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### LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025

5.00pm - 6.30pm

Via MS Teams

Governor name	Initials	Governor type	A = absence
Mr Peter Edwards MBE	PE	Chair, Appointed AC governor	
Mr Kevin Stokes	KS	Deputy Chair, Appointed Parent AC governor	
Mrs Donna Bennett	DB	Appointed AC governor	A
Mrs Emma Taylor	ET	Appointed AC governor	
Mr James Foxton	JT	Appointed AC governor	A

In attendance:

Staff name	Initials	Role	A = absence
Mr Gareth Letton	GL	Executive Principal – SBPA and WPA	
Mr Jon Chapman	JC	Principal - SBPA	
Ms Carly Ripley	CR	Principal - WPA	
Ms Lynsey Parker	LP	Governance Professional (Clerk)	
Mr P Rowse	PR	Member of staff observing for CPD purposes	

Item no.	Agenda item	Action / for whom / by when
SBPA/WPA/ 059/2425	<p><b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence:</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Ms Donna Benett. Mr Foxton was not present at the meeting and had not submitted any apologies in advance of the meeting, his absence was noted and apologies accepted and agreed by the governors.</p> <p>Mr Dowse was welcomed to the meeting, who was observing for CPD purposes</p>	
SBPA/WPA/ 060/2425	<p><b>Declaration of interest:</b></p> <p>There were no new declarations for any items on the agenda.</p> <p>Governors confirmed that the declarations previously given were correct.</p>	
SBPA/WPA/ 061/2425	<p><b>Governance report:</b></p> <p>Link visit reports:</p>	

	<p>Governors acknowledged receipt of the governance report circulated in advance of the meeting, including link visit reports in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and management</li> <li>• GDPR</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Parent and stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• SEND (from previous half-term, circulated for completeness)</li> </ul> <p>Governance housekeeping:</p> <p>Election of Chair and Vice Chair: The Chair explained that the Chair and Vice Chair roles were subject to annual re-election from members of the academy committee.</p> <p>Both Mr Edwards and Mr Stokes have expressed an interest in continuing in the Chair and Vice Chair roles. The Chair asked if there were any other expressions of interest from the academy committee governors. There were no further expressions of interest.</p> <p>Academy committee governors discussed and unanimously voted for Mr Edwards to be re-elected as Chair for another year with effect from the autumn term, and for Ms Weeks to be re-elected as Vice Chair with effect from the autumn term. The academy committee governors and Principals thanked Mr Edwards and Mr Stokes for their continued contribution to both academies.</p> <p>Link governor roles: Due to governor absence, the Chair advised that a discussion on link governor roles would take place at the first meeting of 2025/26, in anticipation of there being full governor attendance and asked all governors to consider which roles may be of interest to them.</p>	All governors
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/062/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 (attached/agreed by Chair and Principals circulated):</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair, Principal, and Executive Principal.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/063/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising:</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/064/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Principal's Report:</b></p>	

Governors noted that they had received Principal's Reports for both academies in advance of the meeting, and questioned the Principals as follows:

**Samuel Barlow Primary Academy (SBPA)**

**Attendance:**

Academy committee governors noted the overall 2.5% improvement since last year, acknowledged all the work being undertaken, and asked the Principal to give an update on the approach taken and if he felt attendance was being managed as efficiently as it could be.

Mr Chapman advised that the academy was proud of the progress that had been made this year and the relentless focus across inclusion team, with support from office support staff, and the Principal overseeing this work. He noted that as well as the whole school improvement in attendance, Pupil Premium student attendance had improved by 2.8% and SEND students by 4.6% but still below non-SEND peers, though with a narrowed gap. However, attendance is still not where it was pre-covid, or at national averages.

Governors noted the impact of children accessing part-time timetables and AP on the figures. Mr Chapman advised that Year 6 attendance has been challenging this year due to the complex needs of the cohort, and noted that current Year 5 are in a better position than current Year 6s with regards to being in school.

**Admissions and projected pupil numbers:**

Governors enquired about admissions and projected numbers for 2025/26 and the Principal advised there are 32 confirmed new intake places for September.

With regards to nurse provision, the Principal advised that there are 19 confirmed places taken in the morning and 15 in the afternoons, of which 12 are full-time places. The academy can accommodate 37 nursery children in any one session and expect the intake to cumulatively increase over the year at 3 intake points. The Principal advised that work with Marketing, reaching out to parents and extended transitions have all taken place. Governors noted that the provision is very positive for the community and thanked staff for ensuring a strong start.

