

Standards Committee
4:30pm, Wednesday 26 February 2020

The Rydal Academy, Rydal Road, Darlington DL1 4BH

MINUTES

Present: (Directors)	Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer), Derek Bell, Keith Bernstone (Chair), Tim Fisher
In attendance:	Nichola Peaker, Head of School, Hurworth School Nick Lindsay, Head of School, Longfield Academy Hayley Moohan, Assistant Head Teacher, Teaching and Learning Progress John Armitage, Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy Tracey Curtis, Governance Partner, Avec Partnership

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Discussion</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	<p>Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present The Governance Partner confirmed that a quorum was present. The Scheme of Delegation for Swift Academies stated that <i>the quorum for each of the committees was three voting directors</i>. Four (4) Directors were present.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for absence and their acceptance It was reported that apologies for absence had been received from Julie Cornelius. Directors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were accepted.</p>	
3	<p>Notification of items of urgent other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> items that the Standards Committee of the Board of Directors of Swift Academies regard are of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the end of the agenda <p>No items of urgent other business were notified for consideration at the end of the agenda.</p>	

4 **Declaration of personal or pecuniary interests**

- a) complete / review the Register of Interest
Directors 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 Directors and/or members or Directors and employees. A register should be completed annually and updated during each academic year where circumstances change.
- b) to declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting
Directors 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.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

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

- **Standards Committee, Wednesday 2 October 2019**

Draft minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Swift Academies held on Wednesday 2 October 2019 had been circulated to Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Swift Academies held on Wednesday 2 October 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and should be signed by the Chair. The Trust Business Manager would retain the approved signed minutes.

- **Review of actions**

Actions contained in the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Swift Academies held on Wednesday 2 October 2019 had been completed.

- **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

6 **The Rydal Academy**

- a) Head Teacher Report
- b) Education Development Partner Report
- c) OFSTED Report
- d) Letter from the Regional Schools Commissioner
- e) SEF/Action Plan

The Head Teacher Report, Education Development Partner Report, Ofsted Report, Letter from the Regional Schools Commissioner and SEF/Action Plan had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Head Teacher presented to Directors the content of the circulated Head Teacher's report, drawing Directors' attention to the summary of change within each section.

Chair / Trust
Business
Manager

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It was reported that the Ofsted Inspection Report contained two key areas of focus:

- *Leaders have developed a curriculum that provides pupils with memorable experiences. Pupils' knowledge in some subjects, such as geography, history and science, is less developed. The work required of pupils does not enable them to explore the curriculum in sufficient depth. Leaders need to improve their curriculum planning to ensure that pupils know and remember more in the wider curriculum. For example, pupils need more opportunities to apply their knowledge in subjects such as geography, history and science.*
- *Leaders and teachers are developing pupils' phonics skills. Pupils' wider comprehension skills are less developed. Their progress in reading has been mixed. Leaders need to intensify actions to sharpen pupils' reading skills to improve their understanding.*

The Head Teacher reported that staff had worked to develop new improved reading arrangements for pupils at The Rydal Academy. There was a renewed focus on text selection in order to ensure a deep understanding was developed amongst pupils.

The Head Teacher further reported that an extensive review of the curriculum was underway across Swift Academies. The introduction of specialist subject teachers was also being explored for introduction at The Rydal Academy with the revised curriculum from September 2020.

Directors commented positively on the work undertaken to date at The Rydal Academy following the Ofsted Inspection and a sharpening focus especially in Reading. Directors commented on the work that had taken place which would allow teaching staff as much time as possible to focus on the review of a revised curriculum to be introduced from September 2020.

Education Development Partner Report

The Head Teacher reported that the last EDP visit to The Rydal Academy had focused on the work that had been undertaken by staff since the Ofsted inspection. It was reported that the focus of the visit had been a productive use of Senior Leadership Team time with good advice received from the EDP. Directors' attention was drawn to the content of the circulated Education Development Partner Report for recommendations in respect of the development of Reading and development of the curriculum.

OFSTED Report

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Ofsted Inspection Report in respect of The Rydal Academy was noted.

Letter from the Regional Schools Commissioner

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated letter from the Regional Schools Commissioner was noted.

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SEF/Action Plan

The Head Teacher reported that the circulated SEF/Action Plan reflected a number of other documents and provided a focus of activities for the current academic year.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated SEF/Action Plan and information reported was noted.

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Hurworth School

- a) Head of School Report
- b) Education Development Partner Report
- c) Removal of the Outstanding Exemption Consultation Document
- d) SEF / Action Plan

The Head of School Report, Education Development Partner Report, removal of the Outstanding Exemption Consultation document and SEF / Action Plan had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Head of School (Hurworth School) presented to Directors and those present the content of the circulated Head of School's report, drawing attention to the summary of change within each section.

