INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Leading Learners Multi-Academy Trust**

**Worth Valley Primary School Local Governing Board**

Minutes of a meeting of the Local Governing Board

held at the School on Thursday 30 November 2023 at 1.00pm

PRESENT: Mr R Laughlin (in the chair)

 Mrs J Batey; Miss R Regan; Mrs V Townson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs C Lodge (Headteacher)

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Tony Hammond, Independent Professional Clerking Services

90 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. No interests were declared.

91 APOLOGIES. There were no apologies for absence.

92 ANY OTHER BUSINESS. It was noted that the Mr Laughlin would feedback on the recent heads and chairs meeting, and that Miss Lodge had some items of additional business.

93 MEMBERSHIP. Miss Regan was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

It was noted that there remained three community governor vacancies. Mr Laughlin informed governors that he had not heard back from Councillor Herd.

Mrs Batey confirmed that she would contact the local dance academy.

Governors were asked to suggest potential new governors, ideally from the local business community.

94 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

95 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.

96 HEADTEACHER’S REPORT. A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting, together with the School Improvement Plan. Miss Lodge confirmed that the Plan did not include any actions that had now been embedded.

**School Improvement Plan**

Miss Lodge updated governors as follows:-

Reading

* It was likely that reading would always be a priority as it was key to accessing the whole curriculum.
* Reciprocal reading was being used for Year 5 and 6 pupils who were fluent and confident readers but struggled with comprehension.
* The National Literacy Trust’s World of Stories programme was supporting the development of a love of reading through the provision of library books/resources.

Oracy

* Oracy was a Trust priority.
* The Reading Lead continued to be a member of the Trust Working Party.

Parental Engagement, including Attendance

* There had been good progress with parental engagement, with examples of parents supporting the School when there had been a complaint about the gates and when the School had gone into lockdown in response to there being an armed member of the public on adjacent land.
* Parental engagement activities included coffee mornings.
* Attendance remained a priority as, whilst it was close to national, the national average was low. The School’s targets were aspirational but achievable.
* The School followed the Local Authority’s staged response to non-attendance.
* A small number of families were difficult to engage with and had children who were persistently late. Staff were focused on identifying the barriers.
* There had been a number of term-time holidays at the start of the year, but the pupils concerned were generally no longer classed as persistent absentees.

Governors asked if there had been any parental resistance to the staged approach and Miss Lodge informed them that there were cases where the letters had not made a significant difference. She confirmed that attendance below 90% led to a persistent absence letter, if there was no improvement there was a second letter and if there was then no improvement a referral was made to the Local Authority, resulting in a warning letter and a 25 day monitoring period. If this did not lead to improvement, fixed-penalty notices were issued.

Curriculum

* This year’s priority subjects in the wider curriculum were Spanish, music and PE.
* The School was working with the Local Authority’s Music Service, with a view to increasing the number of children learning an instrument. It was likely that some Pupil Premium funding would be used to support access for eligible pupils.

Writing

* Work on writing continued to build on last year’s CPD.
* The Local Authority would be providing some training, with a focus on moderation.

**Target-Setting Data**

It was noted that some targets were higher than last year and some lower, because targets were cohort-specific.

**Autumn School Review**

Miss Lodge confirmed that the review on 1 November had been very positive and she would circulate the report. The reviewer had asked some challenging questions and had looked in depth at maths. He had been pleased with the consistency of the teaching of White Rose Maths and had made some suggestions in relation to the SEF and SIP.

**English**

Governors noted that the reciprocal reading trial (in partnership with the Fisher Family Trust) was a 12-week programme that aimed to improve comprehension skills.

Miss Lodge confirmed that the World of Stories programme was designed to support schools in enhancing school libraries and increasing community engagement. The School would receive more than 400 books.

**Staff Training and Development**

Miss Lodge drew attention to the following:-

* National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) were being funded by the DfE for the third year. All teachers had either completed, or were currently undertaking, an NPQ this academic year. Several teachers had enrolled on a second NPQ, which reflected their positive attitude towards CPD.
* The School was working with local colleges and universities and was hosting several teacher training and teaching assistant training placements.
* Staff were supporting other Trust schools in relation to the implementation of PiXL and creative ways to improve attendance/reduce persistent absence.

**Oracy**

Governors noted the following:-

* The School Council had recently visited Cracoe and Rylstone Primary School in the Yorkshire Dales, to gain ideas about how to develop the outdoor space. Following the visit, pupils had decided they would like a garden and a pond.
* The two Year 5 School Council representatives had taken part in a Trust Super Council meeting at Carrwood Primary.

**Staffing**

Miss Lodge drew attention to the following:-

* Lara Crawford (Year 4 teacher) was on maternity leave and had had a baby girl. The class was being led by Tracy Whittam, supported by a teaching assistant.
* A full-time teacher had been appointed on a fixed-term contract, predominantly to deliver high-quality intervention sessions to pupils with SEND.
* A level 2 teaching assistant was being recruited for Early Years.

**Training**

It was noted that the staff training programme was extensive.

**Community Engagement**

Governors noted the significant number of engagement activities.

97 SAFEGUARDING. A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

 **Data**

 Data was noted as follows:-

* There had been 1 new Early Help referral.
* There had been no new Social Care referrals.
* No children were subject to child protection plans.
* 12 children were subject to child in need plans (6 families).
* There were 8 children looked after (7 families).
* 8 children were privately fostered, adopted or subject to special guardianship orders (8 families).
* No children were home-educated.
* No children were educated offsite.
* No children had been reported as missing from education.
* There had been no Prevent referrals.

Miss Lodge confirmed that the low numbers of Early Help and Social Care referrals did not reflect the high level of safeguarding needs.

**Update**

Governors noted the following:-

* Tonya Barnes and Abbie Butterfield had recently completed bereavement training. Isobel Keeling from Bereavement UK was to deliver training to teachers and support staff on 31 January.
* Miss Lodge and Mrs Page were to complete an online NSPCC course on Harmful Sexual Behaviours.
* Anti-Bullying Week had been the focus last week. Pupils had been overwhelmingly clear about what action they would take if they felt they were being bullied, and what action they would expect adults to take. They had been less clear on what to do if they felt someone else was being bullied, so this information had been cascaded to staff and was an area of focus in lessons.
* There had recently been a recorded incident of bullying. This had been ongoing for some time, but the child had not reported it.
* The School used a restorative approach to bullying and establishing/maintaining positive relationships was a significant element of PSHE.

98 COMMUNITY. This had been covered earlier in the meeting.

99 POLICIES. The Young Carers Policy and Admission Policy had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**Young Carers**

Miss Lodge informed governors that the Policy clearly defined the meaning of “young carer”.

**Admissions**

It was noted that refences to “catchment area” had been removed (due to the falling birth-rate) and terminology had been updated.

100 GOVERNOR VISITS. There had been no visits since the last meeting.

101 GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND SELF-REVIEW. Governors were asked to return completed skills audits to the Governance Professional.

102 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS. It was noted that meetings had been arranged for Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 1.00pm and Thursday 11 July 2024 at 1.00pm.

 It was noted that 11 July would be Mr Hammond’s final meeting as Governance Professional.

 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

103 HEADS AND CHAIRS MEETING. Mr Laughlin updated governors on the meeting as follows:-

* The CEO and Chair of Trustees had gone through the Trust’s priorities and had made some positive references to Worth Valley.
* A key aim of the session had been to identify ways in which two-way communication between the Board and LGBs could be improved.
* The Trust currently comprised six schools, but was expected to grow to 13 by the end of the year, with the majority based in The Wirral.
* It was anticipated that members of LGBs would meet with Ofsted inspectors in the future - particularly safeguarding and SEND link governors.
* A training day was to be planned in the first quarter of the year.
* The meeting had been very positive and the Chair of Trustees had offered to visit any LGBs requiring support.
* Heads and chairs meetings would be held on a termly basis.

104 SCHOOL-TO-SCHOOL SUPPORT. Miss Lodge informed governors that the Chair of the Bronte Trust and the Resourced Provision Lead Teacher at Howarth Primary School had visited the School’s resourced provision. They had fed back positively about the children, the environment and provision.

105 THIS WEEK IN SCHOOL. Miss Lodge confirmed that it had been a particularly challenging week. An old water tank had leaked, causing damage to two rooms and leading to the School being closed for a day. A child had also set off the fire alarm on 29 November.

Miss Milner (Year 1) had learned of the sudden death of her mum and the class was being covered by short-term supply. Governors asked Miss Lodge to pass on their condolences and the Chair asked that staff be thanked for not allowing the children to see how upset they were.

106 ANNUAL WHOLE-SCHOOL TRIP. Miss Lodge confirmed that there was to be a free, whole-school trip to the Alhambra Pantomime on 4 January and asked governors to support this if they could.

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signature of Chair

IPC/AH/minutes

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