

2Minutes Local Advisory Board: Orchard & Shepherdswell
14th March 2024 18.00
Meeting held at Shepherdswell Academy
The fourth LAB meeting of the academic year 2023-2024

These minutes reflect the order of the agenda and not necessarily the order of discussion

Name	Lead area	Type of governor	Term from-to	Present	No. of meetings attended
Ruth Ryan	Executive Headteacher	Headteacher	21/02/2020 – N/A	Apologies	3/4
Chris Akpakwu. Joined at 18.08	Vice Chair / Safeguarding	Parent	13/07/20 - 12/07/24	Yes	3/4
Uday Nagaraju Joined Late	Community engagement and extra-Curricular activities	Co-opted	26.05.20 - 25/05/20	Yes	3/4
Riyike Olateru	Chair / Adapting the curriculum for SEND, DA and EAL pupils.	Co-opted	22/06/23 - 21/06/27	Yes	4/4
Kirsty Weatherspoon		Staff Governor Shepherdswell	18/12/2023-17/12/2027	No	1/2
Vacancies	Staff - 1 / Parent Governor - 1 / Co-opted - 5				

Others present at the meeting

NAME	ROLE
Joshua Coleman	Chief Executive Officer - EMAT
John Lawson	Head of Education – EMAT
Alex Rigler	Head of Governance and Compliance - EMAT
Hannah Auger	Head of School - Orchard
Ellen Williams	Head of School - Shepherdswell
Bekky Salako	Observer/Potential Governor
Barry Wardle	Clerk

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome and Introductions	The Board noted that Uday Nagaraju would resign as a Governor from 15 March 2024 due to changes in his employment. Ms Salako was welcomed again to the meeting. KW was noted as absent.	
2. Apologies	Apologies received and accepted from Ruth Ryan (Headteacher)	

3. Quoracy.	The meeting was quorate.	
4. Declarations of interest.	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda that had not already been declared on the annual register of interests.	
5. Minutes of the Local Advisory Board meeting held on the 25 th January 2024	The minutes of the meeting held on 25 th January 2024 were agreed to be an accurate representation.	
6. Action Log from the meeting held on the 25 January 2024.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PO to give an update on governor recruitment at the next meeting. Discussed in Item 8 2. Meeting of Governors with staff and parents during the April Board meeting. Arrangements in hand. 3. Update on Rainforest provision. HA stated the Nature/Nurture Provision at Orchard Academy was having a real impact in the classroom and the behaviour, attitude and knowledge of the children. This increasingly successful initiative was supported by parents and was used by 7 to 12 children during each session 4. Update on school lockdown. HA stated that staff at Orchard Academy had received Lockdown training on the recent INSET day; every Year Group had received an assembly on the purpose and procedures of a lockdown, teachers were now working with their classes – including a practice lockdown in the classroom. This gradual roll out of the Lockdown procedure would be tested with a Whole School Lockdown in the last week of term. 5. Agenda item required for 18 July 2024 Board meeting on Governor Preparation and Involvement with Ofsted. Ongoing 6. Launch of Phase 2 of GovernorHub. Ongoing 7. Amendments to be made to Orchard Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. Done. 	<p style="text-align: center;">HA/EW</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PO</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PO</p>

<p>7. i. Headteacher's Report School Context and Behaviour</p>	<p>i. Headteachers report. HA highlighted Orchard information. EW highlighted Shepherdswell information.</p> <p>SHEPHERDSWELL - Behaviour Behaviour remained good; most children were calm and engaged with their learning. A bespoke curriculum was being delivered successfully in Nursery and arrangements were in hand to increase the number of children using this facility.</p> <p>Gov: How many children currently are in the Nursery? EW: 5; there are two adults working there in the morning and one in the afternoon.</p> <p>Gov: How many parents are using their "free 15 hours" to pay for their Nursery provision? EW: This information will be provided by email before the next meeting.</p> <p>Gov: Will the new Government regulations affect the numbers using the Nursery? EW: Shepherdswell only takes children aged 3 or over, the 15 hours of free provision is being extended to children of 2 years and above and therefore not affect the Nursery.</p> <p>ORCHARD - Behaviour Supporting good behaviour remained a focus for Orchard staff. Staff Development and the appointment of the new Assistant Head and SENDCO with both experience and a good understanding of the needs of Orchard's children had led to improved provision for key children who are finding mainstream provision is not fully meeting their needs. Inclusivity is central to Orchard's vision and all staff worked hard to meet any additional needs of the pupils.</p> <p>Gov: Have the number of suspensions decreased? HA: There has been a downward trajectory for suspension numbers this half term; 7 children who have been identified as repeating offence that would warrant a suspension are now in receipt of adapted provision.</p> <p>Gov: What is being done to help the children who currently find mainstream education difficult? HA: A range of actions have been taken. One child is being assessed by the Milton Keynes Primary Pupil Referral Unit to see if their provision can be met, another has been verbally allocated a place at Special School. The Rainforest setting has really helped these children, as is a reduction of their time in school and the use of alternative provision.</p>	<p>HA</p>
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Gov: Into what category are majority of children who are suspended?

