



ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Monday 12th May 2025

Time: 5.00pm

Venue: Didsbury High School

Clerk: N Burgess

Present: A Clayton, R Watts, M Abadi, J Game, G McGrory, T Theobold, D Woolley and K Houghton

Attending L Woolley for part of the meeting

Action	Initials
Governors to inform the Clerk of any changes to their Register of Business interests	All
Breakdown of category of incidents for suspensions to be included in future Head of School Reports	KH
Number of students with incidents of suspensions to be included in the report	KH
List of Electives and last 3 Newsletters to be circulated to Governors	KH/MH
Update on Safeguarding and SEND Link visits to be given at the next meeting	MA/RW
Governors are asked to complete the mandatory training by the end of the academic year	All
GMc to send completed training certificates to the Clerk for retention	GM
Clerk to circulate meeting invites for the next academic year	NB

Agenda – Part 1

Category	Item	Notes	Action
1 Governance Arrangements	The role of the Academy Committee	<p>L Woolley attended to present to Governors on the roles and responsibilities, and the delegated functions of the Academy Committee, and how this work links to the Trust Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Governors are encouraged to take up a link role and to make visits into school to experience school life.</p> <p>There is also the Code of Conduct document which Governors adhere to, based on the Nolan principles.</p> <p>Record of visit templates were reviewed for Governors to be able to complete as part of their link visits to school. Safeguarding and SEND record of visits are completed over the course of the year.</p> <p>Training was discussed and the importance of completing the mandatory training modules to ensure compliance. All</p>	

		<p>training is detailed, including links, on the Governor SharePoint page. It was also noted that in addition to the mandatory modules there was also details of additional training which Governors may wish to undertake. The Governance page also contains links to additional resources which Governors may find useful.</p> <p>Governors were also informed of the annual Governor and Trustee Conference which takes place in December of each year. This is a chance for Governors to meet other AC Governors from across all of the Trust schools.</p> <p>Q – In terms of visits to school how proactive should Governors be and should we be contacting school to arrange?</p> <p>A We would suggest a list of Link Governors, their contact email, and that of their link in school and then a schedule of agreed visits. We would warmly welcome Governors being proactive in setting up their visits.</p> <p>SEND and Safeguarding links are compulsory, but other links are at the request of the individual AC.</p> <p>Q – How do Governors engage with parents and carers, as detailed in the Scheme of Delegation?</p> <p>A – The Link Governor role is based around visiting staff, but there are opportunities to engage with parents at school events, for example school productions, open evenings, awards evenings or SEND Champion groups. There is also parent representation on the Academy Committee.</p> <p>LW was thanked for the presentation and left the meeting at this point.</p>	
	Apologies	Apologies were received from M Hill, S Wane and H El-Jarn.	
	AOB items	There were no other items of business to raise which were not included in the agenda for this meeting.	
	Declarations of interest in any of the agenda items	There were no declarations of interest made in any of the agenda items.	
	Register of Business Interests	The Register of Business Interests was circulated by the Clerk and Governors are asked to record any changes to their record.	All
	Code of Conduct	GM, as a newly appointed Governor attending her first meeting, agreed to adhere to the Code of Conduct.	

		<p>Part 1 Minutes</p> <p>Governors <u>approved</u> the minutes of the meeting held 6th February 2025 as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>There were no matters arising and all actions had been completed.</p>	
		<p>Membership: Recruitment Update/Succession Planning</p> <p>G McGrory was welcomed to her first meeting of the Academy Committee and introductions were made.</p> <p>It was also discussed that S Wane was currently on a sabbatical from the role of Staff Governor and would be returning at the start of the next academic year.</p> <p>This was the first meeting for J Game in the position of Chair of the Academy Committee.</p>	
		<p>Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>There were no material changes to note to the Scheme of Delegation.</p>	
		<p>Trust Board update</p> <p>Governors reviewed the report from the February 2025 meeting and DW updated on the strategic planning meeting which had taken place in the week prior to this meeting.</p> <p>Trustees had discussed AI and Edtech use in schools. Trustees had also done some horizon scanning work and had agreed to extend the Trust Development Plan for a further year, in line with planned changes including the Ofsted inspection framework.</p> <p>Q – Can you tell us about the growth opportunities of the Trust?</p> <p>A – Norris Bank Primary School will be joining the Trust in September 2025.</p> <p>Q – Is AI an issue already?</p> <p>A – It is not an issue as such, it is already used in the Sixth Form for revision. Exam boards are currently updating their guidance. AI can be used effectively and for efficient revision. Students cannot use AI for coursework.</p> <p>It was discussed that AI can be used effectively for professional development, and also for workload efficiencies, but that GDPR should always be a consideration.</p>	

