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### LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 21 May 2025

5.00pm - 6.30pm

at Wainwright Primary Academy

Governor name	Initials	Governor type	A = absence
Mr Peter Edwards	PE	Chair	
Mr Kevin Stokes	KS	Deputy Chair	
Mrs Donna Bennett	DB	Staff	
Mrs Emma Taylor	ET	Appointed	
Mr James Foxton	JT	Appointed	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	
Ms Georgina Vickers		Observing	

Item no.	Agenda item	Action / for whom / by when
<p><b>Local academy committee training – role of the Family Support Advisor</b></p> <p>Prior to the main agenda, the committee received a training and a deep dive session into the role of the Family Support Advisor, to gain an insight into the role and how it has positively impacted upon the academies.</p>		
SBPA/WPA/ 048/2425	<p><b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence:</b></p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the meeting by the Chair and introductions were carried out around the room. Ms Vickers was welcomed as an observer to the meeting, having expressed an interest in becoming a governor for the Trust.</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Foxton due to work commitments.</p>	
SBPA/WPA/ 049/2425	<p><b>Declaration of interest:</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he has one new interest to declare:</p>	

	Governor at St Mary Magdelene CoE Primary School	
<b>SBPA/WPA/ 050/2425</b>	<p><b>Governance report:</b></p> <p>The Governance Professional confirmed that the governance action plan will be updated ahead of the next meeting. Governors were advised that individual governors skills audits and questionnaires will be circulated after the meeting to inform future local academy committee, and Trust-wide governor training and development plans.</p> <p><b>Link Governor Roles and Link Visit Reports</b></p> <p>It was noted that the leadership and management link governor role needs to be added to the current list of link responsibilities.</p> <p>All link governor visit reports had been received in advance of the meeting. It was noted that a SEND link visit had also taken place at WPA. The Governance report will be updated to reflect this and re-circulated accordingly.</p> <p>In relation to the Health and Safety visit report at WPA, governors queried the arrangements for the full lockdown drill and evacuation training. Ms Ripley confirmed that both are now scheduled for July and have been discussed with staff during a recent staff meeting, including taking on board feedback from recent drills at other academies within the Trust.</p> <p><b>Trust Policy Updates</b></p> <p>Governors acknowledged receipt of the Trust policy updates in advance of the meeting. It was confirmed that there were no substantial changes.</p> <p><b>Governor and Trustee Conference</b></p> <p>Governors were reminded of the upcoming Governor and Trustee Conference taking place on 12 June at the Trust Headquarters in Retford. It was noted that at present, no members of this committee are confirmed to attend and so the Executive Principal encouraged attendance wherever possible.</p> <p><b>Re-appointment of Mrs Donna Bennett</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that Mrs Bennett's term of office had expired and that due to her forthcoming retirement, she was not eligible to continue in her staff governor role. The committee unanimously agreed to appoint Mrs Bennett as appointed governor with immediate effect. This creates a vacancy for a staff governor on the local academy committee and it was therefore agreed that staff governor elections would be organised for the next half term.</p>	<p>LP</p> <p>LP</p>
<b>SBPA/WPA/ 051/2425</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting dated 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (attached/agreed by Chair and Principals circulated):</b>	

	<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/052/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising:</b></p> <p><b>SBPA/WPA/042/2425</b> – CR to give an update on EEF writing pathway trial.</p> <p>Ms Ripley advised the committee that WPA were unsuccessful at securing a place on the funded trial, but have subsequently made a decision to purchase the scheme.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/053/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Principal’s Report:</b></p> <p><b>Samuel Barlow Primary Academy (SBPA)</b></p> <p><b>SEND</b></p> <p>Governors acknowledged the number of SEND students at the academy. Mr Chapman confirmed that there are currently 72 students on the SEND register, representing 25% of the academy population. Of these, 17 students have an EHCP. It was explained that students identified under the K code are those who may have a learning need and require adaptation and intervention. It was advised that funding for children with SEND is largely allocated at the family SENCO level.</p> <p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>The current attendance figure stands at 92.7%, which is 1 percentage point below the national average. However, this represents a year-on-year improvement.</p> <p>Persistent Absence (PA) affects 46 pupils out of 268. The academy continues to monitor these cases daily, with reasons including school refusal, pupils being in Alternative Provision (AP), and extended holidays during term time. The number of PA cases has been decreasing steadily after a spike early in the academic year.</p> <p>Severe Absence (SA) cases involve pupils in AP or those refusing to engage in any form of education. The academy has offered a variety of options including home tutoring and is working with the LA to support these families. It was noted that there are currently 350 children in Nottinghamshire awaiting a special school place, with demand exceeding available provision, and the 160 new places at Horizons Academy are expected to be filled. The academy continues to meet its safeguarding obligations for pupils with severe absence, maintaining regular contact with families to ensure their safety.</p> <p>In response to a governor query, Mr Chapman confirmed that there will be 10 classes next year. Resources have been allocated with the support of the Trust to split the new Y5 cohort to support SATs readiness, and an additional member of staff has been</p>	

