



**Swift**  
**Academies**  
*Success will inspire future triumphs*

**The Rydal Academy**

**Local Governing Body**

**Monday 20 June 2022**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

Present (Governors)	Mark Gray (Chair), John Armitage (Head Teacher), Mark Emerson, Kelly-Ann Lyle, Sarah Clough, Gaurav Bhatia, Katie Turnbull, Melanie Chapman
in attendance	Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer) Sarah Jones: Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies Glen Hart: Chief Finance Officer, Swift Academies Chris Carr: Trust ICT Manager, Swift Academies Caroline Jennings: Trust Governance and Policy Officer (Clerk)

Item	Description of discussion	Action by
	<p><b>PART A: Procedural items</b></p>	
1.	<p><b>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</b> 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. A round of introductions took place at the start of the meeting for the benefit of all those 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> It was reported that apologies had been received from Sarah Newrick and Ewa Kaszuba.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were accepted.</p> <p>It was noted that Troy Turner did not attend.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Notification of items of urgent other business</b> Items that the local governing body of The Rydal Academy regard are of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the end of the agenda.</p>	

	<p>A request was put forward to agree a suitable date for three governors to form a Permanent Exclusion panel by 8<sup>th</sup> July latest.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED this could be added to the agenda under item 16.</p> <p>It was noted that Ewa Kaszuba' s term of office expires on 28 June 2022. He was happy to continue on the Rydal LGB if required.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that Ewa Kaszumba was re-elected until June 2026.</p> <p><b>4. Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests</b></p> <p>a) Governors 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 trustees and / or employees. Registers should be updated during the academic year should circumstances change.</p> <p>All Governors present completed submitted a Register of Interest.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were received.</p> <p><b>5. Approval of minutes / review of actions / matters arising</b></p> <p>Draft minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of The Rydal Academy held on 14 March 2022 had been shared with Governors prior to this meeting.</p> <p>All action points had been completed.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of The Rydal Academy held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 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.</p> <p><b>6. Chair's Report</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that he was having regular meetings h the Head Teacher and Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Single Central Record had been signed.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the new Uniform Policy with the additional items was now in place. Letters had gone out to parents on 23 May 2022 and was available to view on the website.</p> <p><b>7. Head Teacher's report, including Chief Finance Officer and Trust Business Manager and Trust ICT Manager report</b></p> <p>The report had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
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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.

#### **Pupil numbers/attendance and exclusions**

Governors informed there had been a slight reduction in the number of pupils on roll, which currently stood at 556.

Governors advised that the number of nursery pupils on roll stated 48 but this was incorrect and should be 64. The Head Teacher drew Governors' attention to the end column which tracked 'ever vulnerable' pupils who may have historically been involved with social services

*Governors comments: The number of vulnerable pupils is likely to rise due to the rising cost of living and fuel.*

The Head Teacher informed Governors that the number of pupils with Special Educational Needs has risen by over 3% over the last three years.

Governors were notified that the actual number of new Reception places offered is 90, against the prediction of 55. This means the year group is expected to be full in September, but this could reduce as there are still several admission appeals pending.

*Governor comments: It is reassuring to see the increased number of parental preferences selecting the Rydal Academy as their first choice. This impacts positively on our finances.*

*Response: The data also shows more Rydal Nursery children will be joining Reception in September.*

Regarding the in-year mobility numbers; the overall change is 17% which is less than last year. There has been an increase in the number of pupils admitted with English as a second language. A full breakdown is provided in the report.

*Governor comments: It is useful to drill down to this level of detail in order to understand the context.*

The following points were highlighted by the Head Teacher:

- LAC pupils and EHCP pupils performed best for attendance.
- Groups causing concern are: GRT pupils, Pupil Premium, Vulnerable
- Targets for 2021-2022 were to reduce percentage of persistent absentees, to improve attendance of GRT pupils and Vulnerable pupils.
- Progress to date: persistent absentees increased to 23.41%,
- GRT – slightly down on last term and remains a target group.
- Vulnerable down to 90.52%. and remains a target group.
- Compared to national attendance figures, Rydal has tracked above the national average. Figures released for Autumn term 2021 = 93.1%, TRA was equal to this. This is the first time the school has tracked at the same level as national figures.
- Of the children on the Persistent Absentee list from summer 2021: 80.77% have Improved their attendance this year so far, 43.59% are no longer persistent absentees, 19.23 have improved to above 96% attendance and 3.84% have 100% attendance.

