



# Swift Academies

*Success will inspire future triumphs*

## Hurworth School

Local Governing Body  
4:30pm, Tuesday 25 February 2020

Hurworth School, Croft Road, Darlington DL2 2JG

### MINUTES

Present (Governors)	Rita Rees, Joe Kelley, Nichola Peaker (Head of School), Jane Hodgson (Chair), Eddie Donlan, Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer), Nick Gawthorpe, Bree Stamp, Stuart Bradnam
in attendance	Sarah Jones (Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies) Glen Hart (Chief Finance Officer, Swift Academies) Tracey Curtis (Governance Partner, Avec Partnership) Ben Sutherland (Assistant Head Teacher, Hurworth School) Sam Reilly, (Assistant Head Teacher, Hurworth School) Lindsay Burn (Assistant Head Teacher, Hurworth School)

Item	Description of discussion	Action by
1	<p><b>Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present</b> A round of introductions took place for the benefit of all present. This was the first meeting attended by the elected parent Governors, Bree Stamp and Joe Kelley.</p> <p>The Governance Partner confirmed that a quorum was present. The Scheme of Delegation of Swift Academies states that <i>the quorum for</i></p>	

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meetings of the Governors will be three voting Governors. Nine (9) Governors were present.

## 2 **Apologies for absence and their acceptance**

The Governance Partner reported that apologies for absence had been received from the following Governors of Hurworth School:

Louise Johnson  
Franco Sinaguglia

Governors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were accepted. The absence of Andrew Hutton (ICT Manager, Swift Academies) and Martin Clark was noted.

## 3 **Notification of items of urgent other business**

- items that the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School regard are of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the end of the agenda

No items of urgent other business were raised for consideration at the end of the agenda.

## 4 **Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests**

- a) complete / review the Register of Interest  
Governors and those present were reminded that they should complete the register of interest to declare any relevant business or pecuniary interest and close family relationship between Members or Governors and/or members or Governors and employees. A register should be completed annually and updated during each academic year where circumstances change. Governors confirmed that there had not been any changes to their respective Registers since they were completed during the current academic year.
- b) to declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting  
Governors and those present were reminded that they should declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting. No declarations of interest were received. Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

## 5 **Approval of minutes / review of actions / matters arising**

- Hurworth School, Local Governing Body meetings held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 and Tuesday 15 October 2019  
Draft minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of Hurworth School held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Governors RESOLVED that the minutes of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and should be signed by the Chair. The signed approved minutes would be retained by the Trust Business Manager.

Chair / Trust  
Business  
Manager

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Draft minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of Hurworth School held on Tuesday 15 October 2019 had been shared with the Chair of the meeting. It was explained that the minutes considered staff performance management and pay scale awards where appropriate and had not been circulated widely due to the personal information contained in them.

Governors RESOLVED that the minutes of Local Governing Body meeting of Hurworth School held on Tuesday 15 October 2019 would be considered for approval by the Chair and Governors who attended this meeting.

- **Review of actions**

Governors considered the agreed actions identified within the minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of Hurworth School held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 and were informed that all actions had been completed.

- **matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

## 6 **Chair's Report**

a) action taken

b) correspondence

No action or correspondence had been dealt with since the last meeting of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School in October 2019.

c) Local Authority briefing papers

Darlington 2019-2020 Childcare Sufficiency Review

The Local Authority briefing paper, Darlington 2019-2020 Childcare Sufficiency Review had been shared with Governors of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file. The Head of School reported that the briefing paper was aimed at primary schools but had been shared with Governors for information.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Local Authority briefing paper was noted.

## 7 **Head of School's Report including Chief Finance Officer and Trust Business Manager report**

a) **SEF/Action Plan**

b) **Education Development Partner Report**

c) **GCSE Analysis**

The Head of School's Report (February 2020) including the SEF / Action Plan, Education Development Partner Report and GCSE Analysis had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

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The Head of School welcomed the Senior Leadership Team of Hurworth School to the meeting and for the benefit of the newly elected Governors explained that they would present their respective sections of the Head of School Report to Governors. The Head of School explained that the Head of School Report is a standard document used by the Headteachers and Head of School's across Swift Academies. Senior Leadership Teams pull together the content of the report: changes contained in reports from one term to another are highlighted yellow for ease of reference. Governors were encouraged to ask questions, seek clarification and challenge the information presented in the Head of School Report.