HA: the majority of those suspended are White British Boys.

Gov: The school has rightly said it will not accept poor behaviour from children – what have been the consequences?

HA: Some parents have expressed unhappiness that the school is holding children to account. A small number of parents have therefore opted for home education or a different school. Some parents have also spoken with staff inappropriately.

Gov: What support can the Trust give staff who deal with confrontational parents?

JC: The Trust will use the legal process and if necessary, will seek a prosecution; it is also possible to ban parents from the school site or only allow the parent to communicate with one named colleague. The Trust will send letters to any parents explaining why their behaviour has been inappropriate and ask that it not be repeated.

SHEPHERDSWELL – Attendance

Attendance was at 97.4% (National 94.3%) and the recent Safeguarding Audit carried out by the Trust confirmed that its attendance processes were robust and effective. Persistent Absence had reduced – 7.35% (National 16.5%); work was currently in hand with two families to support improving the attendance of their children. The school received a National School Attendance Award in December 2023 for being in the top 10% of all schools in terms of attendance. Celebration of attendance happens in weekly assemblies and the information is given weekly to parents on attendance and punctuality.

ORCHARD – Attendance

Orchards had received very useful advice and support from Shepherdswell colleagues on the management of attendance. The new Attendance Team which supported both schools had been pro-active and helped the attendance improve to 94.7%. Persistent Absence of 18.4% was slightly above the national figure of 16.5% - largely because one child until recently was a Child Missing Education. Another Looked After Child was absent and the school awaiting instruction from Milton Keynes City Council on when to take them off the school roll. Orchard also had provided attendance data to all parents.

Gov: What actions are used by the Attendance Team to support families?

HA: The team monitor attendance daily, the information is summarised weekly, and a variety of actions are used – from telephone calls, letters home, arranging transport and if necessary, collecting the child from home at the start of the school day.

SHEPHERDSWELL – Staffing

The arrival in February 2024 of the new Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and Learning had already had a very positive effect. The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader has used that support to develop capacity. Other new appointments – SEND Teaching Assistant, another Teaching Assistant and a Breakfast Club worker had all settled into their posts. One vacancy was currently in process of being appointed – a Lunch and Play assistant. The two Early Career Teachers continued to make excellent progress and the Board sent its best wishes to the member of the office staff who was currently absent due to ill health.

Gov: Have staff been able to gain support from other EMAT schools?

EW Our Early Career Teachers have enjoyed working with other mentors across the EMAT schools.

ORCHARD – Staffing

The new Assistant Headteacher has worked closely with the Year 4 Team and providing coaching for our Early Careers Teachers (ECT) and our Unqualified Teacher. The Inclusion Team had really benefitted from the arrival of the new Attendance and Pastoral Support Officer. The probationary period for the Year 4 ECT and Year 3 ECT had been extended with a change in contract status for the Year 3 ECT, both colleagues were receiving extra support. There had also been some challenging staff behaviour which had been actioned by them receiving management letters regarding professional conduct.

Gov: Did the staff conduct matter involve safeguarding?

HA: It has not been a safeguarding issue, the matter involved meeting deadlines, planning work, completing tasks and communications with parents.

Gov: What actions are available to management to ensure staff abide to the Staff Code of Conduct

HA: The school follows the Trust Policy on Staff Code of Conduct – various actions are possible from a verbal warning, written warning to the ultimate sanction of dismissal.