2	School Performance & Accountability	<p>Review Head of School report including:</p> <p>Governors reviewed the Head of School Report with the key areas of focus of Attendance, Behaviour, Sixth Form and Results.</p> <p>KH informed Governors that students in year 11 and 13 were working hard and were focussed ready for their exams. August would be the first set of A Level results for the Sixth Form.</p> <p>It was noted that attendance is still tracking above national and local level, but that work is still being done.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to note the year 11 outcome predictions.</p> <p>Q – We can see that suspension numbers are decreasing, but there is no measure of the severity of the incidents, can this be included as a metric in the report for further analysis?</p> <p>A – Yes this can be included in future reports.</p> <p>Governors requested it would be useful to see the number of students who received more than one suspension, to see if the sanction was effective, or if more needs to be done to support the young person. Governors also requested the number of students who make up the suspension numbers.</p> <p>Q – For attendance Eid was mentioned as the attendance rates were lower?</p> <p>A For absence for Eid we add a code R which means this is an authorised absence and does affect the figures. We can only stress that we fully support the students and their families in the absence for their celebrations, but feel this should be recognised in the attendance figures. This is an ongoing discussion for the future.</p> <p>Governors would like to see more information in the future about how initiatives in place are working, for example parent contracts, and work with Manchester City Council. It was noted that there have been some success stories, but not significant impacts. The school are obtaining year 6 into year 7 data in the hope of getting ahead with attendance and beginning to build relationships earlier.</p> <p>Governors discussed the shift in the perception of attendance since the pandemic. It was noted that the school issue fines for more than 5 days unauthorised absence. Term time holidays were discussed and that schools were limited in what they could do to discourage.</p>	KH KH
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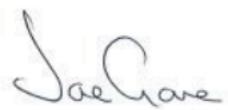
			The fine is considerably less than the holiday cost savings.	
	Review School Development Plan priorities	<p>KH highlighted areas of the plan to give context to Governors.</p> <p>The plan is now a 3-year plan, and sets out what the school aims to achieve, and what success looks like. Behind the plan there is a list of SLT actions to achieve what will success look like. This is to ensure as much as possible is done to meet the ambitious plan.</p> <p>The report is a 3-year cycle based around the 4 Cornerstones. KH detailed the 4 Cornerstones for the information to the new Governors present.</p> <p>Culture Creativity and Rhetoric Academic Aspiration Leadership and Service Competition and Physical Endeavour</p> <p>Lots of the work being done is linked to the Cornerstones. Electives are offered outside of PE. All students take part in an extra-curricular Elective, at the end of the school day, to meet the 3 other Cornerstones.</p> <p>It was agreed to circulate a list of Electives, and also the last 3 newsletters to Governors.</p>		
3	Governor Monitoring	<p>Finance update including pupil numbers, bench marking and value for money</p> <p>Governors reviewed the Management Accounts to 31st March 2025.</p> <p>The current position is looking a little more positive than previously.</p> <p>The staff pay awards are currently unknown and are to be funded from efficiencies. The recommendation is that schools spend no more than 80% of their budget on staffing, and the balance goes on everything else.</p> <p>Governors noted that 72% funding for pay awards equates to being fully funded, as this is based on an average of what the DfE believe should be in a school building and average costs. It was noted that teaching staff costs increase by around £11k per teacher per year, and that there are 100 teachers in school. Leaders also confirmed that they do not wish the finances to drive the curriculum. Funding efficiencies have been made through not replacing non-essential posts and looking at every single resignation before taking a decision to appoint. It was confirmed to Governors that no staff are teaching outside of their specialism.</p>	KH/MH	

	<p>School Level Safeguarding Policy</p>	<p>A Clayton presented the revised Safeguarding Policy for Governors approval.</p> <p>Previously the school has adopted the Trust Safeguarding Policy, which is then individualised to school level, specific to the LA the school is in.</p> <p>A decision has been taken to adopt the specific Manchester LA Policy, which does still overlap with the Trust policy.</p> <p>Governors <u>approved</u> the Safeguarding Policy and agreed to review again at the first meeting of the academic year as part of the safeguarding update.</p>	
	<p>Policies – undertake school level reviews and note phase/Trust level policies</p>	<p>Governors <u>approved</u> the following policies:</p> <p>Behaviour Policy</p> <p>Collective Worship Policy</p> <p>Communication with Parents Policy</p> <p>Electronic Communications Policy</p> <p>First Aid Policy</p> <p>Mobile Technology Policy</p> <p>PSHE Policy</p> <p>Uniform Policy</p>	
	<p>Pupil Premium monitoring</p>	<p>The Pupil Premium Strategy Statement was circulated prior to the meeting. KH confirmed that the document is an overview of the income received and how it is spent to benefit the identified students. The school currently has 40.8% of students identified as eligible.</p> <p>Funding can be used to help students to experience an opportunity they may not have been able to access. Funding is also used to purchase text books and to contribute towards specific items of school uniform. There is also the opportunity to offer a contribution towards school trips and visits based on individual circumstances.</p> <p>Governors noted the map contained within the document, which reflected the difference of the cohort and the socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>Governors appreciated the opportunity to review the thorough and detailed document, and to note how the funding was being used to benefit the students in the best possible way.</p>	

		Safeguarding and SEND Link Governor updates	Link Governors have scheduled their visits and an update will be given at the next meeting in the Autumn term.	MA/RW
4	Governor Development	Review Trust Training Plan	Governors were asked to ensure they had completed the statutory training by the end of the academic year.	All
		Minute any training undertaken by Governors since the last meeting	G McGrory confirmed completion of training, and had found the safeguarding module particularly useful. GM to send the completed certificates to the Clerk.	GM`
5	Community Engagement	Stakeholder Engagement	<p>It was noted that the voucher scheme for FSM holiday provision was moving from Asda to Aldi and that parents would be notified.</p> <p>Q – Who is responsible for the funding for the vouchers? A – Manchester City Council.</p>	
6	AOB			
7	Meeting Dates:	To note	<p>Monday 6th October 2025 at 5.00pm Monday 9th February 2026 at 5.00pm Monday 11th May 2026 at 5.00pm</p> <p>Clerk will circulate meeting invites.</p>	NB

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes	
LWO attended to represent to Governors the roles and responsibilities of the Academy Committee and their delegated functions.	
GMc attended her first meeting as newly co-opted Governor	
Governors reviewed the Trust Board updates	
Head of School report was reviewed, including Attendance, Behaviour, Sixth Form and Outcomes.	
Governors reviewed the revised 3-year School Development Plan	
Management Accounts were reviewed	
Governors approved the new Safeguarding Policy	
Governors approved 8 school level policies	
Pupil Premium Strategy Statement was reviewed by Governors	

Meeting closed at 7.00pm



J Game
Chair of Academy Committee
06.10.2025

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