



# Swift Academies

*Success will inspire future triumphs*

**The Rydal Academy**

**Local Governing Body**

**Monday 3 October 2022**

## MINUTES

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Present<br>(Governors) | Mark Gray (Chair), John Armitage (Head Teacher), Kelly-Ann Lyle, Gaurav Bhatia, Katie Turnbull, Melanie Chapman, Ewa Kaszuba  |
| in attendance          | Derek Bell: Swift Academies Board of Governors<br>Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer)<br>Sarah Jones: Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies<br>Glen Hart: Chief Finance Officer, Swift Academies<br>Leon Watson: Trust ICT Manager, Swift Academies<br>Caroline Jennings: Trust Governance and Policy Officer (Clerk) |

| Item | Description of discussion  | Action by |
|------|--|-----------|
|      | <b>PART A: Procedural items</b>  |           |
| 1.   | <p><b>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</b><br/>It was confirmed that a quorum was present. The Scheme of Delegation for Swift Academies stated that the quorum for meetings of the Governors will be three voting Governors. 7 (seven) Governors were present.</p> <p>The Chair encouraged Governors to seek clarification where discussions or information were not understood.</p> |           |
| 2.   | <p><b>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</b><br/>It was reported that apologies had been received from Mark Emerson, Sarah Clough and Sarah Newrick</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were accepted.</p> <p>It was noted that Troy Turner sent apologies post-meeting.</p>  |           |
| 3.   | <p><b>Election of Chair</b><br/>Governors RESOLVED that Mark Gray was elected Chair of the Local Governing Body until the first meeting in the Autumn Term 2023.</p>   |           |

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| 4.  | <b>Election of Vice Chair</b><br>Due to the absence of Troy Turner (current Vice Chair), and no other volunteers to take up this post, Governors RESOLVED to delay the election until Troy had been contacted by the Clerk.  |       |
| 5.  | <b>Terms of Office due to Expire</b><br>There were no terms of office due to expire.   |       |
| 6.  | <b>Governing Body Code of Conduct</b><br>Governors signed a declaration to confirm they had read the Governors Code of Conduct.  |       |
| 7.  | <b>Notification of items of urgent other business</b><br>Three governors needed to consider a Permanent Exclusion.   |       |
| 8.  | <b>Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests.</b><br>All Governors present completed submitted the annual Declaration of Interest form for the current academic year. The Clerk will contact absent Governors, and collate all responses to be published on the website.<br><br>No declarations of interest were received for this agenda.   | Clerk |
| 9.  | <b>Approval of minutes / review of actions / matters arising</b><br>Draft minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of The Rydal Academy held on 20 June 2022 had been shared with Governors prior to this meeting.<br><br>All action points had been completed.<br><br>Governors RESOLVED that the minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of The Rydal Academy held on 20 June 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting and should be signed by the Chair. The Clerk would liaise with the Chair to arrange a signed copy of the approved minutes are retained on file.  | Clerk |
| 10. | <b>Chair's Report</b><br>The Chair reported that he was having regular meetings with the Head Teacher and Chief Executive Officer.<br><br>The Chair reported that the Single Central Record had been signed.   |       |
| 11. | <b>Head Teacher's report, including Chief Finance Officer and Trust Business Manager and Trust ICT Manager report</b><br>The report had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting.<br><br>Governors were invited to ask question or challenge where appropriate. The Head Teacher explained that any changes since the last reporting period were highlighted in yellow.<br><br><b>Pupil Numbers/Attendance and Exclusions</b><br><b>Governor Question:</b> Do the surplus places include the nursery places? There are a high number of new houses being built in Darlington, how will this affect our predicted numbers going forward?<br><b>Response:</b> The Head Teacher explained that nursery admission numbers are not included in the school projected intake numbers. The Head Teacher |       |



explained that the formula is based on the school's average intake and national birth rates.