Gov: Have there been any resignations of teachers at Orchard?

HA: A teacher gave their verbal resignation today from 31 August 2024

Gov: When can a member of the Teaching Staff resign?

HA: At the end of every half term. Teachers have to give notice of one-half term.

Gov: Is it easy to recruit teachers?

HA: Recruitment has improved but Orchard need teachers who will be able to encourage good behaviour and deliver consistent Quality Teaching and Learning. As the reputation of the school continues to improve it will have a positive effect on the recruitment process. The recent appointments have

li.Data Headlines and School Improvement Plan	<p>been excellent. The Human Resources support from EMAT has been helpful and saved Orchard’s staff considerable time.</p> <p>SHEPHERDSWELL – Data Headlines</p> <p>Early Years Foundation Stage had made good progress with Phonics due to considerable interventions. Read Write Inc had also been adapted to suit the needs of some children. Data has been affected by the arrival of some new children who are not only new to the country but also have not been to school before.</p> <p>Considerable actions have taken place - a detailed and comprehensive Intervention program had been created; all Teaching Assistant had received Fast Track Phonics and Speed Sounds training. The Reading leader is monitoring all staff and teachers allocated to key groups in Years 1 and 2 to support progress in Phonics. Management now work directly for 30 minutes at least every day with Year 6 teachers. An extra Maths group had been created and very good support had also been received and used from other EMAT teachers.</p> <p>Every teacher at the school was aware of the attainment and progress being made for every child in their class. This information was then used to ensure that every child was being appropriately supported and challenged within the classroom. Governors were informed that the “data drop” that would take place at the end of the term would show the impact of the intervention work and support currently offered to Shepherdswell Year 6 children.</p> <p>Gov: Is it possible for Governors to be given the previous year’s headline data for comparative purposes?</p> <p>JL: This information will be provided but Governors are reminded that every cohort is different and that can make meaningful comparison difficult.</p> <p>Gov: Would it be fair to say that Shepherdswell school is “in the right place” in terms of attainment and progress</p> <p>EW: Yes, we believe that the children are making appropriate progress and that the targets set within the School Improvement Plan will be met.</p> <p>Gov: The Data Overview on the Year 6 Mock SATS is very clear but what do EXS and GDS mean?</p> <p>EW: GDS – working at Greater Depth; EXS – working to the expected standard in Reading, Writing, Maths and SPaG (Spelling and Grammar)</p> <p>Both schools reported that they were continuing to work on targets set within the School Improvement Plan and that both schools were on track to meet those targets by the end of the current academic year.</p>	
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iii. Curriculum Developments and Enrichment	<p>ORCHARD</p> <p>The Board noted that the whole school had visited the Milton Keynes Pantomime, the Year 6 SATs Parent Workshop had involved 35 parents and the Year 6 Mock SATs Results Morning had been attended by over 75% of parents. The school also benefitted from the work of two Reading volunteers who supported children in Years 3 and 6 on a weekly basis. The data provided by the recent Parent and Pupil surveys showed that the ongoing changes at the school were having a very positive consequence.</p> <p>SHEPHERDSWELL</p> <p>The Board were pleased that the recent Ofsted Inspection had been shared with all families and publicised in the local press. A Writing Workshop for parents held in January had attracted over 45 families and the presentation made available on the school’s website. Sporting activities had finally started to happen again with other local schools.</p>	
iv. Safeguarding	<p>SHEPHERDSWELL/ORCHARD</p> <p>Governors noted the information on Safeguarding from both schools and this led to the following questions:</p> <p>Gov: Can training be provided on the Equality Act for Governors? JC: There is online training available, and the Trust is developing a Trust wide Equality Policy and associated set of objectives. EMAT to forward details of NGA Equality Policy modules to all Governors</p> <p>Gov: What is being done to combat casual racism? EW: All racism is unacceptable – it is combatted by individual work, within groups, the classroom, the Year Group and the whole school. Support has been received from the Trust and other outside bodies (such as MK Dons). JC: The Trust ensures that all staff record racist and homophobic incidents or language – it is not possible to excuse racism by claiming it was “banter”.</p> <p>PERFORMANCE REPORT</p> <p>Governors asked the following questions:</p> <p>Gov: What can be done about children who are “repeat offenders” in relation to suspension HA: A lot of support is given to several children to enable them to understand their behaviour and ways that it can be changed. Staff at both schools always challenge inappropriate behaviour.</p> <p>Gov: There seems to have been an increase in Mental Health referrals? EW and HA: Yes, there has been an increase. More children are experiencing Mental Health issues, this may be a long-term consequence of the Covid 19 pandemic or that mental health concerns are now more quickly diagnosed and noticed. Both schools use the support of The Thompson Team (which has been</p>	PO