Head of School Report

Directors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head of School Report for information in respect of the current Year 11 cohort and projected education outcomes. Directors were informed that there continued to be a focus on boys and disadvantaged pupils. The Head of School reported that where pupils are educated off-site, they are closely monitored and case studies for all pupils are retained to support their progress and achievement.

Directors sought clarification regarding the support that had been initiated by Directors and provided by the Chief Executive from September 2019; the Head of School reported that the Chief Executive was based at Hurworth 3 days a week and was attending all Leadership Team meetings/briefings/whole school staff briefings and he was working closely with the Leadership Team/Student Support and Middle Leaders to support them in driving forward their respective SEF/Action Plans.

ISDR

The Head of School reported that the content of the ISDR for Hurworth School contained a range of positive information. Computer Science has an average point score of 5.9 which is in the top 20% of schools in the top 20% of schools nationally. Health and Social Care and I-Media have an average points score of 5.6 and 5.3 respectively. Both are in the highest 20% of schools in 2019 and the proportion of entries was at or above national average. 89% achieved Grade 4+, which is the highest 20% of all schools in 2018 and 2019.

However, the EBacc element of Progress 8 (minus 0.6) was reported as significantly below the national average and in the lowest 20% of all schools in 2017-2019 and 2019. English, Maths and the Open Progress

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8 declined between 2018 and 2019. EBacc entry in the school in 2019 was 9% with the greatest barrier to entry the number of pupils choosing to study MFL. Science value added (minus 0.7) was in the lowest 20% of schools nationally and significantly below the national average in both 2019 and 2018. The average points score in Chemistry (5.1), Biology (4.9) and Physics (4.8) were in the lowest 20% of Schools nationally.

Directors sought clarification regarding the current situation and “predicted” progress measures for 2020. The Head of School reported that Geography, Science and VCert PE were being closely monitored and supported in their bid to improve their respective subjects progress; this monitoring was indicating that there would be significant progress in each subject in 2020.

Education Development Partner (EDP) Report

The Head of School discussed with Directors the content of the circulated EDP Report. Directors’ were informed that the latest EDP visit had taken a *health check* approach. Six departments were the subject of mock Ofsted Inspection and were only informed on the day prior. A range of recommendations had since been implemented. Directors’ attention was drawn to the EDP report for information in respect of the recommendations.

Removal of the Outstanding Exemption Consultation Document

The Head of School reported that consultation had recently been launched regarding the removal of the outstanding exemption. Hurworth School had not been inspected (Section 5) since 2008.

SEF / Action Plan

The Head of School discussed with Directors the content of the circulated SEF / Action Plan for Hurworth School. Directors were informed of the curriculum learning journey’s embarked upon by staff, which aimed to underpin what is being done and why. Teaching staff were now more explicit with students and consistent approach in terms of language used, for instance the *unlocking of tasks*.

Directors sought clarification of the approach to how pupils learn to learn and how they would identify their preferred methods of learning.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the Head of School Report (Hurworth School), Education Development Partner Report, removal of the Outstanding Exemption Consultation document and SEF / Action Plan were noted.

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Longfield Academy

- a) Head of School Report
- b) Education Development Partner (EDP) visit report (Autumn Term 2019)
- c) SEF / Action Plan

The Head of School Report (Longfield Academy), SEF / Action Plan and Education Development Partner visit report had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

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The Head of School presented to Directors the content of the circulated Head of School Report, SEF / Action Plan and Education Development Partner visit report. Drawing particular attention to the summary of change.

Admissions

Directors were reminded that the pupil admission number (PAN) for Longfield School was 180 per year group. The school is currently slightly undersubscribed: total numbers have been broadly the same over the last three years. There are 890 pupils in school currently; the current indication was that 187 Year 7 pupils would join the school in September 2020.

Mobility / Stability

Directors were informed that mobility was low and pupil stability high: three pupils had been permanently excluded with one now accessing mainstream secondary education, the other two pupils were currently attending Rise Carr College.

Attendance

Directors were informed that whole school attendance had increased by 0.37% compared to the previous year and increased by 2.71% in three years.

Exclusions

It was reported that there had been a total of 9 students permanently excluded in 2018-2019. To date (2019-2020) the number of students permanently excluded was reported as 3. Permanent exclusions are 0.3% of the school population which is slightly above the national average (0.20% in 2017-2018).

The Head of School reported that a Transition Co-ordinator had been appointed at Longfield Academy. The Co-ordinator would work with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in "feeder" primary schools. The aim of the appointment of the Transition Co-ordinator was to avoid an academic dip in Year 7 when students become part of secondary education, and have a more natural progression from primary to secondary school. It was reported that much more information was known already as a direct result of the appointment of the Transition Co-ordinator. Meetings with appropriate agencies had been arranged for pupils and their families, for instance Early Help / SEN reviews in order to address barriers to learning.