#### **Year 6 Leavers**

**Governor Question:** Do pupils at The Rydal Academy get priority over pupils from other schools when applying for a place at Hurworth School?

**Response:** The CEO explained that this had been discussed previously by Hurworth's Local Governing Body; but they had remained at that time with the existing arrangements including the criteria of 'Associated Areas', which the CEO expanded on.

**Governor Question:** What is the Ofsted rating for St Aidans?

**Response:** Good. The Head Teacher also confirmed he had recently visited St Aidans to meet with the new Head Teacher and discuss improving transition arrangements.

#### **Pupil absence levels (including persistent absence)**

**Governor Question:** What are the critical success factors to reduce persistent absenteeism as is demonstrated in the improvements made across the year by last year's Persistent Absentees?

**Response:** Working with families, continuous tracking, holding parents to account and sharing expectations are key factors. There was also less travel during term time by Gypsy, Roma Traveller families; due to Covid.

#### **Attainment and Progress**

**Governor Question:** Please explain who the rate of growth is calculated?

**Response:** The Head Teacher explained it is the increase in the percentage of pupils working at Expectation from Baseline, and that the rate of growth against national averages for the school is more than double which shows how the school is closing the attainment gap.

**Governor Question:** Why do Year 2 Phonics outcomes show a significant jump from Year 1?

**Response:** Year 1 pupils who do not achieve the expected standard of attainment resit the Phonics test as a Year 2 pupil. Some Year 1 pupils take longer to progress to age related expectation because of their starting point.

**Governor Question:** The Head Teacher was asked to explain more about the new subject overview data?

**Response:** The Head Teacher explained the data demonstrates the proportion of children working at Age Related Expectation (ARE) or higher across the school has increased since the introduction of the new curriculum in September 2020 in Science and all Foundation Subjects. It has stayed flat in Reading, Writing and Maths despite Covid-19 disruption.

#### **Curriculum planning - staffing and class sizes**

**Governor Question:** Is the class size and staff to pupil data in line with national averages?

**Response:** The Head Teacher confirmed class size is right on the medium when benchmarked against comparable schools. The CFO reminded Governors of the School Resource Management Self-assessment tool data in the report which gives a more dated comparison of staffing across the school.



### **Quality Assurance**

**Governor Question:** Is there a process for quality assuring Subject Area Verification Exercises?

**Response:** The Head Teacher confirmed the Education Development Partner visit in Spring reviewed the process and reported that it was robust and rigorous. The History Subject Area Verification Exercise also aligned to the external review. The Head Teacher advised Governors that the Trust was exploring additional external quality assurance processes.

### **Remote Education – Supporting children who are learning from home**

**Governor Question:** How many pupils are involved in remote education?

**Response:** Just a small number last week. The criteria for providing remote education was explained and examples provided of where remote education is and is not appropriate.

### **SEF/School Improvement Plan**

**Governor Question:** How confident are we that pupils can articulate their learning?

**Response:** The Head Teacher confirmed that the school have captured student voice within curriculum areas as part of the Subject Area Verification Exercise process. Pupils are enthused by the topics they have studied. We are looking to increase student voice by setting up Curriculum Squads for all aspects of the school.

**Governor Question:** How are behavior issues in the classroom recorded?

**Response:** Issues are logged on Class Charts and safeguarding concerns logged on CPOMS for future reference.

### **Financial management and governance**

The Chief Finance Officer referred to Section 7 of the Head of School's report, and reported a healthy surplus of £187k at year end. He informed Governors that the medium-term financial plan covering the period 2022/23 - 2024/25 was approved by the Board of Directors in July and subsequently submitted to the ESFA.

Teaching costs, the last-minute release of the 32nd School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) report, informing us of a change to the expected increases to experienced teachers pay from 3% to 5% from September 2022, was released after Swift Academies had already approved the budget and financial plans. The changes apply to all teachers on main scale 6 and above, including leadership. Many Schools and Trusts were also projecting a 2% increase on experienced teachers from September 2023 which has increased to 3% (with some smaller changes to the lower pay scales). These are not yet set in stone, and the DfE state that a review may occur early next year.

Non-Teaching Staff, at the end of July, the National Employers for local government services also made a final pay offer to the unions representing NJC 'Green Book' employees. We had been advised a 3% inflationary increase, however the latest offer is an increase of a £1,925 on all NJC pay points from 1 April 2022 which equates to increases of between 10.5% and



4.04%. The majority of 2022/23 budgets will have been set and approved before this announcement so Schools and Trusts will need to consider the financial impact on the current and future year spending plans. Confirmed figures released by Education & Skills Funding Agency for the school budget share for 2022/23, the for Rydal Academy is £2,689,505, which is an increase of £60k although pupils' numbers have reduced by 10. All other income is expected to be in line with the 21/22 budget. One area that is key to financial/ planning is the retention of existing pupils and ensuring any new intake exceeds the published admission number.

Financial stability of all the schools within the trust is key for the years ahead. The education sector is facing a very uncertain future with increases in staff and energy costs amongst others being a major concern.

**Governor Question:** Has there been any risk to the school's offer of extra curriculum or enrichment opportunities?

**Response:** This year we have more pupils than forecasted so there is no immediate intention to withdraw enrichment or extra curriculum activities. We are also aware that the effect of withdrawing activities may influence preference choices.

#### **Trust IT Update**

The IT Manager reported that work has started on auditing the site infrastructure with means to improve the WIFI access and backend systems. This will enable the site to progress with most wireless setups in the future, however it has been noted that the age of the cables between rooms and the edge switching equipment does not have the capacity to host the modern WIFI equipment, so this will have an effect on the roll out date as the foundations that the WIFI will sit on needs to be addressed.

#### **Schedule of Contracts**

The Trust Business manager advised Governors that the Trusts' external H&S contract was reviewed in July 2022 following notice from EPM that our current service was moving to an online system. We sought and secured H&S Consultants Ltd. who provide a specialist contract manager to support each of our schools. This has ensured we retain the personalised service of a H&S Consultant who has knowledge of each site to provide support from September 2022.

Electricity contracts are due for renewal in December 2022, initial meetings were held with suppliers in September 2022 to discuss the current market and projections due to the global crisis and rise in costs. Further meetings are scheduled throughout the Autumn term to ensure the best possible deal is secured when possible.

#### **Estates Management**

The Trust Business Manager reported that the Government's second round CDC surveys are underway. The Rydal Academy's survey was completed in May 2022 and the report is currently being finalised, we are expecting to receive this early in Autumn term. The results will be utilised to support future CIF and School Re-Building bids.

During Summer break various repairs and improvements were made to site.

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|     | <p>A project to install a new CCTV system commenced but was halted following the discovery of degraded asbestos. These works will hopefully be completed before the end of Autumn term when removal/remedial works have been undertaken.</p> <p>Premises and H&amp;S Audits are due to take place in October 2022. Once these are completed the H&amp;S Committee will be provided with feedback and any outstanding actions or recommendations will be arranged.</p> <p>Site staff from other Trust schools continue to provide support cover at Rydal due to a vacancy – This Building Maintenance Supervisor post was advertised before Summer although no suitable applicants were received. This post has been advertised again and interviews are scheduled for the end of September.</p> <p><b><u>CIF (Condition Improvement Fund)</u></b></p> <p>It was reported that fire safety/asbestos surveys were completed in May and July and works commenced at the start of the Summer holidays. The installation of replacement and new fire doors is scheduled to take place in October half term after a delay with the manufacture of these. Although, the majority of planned fire stopping barriers were able to be installed above ceilings some works were halted following the discovery of asbestos in Key Stage 2. We are currently liaising with the contractors and our project management company to find a resolve for this as the scope of asbestos removal is too vast to be completed under the current funding allocation and may result in a future bid to CIF.</p> <p>2022/2023 Round – Two applications were submitted in December 2021 for The Rydal Academy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £213,000 to further improve sections of roof and drainage around the site</li> <li>• £508,00 to further improve heating distribution, pipework and compliment the efficiency of the new boilers</li> </ul> <p>These applications were appealed in May 2022 but unfortunately were unsuccessful. The bids will be re-considered for submission again this year if they meet the funding criteria.</p> <p>2023/2024 Round</p> <p>Initial discussions have already taken place between the Trust Business manager and RLB who assist with the writing of our bids. Applications are due to be submitted mid-December. Site visits and full asbestos surveys will be undertaken to ensure the applications are robust and fit this year's criteria once it is published, this is expected to be in October.</p> |  |
| 12. | <p><b>Risk Register</b></p> <p>The Chief Finance Officer advised there has been been two areas of change; the increase in energy costs and the pending pay increases for teachers and support staff. Governors were advised that there were adequate reserves in place to meet these costs at Rydal.</p>  |  |
| 13. | <p><b>Chief Executive Officer's Report</b></p> <p>The Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan were shared with Governors prior to the meeting.</p>  |  |
| 14. | <p><b>Admissions arrangements 2024-25</b></p> <p>Governors informed that there had been no change to the circulated 2024-25 Admissions Arrangements.</p>  |  |



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|     | <p>Governors RESOLVED to approve the Admission Arrangements 2024-25 and adopt with immediate effect.</p>   |    |
| 15. | <p><b>Nursery Admissions arrangements 2024-25</b><br/>Governors informed that there had been no change to the circulated 2024-25 Admissions Arrangements.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED to approve the Admission Arrangements 2024-25 and adopt with immediate effect.</p>   |    |
| 16. | <p><b>Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2021-22 for review; 2022-23 for approval</b><br/>The Head Teacher advised Governors that school-led tutoring had been factored into the 2022-23 Pupil Premium Strategy Statement.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED to approve the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2022-23 and adopt with immediate effect. This information should be published on the website.</p>   | HT |
| 17. | <p><b>Primary PE and Sports Funding Strategy 2021-22 for review; 2022-23 for approval</b><br/>Governors advised there had been no significant changes from last year's Primary PE and Sports Funding Strategy.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED to approve the Primary PE and Sports Funding Strategy 2022-23 and adopt with immediate effect. This information should be published on the website.</p> <p><b>Policies for approval / review / information</b></p> <p><b>For information</b> – Trust approved policies (Summer 2022): Infection Control Policy; Probationary Policy; GDPR Data Protection Policy; Pupil Premium Policy, Anti-Harassment and Bullying, Bring your own Device Policy, Capability Policy, Family Friendly Policy, IT Acceptable User Policy, Leave of Absence Policy, Sickness Management Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy, Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy, In-Year Admission Policy; Remote Education Policy</p> <p>For information - Rydal reviewed policies – Charging &amp; Remissions Policy; Child Protection Policy; Physical Intervention Policy &amp; Guidelines; Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy; Sudden death or suicide response plan</p> <p><b>For approval</b> – Behaviour and self-regulation policy - Update in-line with new guidance (attached); Attendance policy - Updated in-line with new guidance (attached).</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Has the Behaviour and Self-regulation policy been shared with staff?<br/> <b>Response:</b> Staff received training in September. Once ratified by Governors, the policy will be emailed to staff outlining what has changed and their responsibilities.<br/> <b>Governor Question:</b> How is the Behaviour and Self-regulation policy cascaded to pupils?</p> | HT |

**Response:** This is rolled out via assemblies. We also intend to send to parents and carers so they are also aware of the process in school.

**Action:** Governors requested the phrase peer-on-peer be amended to child-on-child in line with the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education document.

