i) That the minutes of the Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting held 25 September 2024 be received and noted.***
- ***ii) That the minutes of the Behaviour, Attitudes & Personal Development Committee meeting held on 2 October 2024 be received and noted.***
- ***iii) That a verbal update of the Pay Committee held on the 16 October 2024 be received and noted.***
- ***iv) That a verbal update of the Resource Committee held on 13 November 2024 be received and noted.***

Mr S Russell left the meeting

3.7 **POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

Resolved: That the following policies be approved
Biometrics Policy November 2024
Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
Complaints Procedure
Freedom of Information Policy & Publication Scheme
Employer Discretions Policy
Pupil Premium Strategy Statement
SEN & Disability Information Report
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy
Student Emotional Health & Wellbeing Policy
Support Staff Appraisal Policy
Support Staff Pay Policy 2024 - 2025
Vexatious Complaints Policy

3.8 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

i) **Boilers**

Miss Bailey reported the discussion which took place at the Resource Committee in relation to the CIF Bids.

2 bids will be submitted. One is for the roof that is leaking over the dining room and the other is for the boiler. The school would need to be closed if meals could not be provided if the roof leaks into the canteen, or if the boiler cannot be repaired within a couple of days in periods of time of extreme weather and resulting temperatures.

ii) **GHub App**

It was noted that the GHub App is not working. Clerk to communicate this back to Trust GS.

iii) **Land**

There is no further update.

3.9 **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

There were no additional items requested for inclusion on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

3.10 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved: ***That the next meeting of the Governing Board be held at the school on 26 March at 4.45 p.m.***

The meeting closed at 6.50 p.m.

Chair of Governing Board ………………………………………

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK