

Stanwix School Governance Board meeting 7th October 2025, 6:15pm, at Stanwix School

Attendees – Darren Glynn (DG - Head Teacher), Vicky Jenner (VJ Deputy Head), Jill Blain (JBI – Teacher representative), Michael Johnson (MJ), Jen Barry (JB), Tom Little (TL), Jon McGuckin(JM), Angela Miller (AM), Lynsey Batchelor (LB), Fiona Manuel(FM), Bev Kent (BK), Susan Milburn (SM), Sarah Nutall (SN – via Teams), Karen Robertson (KR), Lyn Marriott (LM Governance Professional)

ACTIONS IN YELLOW			
	Item	Discussion	Action
1	Welcome and apologies JB	Apologies from Karen Robertson, Tom Little, Angela Miller	
2	Conflicts of Interests JB	Nothing additional to declare	
3	Previous Minutes JB	Previous minutes were re-visited by Trustees Safeguarding previously agreed to be on the agenda and JB noted it was a subcategory within Item 5. SN challenged this approach given its importance it should have its own section on the agenda. The board accepted this challenge and agreed going forward to have safeguarding as a stand alone item. SN: have we got a way of tracking trustees have done safeguarding training? Confirmation this is recorded on Governor hub and clarity / arrangements discussed around Trustee training and recording of SG level 1, online safety, prevent. Action: JB to send out further details via Govhub and clarity over training requirements – how to access National College and recording. Action: Trustees who have not already, asked to submit skills audit by next week Other item updates: School improvement plan to be presented at next curriculum meeting – may go to finance meeting if required. Sub-committee chairs will present updates to FGB. School hire policy – paused for now due to prioritisation. MJ queried the progress regarding the Glebe land lease – DG progressing and awaiting response. DG appraisal scheduled for 7th November. Susan, Sarah, Jen and external consultant Peter Hicks to undertake. Proposed:SN Seconded:SM Ensure signed and dated	

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4	Academy Trust Handbook Compliance - o Articles of association (decision) - o Scheme of delegation (discuss) - o Financial scheme of delegation (information only) - o Terms of reference (decision) - o GIAS/Companies house (update) - o Internal scrutiny (update) JB/DG	• Articles of Association: decision External advice sought from NJ on the review of the Articles following ATH advice to explore reviewing if this has not been done in recent years. These have been checked against current DFE guidance and no significant changes required, recommendation from JB to keep as they are. Trustees in agreement. • Scheme of Delegation: discuss Progress update shared on the development of a SOD (non-financial)-template taken from the Key for adaptation. Links with the committees being established and the Terms of Reference to be agreed. SN – really clear, like it. Are there other SoD templates that we could use? DG: One used is from The Key and requires scrutiny and input from Trustees – work in progress. SN – do we have a previous SOD? Acknowledgment we have a financial SOD and previous TOR but this would be a new document to make delegation clearer. SN: Current draft -curriculum activity, staffing and inclusion missing. Has NJ supported? Has sent example but requires Trustee thoughts and input -initial stages. FM – do we collaborate with others where we can find best practice? We can look at other schools ways of working but collaborating might be tricky due to being a single school mat and having a unique structure. JM What's the risk of not having one? JB: The SOD will provide framework for board to operate within, supporting good compliance. Work in progress. Feedback to DG by 31/10/25. Sensitive / Confidential Item discussed MJ – query re staff member being sacked – DG assured clarity - following disciplinary policy and panel of Trustees to inform action who would be supported by an advisor. Clarity required for DG re where staffing recruitment decisions sit. BK/SM link to financial scheme of delegation and if operating within budget then decision can be made. FM – pleased recognising and agree with SN. SN – checking committee members align.	
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		MJ – staffing - Important to highlight - Financial Scheme of delegation: info will go to FESA committee for scrutiny - TOR: decision – TOR documents for sub committees were presented for agreement- SN and SM had reviewed prior to the meeting as sub chairs. Education safeguarding and standards committee – change name. MJ: quorum is majority, what if it's an even number? Then not quorum -meeting can take place but no decisions can be made. Discussion around TOR and ensuring focus and vocabulary is clear aligns with Ofsted. Review minimum annually. All in agreement FESA – quorum to add in Date change Oct 2025 not 2026 Staffing approvals needs defined. All agreed subject to small above changes. - GIAS/Companies House: update – up to date and emails coming to say Trustees are a Director. GIAS click on Stanwix academy – up to date with members. Companies House done - Internal Scrutiny: update – NJ has undertaken audit, report on way for next FESA . Procurement and financial processes, Governance audit. Actions will come out of this. Vulnerability on some internal processes.	
5	CEO Report - o Health and safety - o Safeguarding - o Finance update Additional Focus Area: • Reception Intake 26/27	DG presented the report- the minutes below reflect discussion and DG responses. DG: Change in school improvement target on behaviour FM – would it be helpful to have data linked to national data? Yes, prepared. Contextual info – staff attendance being worked on. KPIs to be established. TL: Are children's learning affected by staff attendance – yes, attendance for teachers and Tas good – lunchtime, challenge. Puts pressure on others to fill roles and mitigate impact on children. SN: [reviewing the] number of children that have left – how is this position now? Risk but stabilised at present. Previous individual issue re SEND -risk around <i>perception</i> around SEND and how to manage communication / social media. JB: Any impact following merging of forms 3 and 4? Those who left were in this cohort but not merge not referenced. Others due to relocation. Final leaver impacted school financially as planning already done.	