- 81% of children who are considered persistent absentees had time off with Covid.

Governors were advised that there are new DFE Guidelines for Attendance. The School is awaiting more details about termly attendance meetings with the Local Authority next year.

Details of exclusions and suspensions and what internal and external support has been provided was shared with Governors. Governors advised that there was an increase in disruptive behavior from a small number of pupils during Spring term which had been addressed through the school's behavior policy and a graduated response approach, but had led to an increase in Suspensions and a Permanent Exclusion pending review.

**Governor Question:** Is the school provided with DFE guidance about what constitutes a racist or homophobic incident which necessitates an exclusion or suspension?

**Response:** *The Head Teacher will always look at the context and what support has been put in place before issuing an exclusion or suspension. Mainly it tends to be one off name calling and is not continuous or targeted.*

**Governor Question:** Regarding mental health, do we know which parents are affected and how this impacts on our pupils?

**Response:** *We have several trained staff who are skill in sign-posting parents to access support, and there are links on the school website.*

#### **Attainment and progress**

The Head Teacher reported that the Early Years Foundation GLD (good level of development) growth from Reception Baseline assessments is more than double the national average and has reduced the attainment gap by x 2 (25%) from the Reception Baseline, with more pronounced improvements in the Disadvantaged group.

The Head Teacher provided more detail regarding the Year 1 phonics results which were below the national average. Four pupils who passed left the school, whilst four new pupils who were admitted did not pass. The impact of Covid is reflected in the national average.

The Head Teacher informed Governors that the school had received a Year 6 writing moderated visit from the Local Authority and teacher assessment was deemed to be very accurate.

The Assistant Head of English from Longfield was able to sit in on the moderation to support their own professional development.

#### **Curriculum Planning**

The Head Teacher drew Governors' attention to Section 3 of the report. He said Subject Area Verification Exercises (SAVE) were completed during Spring term in

Phonics & Reading, Geography, MFL, Science and PE with Geography, MFL, Science and PE maintained a Green rating and Phonics & Reading moving to Green from Amber.

The Head Teacher informed Governors that a new Phonics programme will be implemented in September 2022. Subject Leads have focussed on learning



intention in planning and questioning as against task/activity. Reception participation in the national pilot for Nuffield Early Language Intervention included staff training, pupil screening and delivery of the first half of the programme.

**Governor Question:** Do we still audit subjects that are 'Green'?

**Response:** Yes, annually Subjects of concern would receive a further external review.

### **SEND**

Governors advised that the total number of pupils accessing support which is 'additional to or different from' had increased. The number of pupils with an EHCP decreased due to pupils moving on to specialist provision. The number of pupils with an EHCP continues to be higher than the national average.

### **Financial Management**

The Chief Financial Director referred to section 4 of the report and gave an overview of the key points. Monthly management accounts are shared each month with the board of directors. The CFO & CEO liaise with the Chair of the Trust on any urgent matters.

Governors informed the main variance is for the additional £20k expenditure forecast in E12 Building Maintenance to assist with on-going maintenance issues. The additional increases in ICT are due to the installation of several interactive boards. The increase in agency costs is due to undertaking extra tuition which is funded by a grant.

The CFO reported that due to the increase in pupil numbers, Rydal Academy is in a strong position for next year due to the additional income.

### **Trust IT Update**

The Trust ICT Manager reported the majority of classroom teacher computers and interactive screens have been upgraded with top of the range computers and interactive 65" screens. Additional training has also been delivered to staff on how the screens work and how they can be used to enhance the classroom experience.

He added that a full schedule of summer work had been planned; including CCTV.

The Head Teacher stated that 50k had been allocated for an IT refresh.

**Governor Question:** Some staff have mentioned that laptops are running very slow?

**Response:** *We are aware that some laptops are old, and the intention is to use some of the budget to address this.*

### **Schedule of contracts**

All contracts/ Service Level Agreements continue to be reviewed individually as they expire and best value and quality sought for each agreement,

A termly review of various premises and Health & Safety contracts will be conducted in Summer term, including External H&S Support.

