



Northern Arch

LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Standards Committee

held at Hurworth School

4.30pm, Thursday 26th June 2025

MINUTES

Directors present:	Zoe Beach (Chair), Tarryn Lloyd Payne, Tim Fisher (Chief Executive Officer) and Professor Graham Wynn (Joined Meeting - Remotely via Teams)
In attendance	John Armitage: Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy Laurence Job: Principal, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College Angela Sweeten: Head Teacher, Longfield Academy Rachel Sommerville: Head Teacher, Hurworth School Pete King: Head Teacher, Mowden Schools Jon Tait: Executive Director of Education Nikki Wade: Strategic Development Officer Laura Hawksby: Governance & Policy Officer

Item	Description of discussion	Action
	PART A: Procedural items	
1.	<u>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</u> The Chair welcomed Pete King (Head Teacher Mowden Schools) to his first meeting of the Standards Committee. It was confirmed that a quorum was present.	
2.	<u>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</u> Apologies for absence were received and accepted for Iain Clyde (Director).	
3.	<u>Notification of items of urgent other business</u> None	
4.	<u>Declaration of Personal and Pecuniary Interests</u> None	

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5.	<p><u>Approval of minutes/review of actions/matters arising – Standards Committee 31st March 2025</u></p> <p>Draft Minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 31st March 2025 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting, a copy of which is held on file.</p> <p>All actions had been completed or included for this meeting of the Committee as requested by Directors.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 31st March 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record and should be signed by the Chair.</p>	
PART B: Business Items for Discussion		
6.	<p><u>Academy Updates</u></p> <p><u>Mowden Schools</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher of Mowden Schools provided an update report to Directors. Attendance was noted to be good and evidence from learning walks (Maths and Reading), work scrutinies (RE, History and Science) and from assessments of children's knowledge in Geography & History had shown the curriculum to be strong.</p> <p>The fall in pupil numbers was noted to remain one of the key risks. Directors asked when the new Marketing & Admissions post would be commencing? The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) advised it would be from the 1st August, which would help address this issue and across all the academies. Directors suggested that The Rydal Academy would be able to share their knowledge and expertise regarding in year mobility with Mowden Schools.</p> <p><u>Hurworth</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher for Hurworth School provided an update report to Directors. The new Choices Behaviour Policy as previously reported to Directors continued to be going well and being embedded further with staff working on ensuring consistency.</p> <p>Directors noted SEN (Special Education Needs) were increasing and the number of students being Elective Home Educated. Work continued to address the dip in pupil numbers and the resulting risk regarding finances was noted by Directors.</p> <p><u>Longfield Academy</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher for Longfield Academy provided an update report to Directors. GCSE exams had been well attended and the culture of the Academy continued to grow. Suspensions & exclusions have significantly decreased. Fall in pupil numbers remained the biggest risk and an increase in complex needs of students.</p> <p>With regards to future Academy updates Directors requested that the support required from the Trust be rag rated to help prioritise and monitor areas for action by the Partnership.</p>	CEO/SDO/EDE

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	<p><u>Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College</u></p> <p>The Principal at QE provided an update report to Directors. Course and core aim retention of students remains the highest in the past 4 years. Curriculum attendance is the highest in the past 4 years. Student numbers (recruitment and retention) remain a risk and priority.</p> <p>Current application numbers for new Year 1 students were the highest in the past 5 years, with the number of applications being the second highest in the past 5 years.</p> <p>Directors advised that further links could be explored providing support from universities on for example, results day and helping raise student aspirations to university.</p> <p><u>The Rydal Academy</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher of The Rydal Academy provided an update report to Directors. The Academy's Special Educational Needs and Disability ELMS provision and Reception ASD provision had been reviewed by the Local Authority and the practices had been identified as being as strong as in any of the Local Authority specialist bases. Safeguarding continued to be recognised as strong, despite the level of need. Roll mobility continued to be a challenge.</p> <p>Directors advised that expertise and knowledge from Northumbria University could be shared with the Partnership academies regarding the latest advances in AI (Artificial Intelligence).</p>	<p>Principal/ Director GW</p> <p>CEO/SDO/EDE</p>
7.	<p>Standards ADEMSS Report including:</p> <p>Spotlight on Attendance & Behaviour – PowerPoint and Trust Dashboard preview</p> <p>The Executive Director of Education provided an update on the data dashboard he has been developing and used attendance & behaviour data as an example to demonstrate how the dashboard will present information for analysis across the academies. It will be used for reporting to Directors and as a management tool for senior leadership. Directors questioned where the data is pulled through from for the dashboard and the Executive Director of Education confirmed it was via the Schools' and College Management Information Systems. Work was being undertaken to ensure the same type/level of data is pulled through from each establishment in the Partnership for comparison purposes.</p> <p>Directors asked if this information would be used as information for Ofsted visits and the Director of Education confirmed it would.</p>	

	<p>Curriculum Development - PowerPoint</p> <p>The Executive Director Education has been developing quality assurance calendared across the academic year with thematic/subject reviews. He has also been developing professional learning across the Partnership, including an academies digital hub with weekly additions of articles/videos and 'The Arch' podcast.</p>	
8.	<p>Safeguarding ADEMSS Report</p> <p>Partnership Safeguarding Lead</p> <p>Members of the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leads) group have expressed an interest in the Partnership Safeguarding Lead role as previously reported to Directors of the Committee (Minute 6 Standards Committee 31st March 2025 refers), which will help to provide a clear picture of safeguarding across the partnership and direct support where needed. The next stage is to agree a remit and remuneration for the role. Directors questioned whether the Partnership Safeguarding Lead would be invited to attend the Director's committee meetings, and the Strategic Development Officer confirmed this was correct.</p> <p>Sample Partnership Safeguarding Report</p> <p>A sample Partnership Safeguarding Report was noted by the Committee. Directors advised it was a good report which helped identify what was going well and any risks.</p>	
9.	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee were noted. Directors advised that the role of the Standards Committee had developed further during the academic year since the terms of reference had been approved at the beginning of the academic year. The Governance & Policy Officer confirmed that the terms of reference would be reviewed further in the Autumn term as part of its annual review and would be brought back to the Standards Committee later in the Autumn Term.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Standards Committee Terms of Reference be brought back for review later in the Autumn term.</p>	Governance & Policy Officer
10.	<p>Part C: Concluding Items</p> <p>Approval of documents for inspection</p> <p>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/staff.</p>	Governance & Policy Officer
11.	<p>Date and time of future meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next meeting of the Full Board of Directors was scheduled for 1st July 2025 at 5.00pm 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Standards Committee meeting dates for the 2025/26 Academic Year would be forwarded to Directors following the schedule of meetings approval at the next Board meeting on the 1st July 2025. 	Governance & Policy Officer
The meeting concluded at 7.20 pm		

Action Log

5.	Minutes – 31 st March 2025 to be signed by Chair	Governance & Policy Officer
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rag rating of support from the Partnership to be included in Academy Updates Further links with universities Shared AI knowledge with Northumbria University and the Partnership 	CEO/SDO/EDE Principal QE/Director GW CEO/SDO/EDE/ Director GW
9.	The Standards Committee Terms of Reference be brought back for review later in the Autumn term	Governance & Policy Officer
11.	The Standards Committee meeting dates for the 2025/26 Academic Year be forwarded to Directors following the schedule of meetings approval at the next Board meeting on the 1 st July 2025.	Governance & Policy Officer

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

Signed by: (Chair) Z. Beach

On: (date) 25.09. 2025

Printed name: ZOE BEACH

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