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LB:[context] Do the 9 have EHCPs? Yes.
FM - Is there a target for attendance? – 3 year target written into school improvement plan – I can that show separate for disadvantaged? **Yes.**
 L&G page –
 Leadership capacity– making decisions to prioritise appraisals which results in head and deputy teaching to offer support. Chair offering support, Head offering support to maintain sustainable systems.
SN:is there more we can do as Trustees to support wellbeing?
 Be aware of the context and progress being made when making decisions –we are further ahead than we have been. Continue to challenge and scrutinise but be mindful of capacity within the context/ journey.
ACTION: Chair to check in with staff on wellbeing in line within SIP.

Compliancey FM question page 3
 Page 4 – scrutiny required on intake numbers.
 LM: Do we know why numbers are lower for our school? Not necessarily but marketing will aim to address this.
 One of biggest risks is intake – projections are 22/38/38 over next 3 years. Exploring how to market school – utilising someone with skills and capacity. Focus on new leadership, values, green space, targeted social media.
 LA meeting to discuss pupil numbers re intake figures
 Second meeting to take place to discuss working closer with LA.
 School organisation plan for Carlisle North discussed along with surplus numbers, birthrates, previously applied bulge over PAN for another school in our area and the potential impact this has had on Carlisle North.

Trustees attend open days – define what that would look like 4th November.

LB: have we considered resourced provision places? It would be resource heavy in our context, and we may not be in a position to undertake- await White Paper. There are funding and financial challenges where children are placed.

Strengths within attainment and risk is accuracy on progress. Context suggested that low pupil premium no's SEND strong reading not writing and maths – tracking was an issue. Robustness of moderation and progress to evaluate requires improvement.

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Further info to go to curriculum committee
FM: [You have introduced] standardised testing, [in] which areas? – reading/maths. Utilising assessments to improve.

Safeguarding attendance and behaviour –
SN – how are low level concerns recorded? they are not currently included but we will include in future reporting to committees.

FM - Physical harm and how monitoring incidents? Longer term action, info there staff aware and reiterating message.

FM – online issues, identified as 3 year priority.

FM: Student council – plans to involve students? Longer term.

SN - Great report, lots of detail – thanks to DG. Can see progress.

Personal development –
educational visits overview of offer going out to parents shortly. This year focusing on experience. 3-4 per year group, greatly increased on previous. Residential changes being considered to offer alternative due to similarities in trips.

