



Northern Arch

LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

The Rydal Academy

Local Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Monday 17th March 2025 at 1.00 pm, The Rydal Academy

Present (Governors)	Mark Gray (Chair), John Armitage (Head Teacher), Johanna Thurland, Katie Turnbull, Melanie Chapman, Ewa Kaszuba, Troy Turner, Tracy Vaughan, Eddy Gnaglo and Joanne Keane.
In attendance	Tim Fisher: Chief Executive Officer Laura Hawksby: Governance and Policy Officer

Item	Description of discussion	Action
	PART A: Procedural items	
1.	<u>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</u> The Chair welcomed new General Governors Eddy Gnaglo and Joanne Keane to their first meeting of the Local Governing Body. It was confirmed that a quorum was present.	
2.	<u>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</u> Apologies for absence were received from Gaurav Bhatia (Governor).	
3.	<u>Notification of items of urgent other business</u> None	
4.	<u>Declaration of Personal and Pecuniary Interests</u> None	
5.	<u>Membership Document</u> The following were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• appointments of General Governors Eddy Gnaglo and Joanne Keane as of 3rd March 2025.	

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denotes support and challenge provided by Governors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resignations of General Governors Laura Hudson as of 3rd November 2024 and Kelly Nicholson as of the 2nd March 2025. 	
6.	<p><u>Approval of minutes/review of actions/matters arising – The Rydal Academy Local Governing Body 7th October 2024</u></p> <p>Draft Minutes of The Rydal Academy Local Governing Body held on the 7th October 2024 had been shared with the Local Governing Body prior to the meeting, a copy of which is held on file.</p> <p>All actions had been completed and there were no matters arising.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of The Rydal Local Governing Body 7th October 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record and should be signed by the Chair.</p>	Chair/ Governance & Policy Officer
PART B: Business Items for Discussion		
7.	<p><u>Chair's Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>action taken</u> - no new updates <u>correspondence</u> – no new updates 	
8.	<p><u>Head Teacher's Report</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher provided a comprehensive update report to the Local Governing Body, a copy of which is retained on file. Highlighted in yellow throughout the report were updates since last reported to the Governing Body in October 2024.</p> <p>Areas of discussion included:</p> <p><u>Numbers on Roll:</u> Pupil numbers in nursey and across the school continue to be in line with the previous Academic Year. Future Reception intake numbers are uncertain due to low birth rate. Governors questioned why some of the projected numbers were slightly higher than the Local Authority projections in future years. The Head Teacher advised the Academy had continued to outperform Local Authority projections in terms of current numbers.</p> <p>Mobility is one of the Academy's most limiting factors. Transition procedures, baselining processes and attendance / safeguarding policy are regularly reviewed to address this phenomenon.</p> <p>Governors noted that there is an increase in proportion of children going to be electively home educated and asked whether it was the Academy or Local Authority that would monitor the quality of education. The Head Teacher confirmed that it is a Local Authority responsibility.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u></p>	

Overall attendance is currently high compared to the previous two years and persistent absentees are down. The proportion of severely absent pupils is high against the previous two years. **Governors enquired what were the reasons driving this and the Head Teacher advised this was due to leavers awaiting school places and travelling pupils.**

Governors further asked if the staged warning letters work in helping advise parents/carers when their child was severely absent and whether there were any potential issues regarding all parents/carers being able to access the written message. The Head Teacher advised that support is provided with members of the School's community who may require extra support in this area.

Exclusions

Exclusion levels are low and self-regulation for pupils across the school has been successful. The Kindness Curriculum has been introduced in the Academy. Sensory rooms are set out in several areas of the school, and the ELSA room has been introduced to give an area more conducive to therapeutic style interventions.

Progress/Attainment

There are no progress measures for 2024 or 2025, however growth from Reception Baselines continues to be at least double the national average in most year groups. Attainment against national averages continues to be a key focus for all year groups.

Curriculum

Individual pupil devices (iPads) across Key Stage 2 and a specialist teacher carousel for PPA (Computing, Music, MFL) have received positive feedback from both pupils and staff.

The number of extra-curricular clubs have increased. **Governors asked if these were free and open to all? The Head Teacher confirmed that there was no charge and were open to all pupils.**

Safeguarding

The level of need is significant. The Academy continues to collaborate with partner agencies to offer parent and child support to the most vulnerable cohort.

In the most recent Pupil Voice session, students were overwhelmingly positive about feeling safe, knowing that their concerns with other children are always dealt with by staff when reported and they feel comfortable and safe to report concerns when in school.

SEND

As previously reported to the Local Governing Body SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) has increased within the Academy. The number of pupils with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) remained slightly above national average.

External Audits

External audits had been held in the Autumn Term for reading and phonics with strong results and recommendations noted by the Local Governing Body. The web-site audit carried out at the end of the Autumn term was also noted to be positive.