The Head of School presented to Governors the content of the circulated Head of School's report, drawing Governor's attention to the following specific areas:

### **Pupil numbers**

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school was reported as 127 per year group. Hurworth School was over-subscribed with the total number of pupils broadly the same over the last three years.

It was confirmed that the number of "Darlington" secondary school pupils were increasing and would peak in 2025. However, numbers would start to decline again beyond 2029. Governors sought clarification how the school were coping with the increased pupil numbers: the Head of School explained that pupil numbers have historically been allocated beyond the pupil admission number (PAN) via the Appeals process with an average of 140 Year 7 pupils (13 over PAN) being admitted annually therefore the school is used to coping with numbers in excess of PAN.

It was reported that Hurworth School continues to be 'boy heavy' – the latest School Inspection Data Summary report shows Hurworth School continue to be in the lowest 20% of all schools for the proportion of girls.

There have been significant increases in the number of CLA / PLAC where students often require additional support and have an impact on staff / time / resources. Another significant number of pupils in this category joined the school in September 2019 (5 in Year 7); this resulted in a restructure of roles within the existing Student Support team which included the addition of a Student Support Officer in the Summer Term 2019 in preparation for the Year 7 intake from September 2019.

It was reported that from October 2019 the Student Support team have produced half-termly reports which analyse specific areas of the school as follows:

- Rewards and sanctions
- LAC / PLAC
- Clubs and visits
- Attendance
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Bullying and harassment

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The reports are written and produced by different personnel within the Student Support Team.

### **Mental Health**

It was reported that particularly in Key Stage 4, there are a number of students who are dealing with significant mental health issues which have a negative effect on health, wellbeing and education. There is a team of 8 staff trained in mental health first aid and provide daily support to all students at Hurworth School. Some students are signposted to other appropriate agencies such as Listening Post and Purple Matters. The services of a psychological wellbeing practitioner have been sourced recently. A link CAMHS worker is able to provide further information to school regarding progress of students in their care.

### **Attendance**

The Head of School commented that improved overall attendance to the school target of 95% was a key priority for the current academic year. An external consultant had supported the school to identify further improvements that could be made in this area. Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head of School Report for information in respect of year group breakdown.

Case studies are prepared for individual students (both current and historical) as well as overviews of year groups. The format for analysing attendance was highlighted as a strength in the recent Education Development Partner report. Governors were invited to explore attendance information retained in school.

### **Exclusions**

It was reported that permanent exclusions are below the national average.

Verbal abuse to an adult and persistent disruptive behaviour are the most likely reasons for a pupil to receive a fixed term exclusion. Overall fixed term exclusions are lower compared to the same period of the academic year in 2018-2019 (19 FTE compared to 51 FTE). Reducing the number of exclusions is a school priority for the current academic year.

Governors sought clarification of the role of the Virtual Head Teacher in respect of Looked after Children. It was reported that the number of Looked after Children across Darlington was increasing. The Virtual Head Teacher is contacted regarding individual students acting as a link between students, Local Authorities, external professionals, schools and home and supports the academic achievement of pupils.

### **Attainment and progress**

Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head of School's report for information in respect of pupils' education outcomes and the headlines

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from the secondary Inspection Summary Dashboard / Analyse School Performance documents.

It was reported that pupil's educational outcomes had dipped in some subject areas in summer 2019 and led the schools progress to be negative. The performance of Science although improving still requires further support and monitoring.

Geography and VCert PE are also that are being closely monitored following a period of very strong results there had been a dip in the past year.

The recruitment to EBacc remains below national levels but there has been an upward trend again for next year's cohort.

Governors queried whether EBacc was promoted in school. It was confirmed that EBacc was made available to all students who wished to opt for it and that all pupils receive support with choosing the most appropriate subjects for them. It was reported that the target for 2022 was that 75% of Key Stage 4 pupils should be studying EBacc. The Head of School confirmed that EBacc uptake had increased but that this was not currently in line with 2022 Government target. The Chief Executive Officer explained that the Russel Group of Universities had indicated recently that they are not seeking the EBacc qualification from students.

### **Curriculum planning**

Governors were informed that pupils were set on entry to the school based on Key Stage 2 information. There are 5 sets in Key Stage 3 and they are regularly reviewed to ensure that pupils are in the correct place to ensure that they optimize progress.