invaluable), Milton Keynes City Council Support Team and have created safer spaces in the schools.

SURVEY UPDATE

The Board received the results of the Parent and Student surveys and agreed that this information would be discussed in more depth in Board meeting Number 5. Overall, the Shepherdswell surveys were very positive, and the Orchards results showed that some actions needed to be taken to positively change the local and public perception of the school. Governors were pleased to be informed that the Head of Orchard Academy had recently sent congratulation letters to 12 families whose children were working and behaving well. It was hoped that this positive approach would gradually start to change the present perception of some Orchard parents.

8. Governor updates.	<p>The Board were encouraged to attend the Governor Monitoring Workshop on 18th March 2024 at Pyramus House at 5.30pm.</p> <p>All Governors were encouraged to complete a school visit</p>	
9. External Reports	<p>The Board received and noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Thompson Team Annual Safeguarding Report ✓ Visit by S Waterman on Quality of Education and leadership development of middle leaders ✓ Shepherdswell Academy Safeguarding Review ✓ Orchard Academy Safeguarding Review 	
10. LAB recruitment and retention	<p>The Board noted that Mr Uday Nagaraju had for personal reasons resigned from the Governing Body at the end of this fourth meeting of the academic year 2023-2024. Mr Nagaraju was thanked for his excellent service as a Governor.</p> <p>Governors discussed how more people could be encouraged to join the Board. The following ideas were suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reach out to other offices in Milton Keynes (Santander? Argos/Sainsbury? Accountancy firms such as KPMG?) ➤ Contact local Chamber of Commerce ➤ Contact local Parish Council ➤ Improve marketing of the Board via the internet ➤ Contact Milton Keynes Council ➤ Use Newspapers such as the Guardian ➤ Create a vacancy for a Teacher Assistant Governor ➤ Seek to improve the diversity of the Board ➤ Makes widely available information on what a Governor does ➤ Develop a mentoring system for any new Governor <p>ACTION: Head of Governance to work closely with LAB Chair to encourage governor recruitment.</p>	AR
11. Policies	<p>The Board noted the Trust Policies on Complaints and Admissions</p> <p>The Board unanimously approved the Shepherdswell and Orchards Attendance policies</p>	
12. Any Other Business	<p>Governors were invited to contact Mr J Lawson if they wished to attend either Mid Term reviews of both schools scheduled for 18th March 2024.</p>	

	The Board unanimously elected Ms Bekky Salako as a Co-opted Governor from 14 March 2024 to 13 March 2028.	
13. Dates of meetings	The Board will meet next on 25 April 2024 at 18.00 hours at Orchard Academy, and on 18 July 2024 at 18.00 hours at Shepherdswell	

Minutes agreed as a true representation and signed
Signature
Print Name
Date

The meeting closed at 20.10

Actions from the meeting for O&S held 14/03/2024

Action	Owner
1. RR/HA to arrange a meet the staff/parents opportunity during the April meeting at Orchard. Page 2.	RR/HA
2. PO to add an item on the July agenda for Orchard's Ofsted update including advice for governors for their meeting with the inspector. Page 2.	HA/PO
3. Information to be provided via email before next meeting on number of parents using their "free 15 hours" of Nursery time. Page 3	HA
4. Information on NGA Equality Policy Modules to be forwarded to all Governors. Page 3	PO
5. . PO to share information regarding the launch of phase 2 on GovernorHub at the most convenient LAB meeting. Page 7	PO
6. Head of Governance to work with Chair of LAB on Governor Recruitment. Page 9	AR/CHAIR