



**Standards Committee**

**Held at Longfield Academy**

**4.30pm, Wednesday 5 October 2022**

**MINUTES**

Present (Directors)	Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer), Julie Cornelius, Derek Bell,
in attendance	John Armitage: Head of School, The Rydal Academy Angela Sweeten: Head of School, Longfield Academy Rachel Somerville: Head of School; Hurworth School Caroline Jennings: Clerk

Item	Description of discussion	Action by
1.	<b>Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present</b> Directors were reminded that three Directors were required in order that decisions could be taken during this meeting of the Standards Committee of Swift Academies. Three (3) Directors were present.	
2.	<b>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</b> Apologies received from Tim Fisher and Sam Hirst.  Directors RESOLVED to accept the apologies received.	
3.	<b>Election of Chair</b> Tim Fisher was nominated and elected as Chair of the Standards Committee until the first meeting in the Autumn Term 2023.	
4.	<b>Election of Vice Chair</b> Julie Cornelius was nominated and elected as Vice Chair of the Standards Committee until the first meeting in the Autumn Term 2023.	
5.	<b>Terms of Office due to expire</b> None.	
6.	<b>Notification of items of urgent other business</b> It was reported that Derek bel has attended the Autumn Term Rydal and Longfield LGB meetings and that Julie Cornelius had attended the Hurworth LGB meeting,	
7.	<b>Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests</b> Directors and those present were reminded that they should complete the Register of Interest annually to declare any relevant business or pecuniary interest and close family relationship between members and / or other	



Persistent disruption and Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult are the most common reasons for suspension in 21/22, with Year 9 and 10 the highest in both categories. The comparison is not accurate, however, due to the lockdown that removed 9 weeks of comparative data from 2020/21 information. By averaging out the 30 week total suspensions and then multiplying the average weekly suspension by 39 weeks, there is an argument that the number of students being suspended has reduced from 20/21 to 21/22. Up to week 3 2022 we have had 8 suspensions. All students who have had previous suspensions last year. This is 4 students less than at the same time last year.

The introduction of staggered lunchtime sessions, with each year group going separately is in its infancy but going well.

**Governor Question:** Would you say that lunchtime is more settled now and incidents have reduced?

**Response:** Directors were advised that although it was staff intensive to run, the benefits far outweighed the negatives and incidents at lunchtime had been reduced significantly. This also has an impact on behaviour in lessons as pupils are calmer and therefore the strategy is impacting on less disruption to lesson time too.

#### **Quality of Education: Attainment and Progress**

The 2021/2022 GCSE results were shared with Directors. Although not validated they show that the Academy has maintained its performance despite the disruptive year it had

Directors informed that deep dives were completed in the Maths and English Department last term. A summary of strengths and areas for development are included in the report.

**Governor Question:** Do the Science and Maths leads have the capacity to improve their departments?

**Response:** Directors advised that the same systemic issues have been discovered in a number of departments not just Maths and English. The issues are pace, challenge and differentiation for SEN

From what has been seen so far, we have concerns in Maths and Science from the detail quality assurance we have completed so far. A new Director of Science has been appointed for January; she will be coming in one day a week until January to start putting a rapid improvement plan in place.

In Maths, Directors informed the Head of Department has the capacity to drive the department forward and may draw upon additional expertise from Hurworth. The department work together well as a team and are willing to support the changes being made.

Directors advised the English Department is going through a transitional stage of leadership with a newly appointed Head of Department. The Head of Departments understands about curriculum fluency and has focus and drive. She is planning for an interleaved curriculum to be implemented across the English Department based on questions raised during the deep dive. Consistency is a key issue across the Academy.

**Governor Question:** Are we looking at any external support to draw upon?

**Response:** The school is investigating what support Durham subject specialists can provide, expertise from Hurworth, and support from the Education Exchange for support in enabling the Academy to quality assure ourselves effectively.

#### **Student Voice**

The Head of School informed Directors that it was felt the student questionnaire was skewed as it took place too early following the changes and didn't reflect a comparison from the previous situation. The type of questions and terminology needed a review.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the Head of Longfield Academy School's Report and School Improvement Plan were noted.

10.

#### **Hurworth School**

The Head of School report and the School Improvement Plan were circulated to Directors prior to the meeting.

Directors advised that the first draft of the Ofsted report had been received and shared with the respective Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Directors and LGB. It was an extremely positive read with just a few minor amendments that had been returned for suggested change.

#### **Quality of Education**

The GCSE results were shared with Directors; overall progress has improved since 2019 for all students.

Disadvantaged students progress has shown improvement since 2019. Boys overall progress has improved. Attainment 8 has improved across all groups since 2019. English and Maths basics have shown improvement since 2019 and are in line with or higher than LA and national average figures. Overall Science 4+ grades in both combined and separate Science has increased since 2019 which demonstrates the impact of the work done with the department.

**Governor Question:** How do the English results compare in 2022 to those in 2019

**Response:** The English results are strong and have returned to the period pre-2019; in terms of progress, attainment and correlation with Maths outcomes.

Directors advised a key priority is the whole school reading strategy. Actions are detailed in the report.

#### **Quality Assurance**

The Head of School informed Governors that a Quality of Education Team has been appointed to lead the way in ensuring, as a school, we have robust and effective quality assurance procedures.

Hurworth School would be working with The Education Exchange to develop quality assurance model and protocols. Regular "deep dives" are also to be scheduled throughout the year for all departments.

A whole school learning walk will be carried out by the Quality of Education Team.

<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Governor Question:</b> Are staff engaged with the QA process?  <b>Response:</b> Staff are on board and keen to implement the proposed strategies.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the contents of the Head of Hurworth School Report and the School Improvement Plan were noted.</p> <p><b>The Rydal Academy</b>  The Head Teacher report and the SEF/Action Plan was shared with Directors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Attainment and Progress</b>  The Head Teacher presented the overarching points relating to pupil outcomes.</p> <p><b>Early Years Foundation Stage</b>  Good Level of Development (GLD) projection is broadly in line with 2016 and 2017. Growth is more than double the national average and has reduced the attainment gap by x2 (43%) from the Reception Baseline. Growth for disadvantage pupils is significantly closing the attainment gap.</p> <p><b>Year 1 &amp; 2 Phonics</b>  Directors advised that Year 1 phonics result (60%) is below the national average of 82%; other pupils outperform disadvantaged pupils; stability pupils outperform mobility pupils significantly.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Do Year 1 boys have a lower attainment than girls?  <b>Response:</b> It is a mixed picture. Due to the low starting point of the year group, on average 15% of cohort at Age Related Expectation for Reception Baseline, it tends to take pupils longer to meet the phonics requirement. As evidenced by the Year 2 phonics outcomes and Year 1 phonics results for the previous two cohorts when the phonics check has been delayed by a term. This picture has also been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic on our Disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Year 2 phonics cumulative result are slightly above national averages; disadvantaged pupils are in-line with other pupils; stability pupils outperform mobility pupils and are above national averages.</p> <p><b>Key Stage 1</b>  Directors were advised that pupil attainment track below national data. But progress from starting points growth is more than double the national average. Stability pupils outperform mobility pupils. Disadvantaged pupils don't perform as well as all pupils (at expected or greater depth level). Results in Maths at greater depth level are lower than reading and writing but have improved since autumn.</p> <p><b>Key Stage 2</b>  Directors informed that progress in Reading is the second highest it has been as is progress in Writing. Progress of Stability pupils is significantly better than that of Mobility pupils.</p> <p>Attainment is below national averages in all three areas. The largest gap exists in writing which impacts at combined. Stability pupils significantly outperform mobility pupils in all areas and combined (+21%).</p>	
------------	--	--

**Whole school**

Attainment against national averages continues to be a key focus for all year groups. Growth is double the -national rate in most year groups. Reading remains the key intervention focus.

**Curriculum impact**

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.