A presentation was made to Governors regarding the Curriculum Vision. A copy of the presentation would be retained on file. Governors were informed that Swift Academies provide a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum that ignites pupils love of learning and successfully unlocks the true potential of each individual. The presentation covered the following:

- Changes to the OFSTED framework
- Curriculum Journey's
- Verification documents
- Website overviews
- Learning Journeys
- Long Term & Medium Term Plans
- Non-negotiable knowledge
- Retrieval of knowledge
- ILT's
- Next Steps

Governors sought clarification of how it would be ensured that knowledge was grasped by students. It was reported that staff assess pupil's knowledge lesson by lesson and adapt their lessons as necessary:

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retrieval activities are implemented to ensure understanding is in place. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own education and independent learning. Further work is to be developed and implemented to ensure that students can access a wide variety of retrieval activities, allowing them as they move forward to utilize the specific one/s that they consider to be most effective for their learning. Information in respect of the revised curriculum has been uploaded to the school website.

It was reported that the Trust Curriculum Development Group (CDG) had been reviewed the curriculum across Swift Academies. A meeting of all teaching & non-teaching staff across the Trust was due to take place on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Staff would meet in subject specific teams to consider their current curriculum provision and discuss any changes which needed to be implemented ready for September 2020.

### **Financial management and governance**

The Chief Finance Officer reported that during Autumn Term 2019, the Trust was subject to the annual external audit which was undertaken by Clive Owen. Six areas were identified where controls could be improved. All recommendations were implemented in December 2019.

Governors were reminded that a programme of internal audit to review GDPR, IT, insurance and risk management had been agreed by Directors. Clive Owen LLP have undertaken the internal audit and identified three areas of low importance around obtaining contractors insurance certificates, the use of USB memory sticks and the updating of an asset inventory.

Monthly management accounts continue to be shared with the Chair of the Trust and Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee. Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head of School Report for information in respect of the management accounts position at 31 December 2019. A deficit of £2,000 against a break even budget was predicted. Estimated reserves at August 2020 would be circa £27k.

### **School Resource Management self-assessment**

In September 2018 the Department had published a voluntary self-assessment tool, comprising a checklist and dashboard, to help maintain a good level of financial health and resource management. From Autumn Term 2019, the self-assessment became mandatory for academy trusts on an annual basis. A copy of the completed self-assessment must be provided to the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

### **Schedule of contracts**

The Trust Business Manager reported that all contracts / service level agreements continue to be reviewed individually as they expire and best value and quality sought for each agreement.

It was reported that in July 2019, gas contracts across the Trust were revised and changed to a new supplier which was anticipated to save approximately £20k - £25k compared to the previous contract.

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Electricity contracts across the Trust were due for renewal in December 2019, discussions had already commenced to source the best deal with a view to making savings possible or freeze costs.

### **Health and Safety**

Interim Health and Safety and Premises audits are due to take place week commencing Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020: feedback would be provided at the Summer Term meeting of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School, premises meetings continue to be extremely useful as they allow site staff across the Trust to meet, discuss issues and share best practice in aspects of Health and Safety. Termly Health and Safety Committee meetings continue to be held termly where ongoing issues and concerns are discussed.

### **Estate management**

It was reported that the CIF 2020-2021 bidding had closed in December 2019. This year project options were being explored by a surveying company who write the bids on a 'no win, no fee' basis. Preparation of potential applications had already commenced. The surveying company was reported to have a proven track record in assisting schools obtain funding without the risk of costs paid upfront without any guarantee of success. The applications in respect of Hurworth School had been made for new boilers and heating and the replacement of flat rooves. In addition, there were two pending Trust SEEF applications to reduce carbon footprint and implement LED lighting throughout the school. An application would be explored for Hurworth School before the end of Autumn Term.

### **HR**

Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head of School report for information in respect of staff absence. During Autumn Term there had been no long term absences through illness. There were reported to be two vacancies on teaching staff. Both posts are currently being covered by regular supply teachers and appointments have been made to both posts from September 2020.

### **Parent Views**

During the current academic year, 123 responses were received from parents of Year 7, Year 9 and Year 11 students. The vast majority were reported to be very positive with no significant issues being raised. Questionnaire findings would be used to inform the school's strategic plan for the following academic year.

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**8 Removal of the Outstanding exemption consultation**

The Department for Education guidance *Removal of the outstanding exemption (Government consultation)* had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Head of School reported that consultation had recently closed regarding the removal of the outstanding exemption. Hurworth School had not been inspected (Section 5) since 2008. Results in the 2018-2019 academic year had dipped, the Head of School reported that the dip in results was considered to be a blip and reminded Governors of the Oqual communications in respect of English results.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the Department for Education guidance *Removal of the outstanding exemption* and information presented was noted.