### **Estates Management**

The Trust Business Manager presented a summary of the report. She informed governors regarding work scheduled as well as work completed.

The Academy is currently awaiting the results of the CDC survey completed in May 2022.

Following the successful 2021/2022 CIF bid to improve fire safety, works are due to commence in July 2022.

Governors advised that neither of the 2022/23 bids were successful for the heating or roof/drainage work. However, as the bids were just below the acceptance threshold a 'no win, no fee' company has been commissioned to appeal the decision. Further updates will be provided once a response has been received.

### **Quality Assurance**

Governors' attention drawn to page 20 which highlights the school spending compared with schools that share similar characteristics, for example free school meals and Disadvantaged pupils. The data shows the teaching and support staff ratio is slightly above average.

**Governor Question:** Are we expecting an Ofsted inspection soon?

#### **Response:**

*As you know we are awaiting a Section 5 inspection and are within the inspection window. Covid has significantly affected the inspection cycle but it could be any times. Documentation is up to date, evidence of the quality of education is strong. We continue to self-evaluate the school as a Good school.*

### **External review activities**

Governors were informed the Education Development Partner (EDP) visit in the Spring term focused on a History subject review and Leadership and Management.

Recommendations and actions outlined in the attached report.

Governors were advised that the Local Authority Early Years Advisors conducted an advisory visit to the review 2-year-old provision. They looked at all aspects of provision and returned a positive report Recommendations and actions outlined in the attached report will be factored into the EYFS section of the SEF/SIP.

### **Internal review activities**

The Head Teacher reported the audit focused on the Academy's provision for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children identified 40/47 criteria as green, 5/47 criteria were identified as yellow, 2/47 criteria were identified as red. Actions to remedy the red areas are detailed in the report.

*It was recommended that the LAC and SEN Governors meet together with the SENCO and DSL annually as part of the Governor monitoring process, rather than separately as SEND pupils are the schools most vulnerable group of pupils*

**Action:** Headteacher to include a joint meeting with the SEN Governor, LAC Governor, SENCO and DSL in the Governor Monitoring schedule for 2022-23.



**Equality Data**

Current equality data for pupils and staff was shared with a summary of changes.

**Action:** The national average % for each ethnicity group to be added in the next report.

**Safeguarding**

Governors were informed the number of harmful sexual behaviour incidents has significantly increased. Details of additional training completed by staff is detailed in the report.

An increase in Online and Social Media bullying are being addressed through the Computing and PSHRE curriculums, signposting families to local services and staff training.

Governors advised LAC/PLAC are making either expected or better progress but to close the attainment gap more need to progress towards exceeding progress.

**Health and Safety**

Premises and H&S Audits are due to take place in June 2022. Once these are completed the H&S Committee will be provided with feedback and any outstanding actions or recommendations will be arranged. The external H&S support received is currently under review.

**Staff Views**

It was reported that there was little change in the survey data regarding staff views. The school is looking at ways to increase participation.

**Staffing Structure**

The Head Teacher advised Governors that the role of Speech, Communication and Language Advisory Assistant had been removed from the staffing structure from Summer term 2022 due to the member of staff moving on to a post with the NHS. Furthermore, the 3 x caretaker post (1.6 FTE) will now change to 1 x Building Maintenance Supervisor (1.0 FTE) and caretaker (0.6 FTE).

New appointments and current vacancies are detailed in the report.

**Pupil Views**

Governors were informed there was an additional question regarding the location of where in school pupils felt 'unsafe' added to this terms survey. The areas mentioned would be monitored going forward.

Suggestions put forward by pupils to make the school better; 5% of respondents: more/better playground equipment (44%, up by 17%); improve toilets (17%, up by 6%); better/more laptops (10%, up by 2%); stop bullying / improve behaviour (8%, down by 5%); more school trips (5%, down by 6%); improved cloakrooms (6%); longer breaks (6%); bigger classrooms (5%).

**Parent/Carers Views**

The Headteacher reported there were no areas of concern this term. However, as there had been no responses from the gypsy/traveller groups, the school was looking at engagement in order to get their views.