**Behaviour:**

Governors acknowledged that achievement points have outstripped behaviour incidents and points at the academy, which is pleasing, before asking the Principal to comment on the number of suspensions this year. Mr Chapman explained that there have been 17 suspensions, the majority of which are for Year 6 children. In response to a question from governors, Mr Chapman confirmed that all children have SEND but not all have an ECHP. Regarding the overall approach to behaviour, Mr Chapman advised that Team Teach training is taking place next week, and that he is carrying out some work with the Trust on behaviour pathways and graduated response.

	<p><b>Stakeholder and community engagement:</b> Mr Chapman advised that the sponsored colour run event has been phenomenally well supported by the local community.</p> <p>Governors were invited to any end of the remaining end of year events and it was confirmed that Mr Stokes would be attending sports day and the leavers assembly. It was advised that other events include the end of year summer party on the last day (25<sup>th</sup> July) to help encourage attendance to the end of term, and sleepover at school for Year 6.</p> <p><b>Staff and pupil wellbeing:</b> The Principal updated that Samuel Barlow is now a mental health school, and has partnered with the local mental health support team who have carried out stress workshops with Year 6. Any referrals into the team will be processed more quickly due to partnership status</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> Mr Chapman gave a verbal update on the summer statutory key stage assessments.</p> <p>EYFS Good Level of Development = 68% , representing a 0.5% increase on last year, and against a target of 75%, therefore still some way to go.</p> <p>Year 1 Phonics Screening Check = 78% met expected standard Mr Chapman advised that this is still not at national standards, but represents a significant improvement over the last 3 years, and he thanked all of the team for their hard work and commitment in getting the children ready to take the test.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Governors, the Principal confirmed that those children who did not meet the expected standard will take a re-check in Y2 if they can access the test, though it was confirmed this will not be the case for those with the most significant levels of need.</p> <p><b>Multiplication check:</b> 5% = attained full marks (25/25) 33% = attained 20+</p> <p>Mr Chapman advised that the academy has implemented a new Maths fluency programme this year but has not yet had time to embed fully and see the impacts, and that this will continue to be implemented next year.</p> <p><b>Year 6 SATS:</b> 31% = meeting expected standards in Reading, Writing and Maths, which is in line with last year. 25% of children could not access and take the assessments.</p>	
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	<p>Mr Chapman advised governors that he was pleased with the SATs results considering the starting point of the children but that the academy is still a significant distance away from where it needs to be. He confirmed that there are tight plans in place for improved attainment at KS2 next year.</p> <p>AIP objectives: Governors thanked the Principal for the end of year update against the 2024/25 AIP objectives.</p> <p>The Chair of Governors advised that Samuel Barlow will be due for Ofsted inspection from next year, and asked that Ofsted preparations be a standing agenda items at local academy committee meetings throughout 2025/26.</p> <p>The Principal explained that all previous areas for improvement had been addressed and actioned; and that the new Ofsted inspection framework will be used as soon as this becomes available in the autumn term.</p> <p>Safeguarding: Governors acknowledged receipt of the safeguarding checklist, and the Principal also advised that the academy assistant SENCO is carrying out Thrive ambassador training and that the Thrive approach will be embedded next year, underpinned by the AIP.</p> <p>Governors asked the Principal for any update on the figures and overall safeguarding culture. Mr Chapman confirmed that 26 safeguarding referrals have been made including 15 into the LA's neurodevelopment service. He advised that the Samuel Barlow AIR has recently taken place which found Safeguarding reporting at the academy is exemplary, and noted how well the safeguarding and inclusion teams have worked together. Mr Chapman will share the final AIR report with academy committee governors as soon as this is available.</p> <p><b>WPA:</b></p> <p>Safeguarding: The Principal advised that since the report was provided to governors, another MASH referral has been made this week, taking the total to 11.</p> <p>Academy committee governors queried the levels of service from the local authority regarding referrals and requests for support. The Principal advised that that academy's Family Support Adviser is making good links and relationships with external agencies but advised that all services are stretched compared with the level of need and noted that WPA do not feel that the local authority is not giving support, but that there is not enough resource to go round.</p> <p>AIP objectives:</p>	<p>LP</p> <p>J Chapman</p>
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	<p>Academy committee governors noted that the AIP objective around writing had not been fully met at the end of the year and asked the Principal to provide an update. Ms Ripley confirmed that new approaches have been adopted and all indicators show that writing is improving, but is not yet having the impact on standards and assessments, therefore this will need to remain a priority for next year. The academy has recently bought into the Pathways to Writing programme and this will be embedded next year.</p> <p>In relation to the reading and phonics priority, Ms Ripley confirmed that more children are achieving age related expectations at the end of their key stages at reading. The academy has also bought into a reading pathway as well as the writing scheme. The teaching team are looking closely at teaching approaches and are using every opportunity possible to read with the children.