	<p><u>Finance/ Estates/IT</u></p> <p>The Management Accounts Summary December 2024 for The Rydal Academy were noted. The school is forecast to make a small surplus at year end based on current operations.</p> <p>GAG income has increased due to an increase approved in year for pay awards resulting in a higher per pupil rate. The forecasts do not yet show the increase in National Insurance spend on employers and the National Insurance funding which is to be announced. Other increases in income are due to increased SEN (Special Education Needs) income and increased nursery income.</p> <p>The increase in non-staff expenditure was due to the additional staff required for the increased SEN and Nursery requirements. The remainder were inflation pressures and premise costs in relation to the new electric gates.</p> <p>The application window for this year's round of funding for CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) closed in December 2024, applications weren't submitted on this occasion for The Rydal Academy. Moving forward the Trust will be eligible for Schools Condition Allocation funding instead of CIF funding due to the recent, successful growth.</p> <p>The Management Information System (MIS) has been successfully migrated from Sims to Arbor. In preparing for the migration to windows 11 full audits have been completed to ensure that the school has the required computers for September 2025.</p>	
8 a.)	<p><u>Risk Register</u></p> <p>The Risk Register for Rydal Academy was currently being reviewed by the Strategic Development Officer, in conjunction of the Trust Risk Register. As across all schools in the Trust pupil numbers will be included as a key risk for the Academy.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that The Rydal Academy Risk Register be brought back to the next meeting of the Local Governing Body.</p>	HeadTeacher/ SDO
9.	<p><u>Single Central Record</u></p> <p>It was noted The Single Central Record continued to be reviewed and updated by Human resources to ensure it is compliant.</p>	
10.	<p><u>School Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR)</u></p> <p>The School Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) was noted for information.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Chief Executive's Officer's Update Report</u></p> <p>The process of bringing Mowden Federation of Schools into Northern Arch Learning Partnership has progressed smoothly and the transfer was completed on 1st March 2025. There are six academies now in in the Trust all rated Good or better. A new Executive Director of Education had also been appointed also within the latter half term. Governors asked the Chief Executive Officer about the</p>	

	<p>role of the Executive Director of Education and the value it would provide for the Local Governing Bodies? The Chief Executive advised that the position would allow the quality of education to be objectively reviewed across all schools and the college in the Partnership. It would also help support as well as develop the quality of teaching, professional learning and curriculum development across the academies in the Partnership.</p> <p>A successful Schools Resource Management Advisors (SRMA) report was produced last term, helping the Partnership identify further how it may be efficient and resilient.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024-25</u></p> <p>An update was provided on the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024-25 which was currently progressing through Parliament. The Bill aims to improve children's social care and education.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Policies:</u></p> <p><u>Trust approved policies from the Autumn Term 2024 were noted for Information:</u></p> <p>Family Friendly (Schools), Leave of Absence Policy (Schools) and Staff Health & Wellbeing Policy (Schools).</p> <p><u>The Rydal Academy Policies:</u></p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the following The Rydal Academy Policies be approved:</p> <p>a.) For information: Behaviour & Self-regulation Policy; Personal, Social, Health and Relationships Education (PSHRE) Policy; Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy; SEND information report; SEND - Pupil & Parent Guide; SEND Local Offer; Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy; Early Years Policy; Early Years Guidance; Playtime Supervision Guidelines; Whole Class Reading Staff Guide; Photo & video parent statement; Pupil Transition Policy; Attendance policy; Collective worship policy; Sudden death or suicide response plan; Child Missing in Education Policy; Mental Health Policy.</p> <p>b.) For approval: Alternative Provision Policy (New); Young Carers Policy (New); Health & Safety Policy.</p>	
14.	<p><u>Link Governors</u></p> <p>Governors noted the Governor link reports for Special Educational Needs including SEMH) and Disadvantaged.</p> <p>The following link Governor vacancies were filled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding (including E-safety) & Welfare – Governor Joanne Keane • Behaviour & Attitudes (Attendance & Punctuality, Conduct, Rewards and Sanctions) – Governor Eddy Gnaglo • Finance – Troy Turner 	

	<u>Part C: Standing Items</u>	
15.	<u>Trust Scheme of Delegation</u> <p>The current Board approved Scheme of Delegation was noted by the Local Governing Body.</p>	
16.	<u>Trust Strategic Plan</u> <p>The current Board approved Trust Strategic Plan was noted by the Local Governing Body.</p>	
	<u>Part D: Concluding Items</u>	
17.	<u>Approval of documents for inspection</u> <p>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/staff.</p>	
18.	<u>Date and time of future meetings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rydal LGB – Monday 16th June 2025 at 1.00 pm 	
19.	<u>Head Teacher & Chair's Message of Thanks</u> <p>The Head Teacher and Chair expressed their gratitude, on behalf of the Local Governing Body, for all the hard work undertaken by Ewa Kaszuba for whom this was her last meeting as a Governor.</p>	
	The meeting concluded at 3.00 pm	

Action Log

5.	Minutes of the 17 th March 2025 to be signed by the Chair and retained on file.	Chair/Governance & Policy Officer
8 a.)	Risk Register – reviewed Rydal Academy Risk Register to be brought back to the next meeting of the LGB.	Head Teacher/SDO

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

on: 23/1/26 date

Signed by: (Chair) 

Printed name: MARK GRAY