**SEF Action Plan**

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	<p>The school Self Evaluation Form and Action Plan was shared for information.</p> <p><b>Risk Register</b> The risk register was shared with Governors prior to the meeting. It was recommended that the school's response to the pandemic remains as 'medium'.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Chief Executive Officer's Report</b> Governors advised that we are still awaiting the final Ofsted Inspection report for Longfield Academy.</p> <p>The CEO outlined the rationale and timeline behind the Hurworth and Longfield Academy Head of School appointments of Angela Sweeten at Hurworth School and Rachel Somerville at Longfield Academy.</p> <p>Following an on-going dialogue between all parties, it was proposed that AS remain at Longfield Academy, in order to build upon the robust impact, she has already made, and RS takes over headship at Hurworth School. Both roles to remain for the academic year 2022-2023; following this a review will take place.</p> <p>This decision had been ratified by the Directors.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED the Directors' decision was noted.</p> <p>Governors informed the current ICT Manager was leaving the Trust and Leon Watson had been appointed to the role.</p> <p>Governance and Policy Officer – Caroline Jennings Personnel Officer - Emma Barker</p> <p>There have been no changes to the Scheme of Delegation since the last meeting.</p> <p>MAT Development Training will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 via TEAMS. Invitations and link have been sent out.</p> <p>Governors thanked for completing the skills audit which will inform training.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Approval of Term Dates 2024/25</b> Governors advised the term dates were in line with DBC and the rest of the Trust.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Darlington Borough Council – two-year-old provision summer of visit</b> The report was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Special Interest Governors – feedback/updates from school contact</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Premises / Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>b. Safeguarding (including E-Safety) &amp; Welfare)</li> <li>c. Looked After Children (LAC) &amp; Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)</li> <li>d. Special Educational Needs (SEN), including SEMH</li> <li>e. Finance</li> <li>f. Personal Development</li> <li>g. Careers &amp; Transition</li> </ol>	



	<p>h. Quality of Education (Teaching &amp; Learning, Curriculum and Progress)</p> <p>i. Behaviour and Attitudes (Attendance &amp; Punctuality, Conduct, Rewards and Sanctions)</p> <p>j. Disadvantaged Lead</p> <p>k. Early Careers Framework</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the updates included in the papers were noted.</p> <p>Governors were warmly encouraged to come into school; speak to pupils and teachers. The CEO advised that a template with relevant key questions focused on school development was being prepared to assist Governors.</p> <p><b>12. Single Central Record</b> Governors RESOLVED that the Single Central Record for The Rydal Academy should be reviewed and signed by the Head Teacher and LGB Chair.</p> <p><b>13. Swift Approved Policies</b> The Headteacher drew Governors attention to the policies for information and approval.</p> <p>Swift approved policies: Infection Control Policy; Probationary Policy; GDPR Data Protection Policy; Pupil Premium Policy</p> <p>The Rydal School Policies: For information: Uniform Policy, Lock Down Policy, Physical Intervention Policy, Looked After (PLAC) Policy, CEIAG Policy, Literacy Policy.</p> <p>For approval: Policy for supporting pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL), Mental Health Policy</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the circulated policies, including any changes were noted. New policies were APPROVED and adopted with immediate effect.</p> <p><b>14. Feedback from MAT Development Session</b> Governors reminded about the next MAT Development session on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 5.00pm.</p> <p><b>15. Chairs/Vice Chairs of LGB and Executive Leadership Team</b> This will be held via TEAMS on Friday 8 June 2022 at 1.30pm. The Chair confirmed they would be in attendance.</p> <p><b>16. Any other urgent business raised under item 5</b> None.</p> <p><b>17. Approval of documents for inspection</b> Governors RESOLVED that the agenda, approved minutes and supporting documents be made available for public inspection apart from information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teacher</p> <p><b>18. Date and time of future meetings:</b> LGB Rydal Monday 3 October 2022, Monday 13 March 2023, Monday 19 June 2023.</p> <p>Meeting ended: 15.09</p>	SJO
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These minutes were approved by the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy as follows:

on: 31/02/22 date

signed by: (Chair) 

printed name: Mark Gray

**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

**Action Points:**

- Minutes to be signed by Chair (CJE)
- SCR to be signed by Chair (SJO)
- Meeting with the SEN Governor, LAC Governor, SENCO and DSL to be added to the Governor Monitoring schedule for 2022-23 (JA)
- Average % of each ethnic group added to Equality data (JA)