Governors RESOLVED to approve the Behaviour and Self-regulation policy and adopt with immediate effect.

Governors reviewed the new policy which had been updated in line with new DfE Attendance Guidance. They also shared representation from parent/carers relating to the current policy of no consideration of 'exceptional' circumstances for holiday fine referrals.

**Governor Question:** Asked for more clarification on whether all unauthorised holidays are fined? Is there any flexibility for individual cases with exceptional reasons? Is the same rationale in place for all Swift schools?

**Response:** At The Rydal Academy all holidays taken during term time are unauthorized and fines issued by the Local Authority. This is not the case in other Swift schools.

**Governor Question:** Since the 'no holidays in term time' policy has been in place, has attendance improved?

**Response:** Yes

Governors RESOLVED that the policy should be amended to include consideration of 'exceptional' circumstance for term-time holidays or leave of absence and an application process developed then to approve the Attendance policy and adopt with immediate effect. The Attendance policy should be reviewed on an annual basis to review any issues which may arise.

AHT

### Special interest governors

Governors asked to complete the templates sent to them when visiting the school. It was explained that all sections do not need to be completed as this will build up over time.

Governors asked to contact their link member of staff as soon as they can.

Governors volunteered for the following areas of interest.

This will be approved at the next Standards Committee meeting.

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| Premises / Health & Safety   | Mark Emerson   |
| Safeguarding (including E-Safety) & Welfare  | Sarah Newrick  |
| Looked After Children (LAC) & Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)              | Sarah Newrick  |
| Special Educational Needs (SEN), including SEMH                                    | Kelly-Ann Lyle |
| Finance  | Sarah Clough   |
| Personal Development   | Gaurav Bhatia  |
| Behaviour and Attitudes (Attendance & Punctuality, Conduct, Rewards and Sanctions) | Mark Gray      |
| Disadvantaged  | Mark Gray      |
| Careers & Transition   | Troy Turner    |

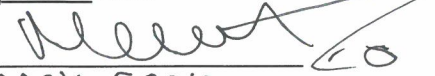
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|     | Early Careers Framework  | Mark Gray |
|     | Quality of Education (Teaching & Learning, Curriculum and Progress) & Disadvantaged Lead)  | Mark Gray |
| 19. | <b>Standing Items</b><br><b>MAT Development Session</b> (all from 5pm) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thursday 3 November 2022 (Staff Health &amp; Well-Being – Angela Galey and Finance – Glen Hart)</li> <li>Thursday 16 February 2023</li> <li>Thursday 6 July 2023</li> </ul>  |           |
| 20. | <b>Concluding items</b><br>Three Governors volunteered to form a Pupil Discipline Committee to consider a permanent exclusion on Monday 17 October 2022.   |           |
| 21. | <b>Approval of documents for inspection**</b>  |           |
| 22. | <b>Date and time of future meetings</b> (all from 1:00pm): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rydal LGB - Monday 13 March 2023, Monday 19 June 2023</li> </ul> <b>Chairs / Vice Chairs of LGB and Executive Leadership Team</b> (all from 1:30pm) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friday 7 October 2022, Friday 17 March 2023, Friday 6 July 2022</li> </ul>  |           |
|     | <b>Action Points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish Pupil Premium Strategy 22-23 to the website (Head Teacher)</li> <li>Publish PE and Sports Funding Statement to the website (Head Teacher)</li> <li>Update wording of the Behaviour policy and publish (Assistant Head Teacher)</li> <li>Amend Attendance policy and publish (Assistant Head Teacher)</li> <li>Contact Troy Turner re. Vice Chair (Clerk)</li> <li>Contact absent Governors re. Declaration of Interest forms (Clerk)</li> <li>Sign Single Central Record (Chair)</li> </ul> |           |

These minutes were approved by the Local Governing Body of Rydal Academy, as follows:

on: 13/03/23 date

Signed by: (Chair)   
Printed name: MARK GRAY