Early Years – a lot of work has gone into it, positive part of the school. Strength of school.

FM: Do we have an EY lead? No but reorganised leadership roles for wider school improvement team. Early years team member involved.

Inclusion – working hard under challenging circumstances to meet full range of interventions. Defined roles of wider leadership team to work together to share responsibility.

FM - Do you have impact statements for Pupil Premium? Working towards to be discussed at next curriculum meeting.

Chair acknowledged the work and detail that went into the report and shared thanks.

H&S walk around took place, talking about risk assessments, progress towards audit

6	Trustee visits	Safeguarding (single central record) – check to take place next half term.	
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	- o SCR - o Health and safety - o Chair visit JB	• H&S – gate safe and checked. Risk assessments in progress • Chair visit <i>Actions from visits to document and track – JB/LM discussion.</i>	
7	Governance Training and skills matrix LM	Item discussed under agenda item 3	
8	Annual work plan and agenda setting JB	JB shared the annual governance workplan developed in line with the requirements under the Academy Trust Handbook. 4 cycles – 2 sub committee- FESA and ESS feeding up to FGB within each cycle. SN: CFO report is CEO report H5 cell. <i>Noted-to amend</i> SM: Finance meetings on Teams – can we change to in person? Yes Cycle 2 – DG – this is transitional year, introducing a framework to support good governance- Y1, we may not necessarily be able to deliver all identified/ developed information, but we will work to deliver this – a work in progress. We will bring to meetings items as they are, to help to develop, define, identify gaps. MJ: Accounts are submitted by 31/12 – why is the AGM after? Only need to be presented to members- Trustees agree. JB: Aware heavy agenda but structured. Challenge still required, being mindful of context and development going forward.	
9	Risk Management • Risk register • Current risks- rag rated	Thoughts and questions welcomed – Discussion over register. Comments to DG by 14/10 and risks picked up and updates at further meetings.	
10	Policy review approach JB	JB presented a paper on approach to Policy Review. Summary of report: Explains that Trustees are responsible for ensuring all statutory and non-statutory policies are up to date, but the current practice of reviewing most policies in September places excessive pressure on Trustees and senior leaders at one point during the year and risks reviews becoming superficial. Proposes a move to a phased policy review cycle across the academic year. This approach would prioritise statutory and safeguarding-critical policies, align reviews with relevant committee work, and use a tracker to ensure full compliance by year end. While there are risks around potential	

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		non-compliance, these would be mitigated through prioritisation, professional support, and clear oversight. The proposed model aims to improve sustainability, deepen scrutiny, and strengthen governance, with a review at the end of the year to assess its effectiveness. Discussion and agreement that the majority of review happens outside of meetings to and scrutiny to align with sub-committees, feeding up to FGB. Prioritised gaps and Safeguarding. Kim Allen to do update on 14 policies in place, school to embed and time required to do this. SN: This approach seems pragmatic / strategic and will help to embed school vision and values. SM: Can writing be spread over leadership team? Yes, will be delegating responsibility with planning and support to team. FM: I would be looking to see is it pertinent to the school and do staff understand it? Working hard to achieve this. Vote – Unanimous decision to approve. DG gave thanks to JB – massive amount of work has been undertaken and acknowledged the position the school are in is stronger than recent years.	
11	Policy • Emergency plan • Lockdown procedures • Executive pay	Emergency plan and lockdown– DG and VJ provided an update on the progress. Consulted with staff and with BM for final details and decisions. SN Is there a plan for site evacuation and where do you go? Work in progress soon to be finalised. Huge thanks to VJ for work, bringing detail and clarity. Executive pay policy– one amendment required to existing procedure to ensure it aligns with the teacher pay policy– approved SN: suggested we also make amendments to the header to ensure it reflects the new values.	
10	Any other business	Photos and bio for website requested from Trustees 50 – 100 words. Send photo to LM. Lynsey- name change required remove D Meeting closed at 20:55	