**Attendance**

Directors informed that national figures for Autumn term 2021 were 93.1% and Rydal was equal to this.

Of the children on the Persistent Absentee list from Summer 2021: 61% have Improved their attendance for the year; 34% are no longer persistent absentees; 16% have improved to above 96% attendance and 2% have 100% attendance. 81% of children who were considered persistent absentees had time off with Covid.

**Governor Question:** During the Covid lockdowns, what was the attendance impact on pupils from Traveller families

**Response:** Attendance was much improved as Traveller families were unable to move around the country. However, this term travelling patterns have returned to that of pre-pandemic.

**Governor Question:** How many traveller sites are near the school? Have you tried to convince parents to use school holidays for travelling?

**Response:** Often it is a last minute decision related to work. 12% of the school population are travellers, and there are three sites. in Darlington. The attendance team works closely with the Traveller Education and Achievement Service and Darlington LA, and staff receive cultural awareness training.

Directors RESOLVED that the contents of the Head of The Rydal Academy's Report and the SEF/Action Plan were noted.

12.

**Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The amended Scheme of Delegation was shared with Directors with the changes highlighted in yellow for ease of reference. Governors link areas of responsibility have been updated, and new monitoring templates issued for consistency.

Directors reminded they can attend all interviews. LGB Governors can appoint up to Deputy Head level.

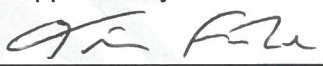
The Trust Development Plan was circulated prior to the meeting.

The CEO updated Directors on changes to HR support staffing.

Directors informed that in view of the Ofsted report, Longfield Academy would be rag-rated as red on the risk register; Hurworth and Rydal remain green

13.	<p><b>Policies for approval</b> Low Level Concerns Policy. It was explained that this is an addendum to the Staff Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED to adopt the Low Levels Concerns Policy with immediate effect. The approved policy to be uploaded to the Trust website.</p> <p><b>Policies for information</b> Staff Health &amp; Wellbeing, Flexible &amp; Phased Retirement, Disciplinary Policy, Biometric Data Policy, Data Retention and Destruction Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality Policy.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p><b>Any urgent other business raised under item 3</b> No urgent items of other business were identified under item 6.</p>	
15.	<p><b>Approval of documents for inspection</b> 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</p>	Clerk
16.	<p><b>Date and time of future meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT Development Session Thursday 3 November 2022 (5pm via Teams) (Staff Health &amp; Well-Being – Angela Galey and Finance – Glen Hart)</li> <li>• Board of Directors Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (2pm @ Longfield)</li> <li>• Standards -Wednesday 15 March 2023, Wednesday 21 June 2023 (4.30pm @ The Rydal)</li> </ul> <p>Meeting ended: 17.52</p>	
	<p><b>Action Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the annual Register of Business Interests and upload to website (CJ)</li> <li>• Chair to sign approved minutes and upload to website. (TF)</li> <li>• Upload Low Levels Concerns Policy to website (CJ)</li> <li>• Upload approved minutes to website (CJ)</li> </ul>	

These minutes were approved by the Standards Committee, as follows:

Signed by: (Chair)  On...16/3/23 (date)

Printed name: TIM FISHER

**Explanatory notes:**

\* Minutes of the previous meeting are draft and cannot be issued until the Board of Directors approves them at the current meeting. This gives the Board the opportunity to correct any inaccuracies and review 'approval of documents for inspection' (see below). Detailed minutes of discussions are inappropriate and likely to inhibit the full and frank exchange of views and debate.

\*\*'Approval of documents for inspection' is a section within the minutes which gives the Board of Directors an opportunity to withhold from public consumption information which has been deemed to be inappropriate for general release, e.g. personal information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers. Supporting documentation could, for example, include the names of pupils or teachers

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Directors need to be aware that despite withholding documents under 'approval of documents for inspection', they could still be requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If this is the case, the school needs to consider the request and the application of possible exemptions. You are advised to seek further advice

Approved