	<p>employed. The Principal confirmed that two experienced teachers will be joining the team.</p> <p><b>Wainwright Primary Academy (WPA)</b></p> <p><b>Standards and Outcomes</b> Governors received the positive feedback from the recent Trust Standards and Outcomes committee visit.</p> <p>A query was raised regarding the Trust’s support in recruiting volunteers. It was noted that volunteers, often family members or grandparents, are encouraged to support reading and other activities. The academy is actively seeking to increase this support, with the Family Support Worker working on this.</p> <p>Governors welcomed the engagement between Trustees and staff, noting the importance of two-way communication. Concerns were raised about the sustainability of relying on staff goodwill. The Principal acknowledged that this is a national issue, and part of the teacher recruitment and retention challenge. However, staff are increasingly open about wellbeing, and generational expectations around work-life balance are evolving. All acknowledged and agreed that the Trust continues to provide support for staff. The Principal confirmed that the wellbeing and mental health of staff remains a priority, and the Chair reminded governors to raise this during link visits. Governors also noted the impact of changing workloads on TAs. It was confirmed that staff are rotated to ensure the right support for children with complex needs.</p> <p><b>Sport Premium</b> Governors received the Sport Premium report and noted the positive use of funding.</p> <p><b>Phonics Audit</b> Governors noted the positive trajectory in the teaching of phonics and commended the work being undertaken.</p> <p>In response to a query, the Principal advised that fine and gross motor skills are becoming a greater focus to support writing development. This is not a new initiative but a growing priority.</p> <p><b>Attendance</b> It was noted that attendance figures are disproportionately affected at the start of the year due to absences within the EAL community. There are also a number of school refusers, who are contacted regularly from a safeguarding perspective.</p> <p>The Principal confirmed that all four children on part-time timetables are now increasing their hours.</p>	
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	<p><b>Parental Engagement</b> Governors noted the low levels of attendance at the recent phonics workshop. Staff are exploring new ways to engage parents, particularly those from EAL backgrounds, and those parents who may lack confidence or have had negative experiences of education. Ideas include getting parents into classrooms to see the academy in action, and to continue to build positive relationships with parents and carers at the start and end of the school day, especially in KS1. Governors expressed interest in supporting events such as parents' evenings to promote the academy's work.</p> <p><b>Admissions – September 2025</b> The PAN for WPA is 60. Currently, 49 applications have been received. The academy is working with families to encourage applications and it was noted that parents are still visiting the school to look around.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b> Both safeguarding checklists were received and noted by governors.</p> <p><b>Digital Poverty</b> Governors discussed the issue of digital poverty and lack of access to IT equipment. The Chair is working with West Notts College to refurbish old laptops and PCs for distribution to schools in Mansfield and Ashfield. Both SBPA and WPA expressed interest in being involved in this initiative.</p>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/054/2425</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>• SEND</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Pupil number projections</li> <li>• Staff wellbeing</li> <li>• Parental and community engagement</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Use of funding</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SBPA/WPA/055/2425</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/056/2425</b></p>	<p><b>Complete Termly Report to Trustees:</b></p> <p>The report was completed and submitted to the Trust Board following the meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that there were no matters requiring a response or feedback from Trustees.</p>	

<b>SBPA/WPA/ 057/2425</b>	<p><b>Determination of Confidentiality:</b></p> <p>Academy committee governors considered whether anything discussed should be deemed confidential and it was resolved:</p> <p>That confidential items had been discussed and that matters discussed within agenda item SBPA/WPA/053/2425 should remain confidential to attendees of this meeting.</p>	
<b>SBPA/WPA/ 058/2425</b>	<p>Date and time of next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Samuel Barlow Primary Academy</li> <li>• Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025</li> <li>• Training Meeting: 4.30pm</li> <li>• Main Agenda: 5.00pm - 6.30pm</li> </ul>	
<p>The meeting closed at 6.02pm</p> <p>Signed: P.Edwards (Chair) Date: 23.5.25</p>		