</p> <p>In response to a query from the governors, Ms Ripley noted that EAL children experience significant barriers to accessing the curriculum, and whilst there is lots of evidence to show that they are making progress, many are not yet at the expected standards. She advised that there are 30+ languages in use in the academy, which as well as teaching, also poses challenges for communicating and engaging with parents, many of whom are not able to support children with their reading at home.</p> <p>Governors queried if Speech and Language Therapists work with EAL children in the academy. The Principal explained that an experienced TA leads on working with children with EAL, and also educates staff on teaching and learning strategies for these children. Mrs Taylor confirmed that she would meet with the member of staff during the next SEND link governor visit in to the academy to talk through the provision.</p> <p><b>Attendance:</b> Governors thanked the Principal for the comprehensive update provided on the current attendance rates and the approaches taken by the academy. The Principal confirmed that there is a whole-school focus on improving attendance, with a team around this and with lots of interventions taking place, but the overall attendance rate remains stubbornly unchanged at 93%. Networking across the Trust to share knowledge and expertise is helpful.</p> <p>In response to a query, the Principal confirmed that attendance letters home are issued in community languages wherever appropriate, and that these do have an impact but are only one piece of the puzzle in engaging families and ensuring children are in school.</p> <p>The Principal explained that whilst the numbers of children accessing part-time timetables may look similar to the previous report to governors, these relate to different children. 1 child from the last report is increasing their hours. Others in this term's report may be new arrivals and are doing an extended transition into the academy, this has been an approach that works, is beneficial for the children and has enabled them to progress to the full time timetable successfully.</p>	<p>ET</p>
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	<p><b>Standards:</b> Ms Ripley gave a verbal update on summer statutory key stage assessments:</p> <p>EYFS Good Level of Development = 68% The Principal advised that lots of work has taken place with the Year 1 team to continue to bridge the gap between where the cohort are currently, and where they need to be to meet expected standards, as these children enter Year 1 next year.</p> <p>Year 1 Phonics Screening Check = 58% achieved expected standard</p> <p>Year 4 Multiplication Check = 41% = attained full marks (25/25) 75% = attained 20+ marks Ms Ripley feedback that lots of teaching interventions had taken place in the run up to the testing and it was pleasing that the strategies put in place paid off and children have achieved really positive results.</p> <p>Year 6 SATS:</p> <p>Reading: 54% achieved expected standard 10% achieved greater depth</p> <p>Writing: 61% achieved expected standard 2% achieved greater depth</p> <p>Maths: 71% achieved expected outcome 24% greater depth</p> <p>The Principal noted that these results demonstrate that Maths is an area of strength for the academy, and also suggests that the focus on writing in next year's AIP is the right one. Governors thanked the Principal and all the staff for their hard work on the children's development.</p> <p><b>Academy risk register:</b> Governors received the latest risk register and agreed with the academy's view that SEND, funding, barriers to improving outcomes were areas of risk for WPA. Mitigating actions were received within the report and noted.</p> <p><b>Any other business:</b></p>	
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	<p>Furter to recent reports in the press regarding cost pressures nationally impacting the quality and choice of school meals, governors asked if this was an issue at the academies.</p> <p>Ms Ripley advised that WPA staff go above and beyond to offer various choices for the children so that they get a full, balanced meal each day, including a hot meal, jacket potato, and sandwich option</p> <p>In response to a query from the academy committee governors, the Principals also advised that there were breakfast clubs in place at both academies but noted that neither are part of the government funded trial, and so the provision is not free for those families accessing it.</p> <p><b>Executive Principal comments:</b> Mr Letton advised that planning for next year at both academies is really positive, and reiterated that there will be an overall aim to improve standards and to get more children ready for secondary, focusing on basic skills really unapologetically.</p> <p>The Executive Principal thanked all the governors for their hard wok and contribution to both academies this year.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/ 065/2425</b></p>	<p><b>How has the Academy Committee held senior leaders to account:</b></p> <p>Governors had challenged the Principals throughout the meeting in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards</li> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Behaviour</li> <li>Safeguarding</li> <li>Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>Planning and academy priorities for 2025/26</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/ 066/2425</b></p>	<p><b>How have Vision, Mission and Values of Trust/Equality been upheld:</b></p> <p>These have been upheld through the agenda and discussions that have taken place. Equalities implications have been considered in all agenda items.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/ 067/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Annual Report to Trustees:</b></p> <p>After discussion by the governors, the annual local academy committee report was completed and submitted to the Trust Head of Governance following the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/ 068/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Determination of Confidentiality:</b></p> <p>Academy committee governors considered whether anything discussed should be deemed confidential and it was resolved that there had been no confidential discussions.</p>	

<b>SBPA/WPA/ 069/2425</b>	<b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> September at 4.30pm at Samuel Barlow	
The meeting closed at 17.35pm  Signed: P.Edwards (Chair) Date: 23/7/25		