**9 Admissions arrangements for 2021- 2022**

The Head of School reported that there had been 300 applications for student places in Year 7 from September 2020. The pupil admission number (PAN) for Hurworth School was 127: 140 students would be accepted. It was likely appeals would be made for admission in Year 7.

Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

**10 Chief Executive Officer's Report**

- a) Scheme of Delegation
- b) Trust Development Plan

The Chief Executive Officer's Report, Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan were noted.

**11 Chief Finance Officer Report  
Risk Register**

The Risk Register for Hurworth School had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Governors' attention was drawn to the content of the Risk Register in respect of risks RAG rated. The Chief Finance Officer reported that policies and procedures were in place to mitigate risks. Areas identified red in the respective school Risk Registers would automatically be included in the Trust Risk Register.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Risk Register was noted and that the Risk Register for Hurworth School would continue to be reviewed at each meeting of the Local Governing Body.

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**12 Trust ICT Manager Report / ICT Development Plan**

The ICT Development Plan had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated ICT Development Plan was noted.

*During this item Rita Rees left the meeting*

**13 Single Central Record: for signature by the Head Teacher and Chair**

Governors RESOLVED that the single central record for Hurworth School should be reviewed and signed by the Head of School and Chair of the Local Governing Body.

Head of School / Chair

**14 Special interest governor update:**

- a) Premises / Health & Safety: Rita Rees
- b) Safeguarding & Welfare, Looked After Children (LAC), e-safety: Louise Johnson
- c) Special Educational Needs (SEN) including SEMH: Louise Johnson
- d) Finance: Rita Rees
- e) Values, Community & Equality: Jane Hodgson
- f) E-Safety: Franco Sinaguglia
- g) Careers & Transition: Jane Hodgson (Franco Sinaguglia)
- h) Standards (Teaching, Learning, Curriculum & Progress): Rita Rees
- i) Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT): Jane Hodgson

The Head of School reported that governors were regularly in school. Governors would be asked to complete the standard report form that had been introduced across Swift Academies. Governors were asked to ensure that termly visits took place as a minimum and an invitation for new Governors to visit school to find out more about the special interest areas was extended.

**15 Policies for approval / review / information**

- a) For information – Swift approved policies: Pay policy for teachers and support staff; Asbestos Trust Statement of Intent and Asbestos Plan; Equality Objectives; Biometric Data Policy; Substance Misuse Policy; Risk Management Policy and Procedure; Phased and Flexible Retirement Policy.
- b) For information – Hurworth reviewed policies: British Values and Collective worship statement, Pupil premium statement, Exams, Independent Learning, Non-examination assessment, Physical Activity, SEN, Supporting students with medical conditions, Transition, Values charter

Governors were reminded that school policies could be found on the school website.

Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

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**16 Standing Items**

**Feedback from Director and Governor development session  
Thursday 6 February 2020 – acronym buster for Governors**

Governors were asked to contact the school if there were any further acronyms which they felt needed adding to the circulated document to support their understanding.

Governors RESOLVED that the Head Teacher (The Rydal Academy) would be asked to present information to the Governors of Hurworth School in respect of the current Ofsted framework. The Head of School would confirm arrangements via e-mail to Governors.

**17 Date of next meeting Chairs and Vice-Chairs meeting 1:30pm, Friday 6 March 2020, The Rydal Academy**

Governors were reminded that the next Chair and Vice-Chair session would take place from 1:30pm on Friday 6 March 2020 at The Rydal Academy. The Chair confirmed that she was unable to attend the termly briefing.

Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted. The Head of School would seek Governor representatives of Hurworth School via e-mail to attend the termly Chair and Vice Chair briefing.

**Concluding items**

**18 Any urgent other business raised under item 4**

No items of urgent other business had been raised for consideration.

**19 Approval of documents for inspection**

Governors RESOLVED that the agenda, approved minutes and supporting documents be made available for public inspection with the exception of information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers.

**20 Date and time of future meetings**

A schedule of meetings (2019-2020) across the governance structure of Swift Academies had been shared with Governors of Hurworth School.

Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted and that the next meeting of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School would take place from 4:30pm on Tuesday 9 June 2020. The meeting closed at 6:30pm.

*These minutes were approved by the Governors of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School with effect from Monday 8 June 2020. The minutes were approved electronically via an e-mail communication with Governors of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School.*

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