The Head Teacher (The Rydal Academy) commented that a number of primary schools had commented favourably and were supportive of the Transition model adopted by Longfield Academy.

The Head of School reminded Directors and those present that the current Year 11 were the last students to attend Longfield Academy of Sport (prior to the involvement of Swift Academies). A large number of these students were reported to be engaged with the school and reported to be revising and attending lessons in order to have as much preparation for Summer Term 2020 examinations.

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Attainment and Progress

The Head of School reported that the Progress 8 predicted score for the current Year 11 cohort was 0.126.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Head of School's Report and information presented was noted in respect of Longfield Academy.

Curriculum Journey

Directors were presented with information regarding the curriculum review undertaken by staff at Longfield Academy. The presentation covered the following:

What is our vision for our Curriculum?

Key Stage 3 – Key Stage 4 English Baccalaureate and options

Longfield Learning Station

- liaise
- engage
- approach
- resilience
- network

Changes to the framework

Subject Intent

Long Term Plan

Medium Term Plan

Learning Track

Learning Journey

Lesson PPT

Lesson Structure

Retrieval of Knowledge

Science of Teaching

It was reported that a cross Trust Curriculum Development Group had reviewed the curriculum across Swift Academies: all teaching staff were involved including more experienced teachers supporting those less experienced in the development of plans. A meeting of all teaching & non-teaching staff was due to take place on Wednesday 6th March 2020, where the further development of the curriculum would be explored by staff.

Directors sought clarification regarding aspects of the Curriculum Journey presented: Directors commented positively on the work to date in respect of curriculum but queried arrangements for supply teachers to ensure they delivered the same level of teaching to students. It was reported that packs of information in respect of subject areas would be prepared for sharing with supply teachers in order to ensure a consistent approach. It was intended that supply teachers would be sourced who were prepared to deliver a consistent lesson and mark students' work.

Education Development Partner Report

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Education Development Partner Report (Longfield Academy) was noted.

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SEF / Action Plan

The Head of School reported that staff were performing exceptionally well and had shown themselves to be more than capable. The Head of School thanked Directors and the Chief Executive Officer for allowing Longfield to develop as Longfield Academy.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the SEF / Action Plan and information reported was noted.

9 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 Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Scheme of Delegation

It was reported that the Scheme of Delegation continued to be a standing item on agendas of Local Governing Body and Director meetings and would be reviewed during each meeting to ensure that it was fit for purpose.

The Chief Executive Officer reported that the latest changes were in respect of the approval of statutory and non-statutory policies.

MAT Development

The Chief Executive Officer reported that the results of the recent skills audit had not identified any *global* areas where training or development was required. As a result, a number of bespoke clinics had been run during the MAT Development Session held on Thursday 6 February 2020. The Summer Term MAT Development Session would cover the curriculum design and review.

School Transport

Directors were informed that adjustments had been made to Hurworth School transport arrangements following the introduction of compliance for all national transport with Public Service Vehicle Regulations (PSVAR) from 1 January 2020. During December 2019 the deadline was extended to 31 July 2020. A tendering exercise was undertaken via the Darlington Borough Council framework, with a rationalised service introduced for a period of four years with a price increase from £3 to £3.80 per pupil per day

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Chief Executive Officer Report, Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan and information reported was noted.

10 Trust Review Letter

The Chief Executive Officer reported that the Department for Education Trust Review meeting had taken place during Autumn Term 2019. A copy of the letter documenting the outcome including agreed Trust priorities had been circulated to Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

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The agreed priorities for Swift Academies during the current academic year were reported as follows:

- continuing improvement at Longfield Academy
- closing the gap for disadvantaged pupils at both Hurworth School and Longfield Academy
- develop reading comprehension at The Rydal Academy
- continue working with the SRMA deployed within the Trust

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the letter from the Department for Education in respect of the Trust Review for Swift Academies and information reported was noted.

11 Policies for approval / review / information

- a) Pupil Premium Policy
- b) Probationary Policy for Support Staff

The Pupil Premium Policy and Probationary Policy for Support Staff had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the Pupil Premium Policy and Probationary Policy for Support Staff were approved and adopted with immediate effect.

Concluding items

12 Any urgent other business raised under item 5

No items of urgent other business had been notified.

13 Approval of documents for inspection

Directors 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.

14 Dates, times and venue of future meetings

Directors RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Standards Committee of Swift Academies would take place from 4:30pm on Wednesday 10 June 2020 at Hurworth School.

The meeting closed at 6:30pm.

These minutes were approved by the Director members of the Standards Committee of Swift Academies with effect from Wednesday 10 June 2020. The minutes were approved electronically via an e-mail communication with Director members of the Standards Committee of Swift Academies.

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