



**Minutes of the Axe Valley Academy Local Governing Committee Meeting  
held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 virtually via Zoom**

Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Amanda Bujniewicz	AB	Jeremy Walden	JW
Mike Huskins	MH	Rob Crocker	RC
Laura Jenkins	LJ	Matt Brookman	MB
Jill Larcombe(Chair)	JL		
Mark Lees	ML		
Julie Paddick	JP		

Apologies / Absence (reason if required)	Initials	In Attendance	Initials
		James Hammett	JH
		Claire Price	CP
		Joanne Govier (clerk)	JG

Signed as a correct record of the meeting: .....

Date:.....

## 1. Welcome to governors

Welcome and introductions to James Hammett and Claire Price - potential parent governors.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

## 3. Declaration of Business Interests

**3.1 Governors to declare any particular interests, financial or otherwise in any of the agenda items to be discussed at the meeting.**

No business interests relevant to agenda items were declared.

**3.2 Update register of interest forms**

All register of interest forms had been returned.

## 4. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> November were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chair.

## 5. Matters arising from those minutes.

**5.1 All business forms/ skills audit to be returned**

All business forms/skills audits had been returned

**5.2 Parent Governor Recruitment drive in Christmas newsletter**

Recruitment article in the Christmas newsletter had been successful. Two parents had enquired and applied to become parent governors.

**5.3 JL to provide introduction profile for the newsletter**

JL had provided a personal profile of introduction as the chair of the governing committee in the Christmas newsletter.

**5.4 JP to liaise with GC(SENDCo)**

JP had arranged a virtual meeting with the SENDCo. The information from this meeting had been provided prior to the meeting.

**5.5 JW to liaise with JSc (DSL)**

Unfortunately, due to work commitments JW had been unable to schedule a safeguarding meeting. Due to the importance of the Safeguarding Lead Governor meeting regularly with the DSL and reporting back to governors JL proposed a change of roles. It was agreed unanimously that AB would become the named Safeguarding Lead Governor. JW will be the Deputy Safeguarding Lead Governor.

As AB is taking on the Safeguarding Governor role it was agreed that ML would become the Lead Governor for Pupil Premium.

## 6. Board membership matters

JL raised the issue of some Heads across the trust having voting rights, and others did not. This had stemmed from the original differences between UAT and VLT. Under VLT the Heads were ex-officio members of the LGC in that they were there as part of their job role yet had no voting rights.

As MB was the only staff governor, one other needs to be recruited. It was agreed that an email should be sent to staff inviting them to express their interest.

## 7. Safeguarding

**7.1 Safeguarding S175 audit-** confirmation of submission to Babcock and action plan from the audit. The safeguarding audit has been completed and submitted to Babcock. The action plan from the audit was circulated prior to the meeting. The majority of actions from the audit

are updates to current practices, training and sharing information. The largest job will be to plan, launch and embed CPOMS, this will move away from a paper based model. A further COVID appendix for the child protection policy has also been created. LJ explained AVA had attempted to get all LAC, CIN, CP and EHCP learners on site. For those who aren't attending, the school has worked with their allocated social worker to create a safety plan. All vulnerable learners receive a variety of phone calls, video calls and home visits to monitor and offer support. We have also reviewed their access to remote learning and provided laptops and access to the internet to all of them. Lorraine Heath CEO will be conducting a safeguarding review at AVA.

**7.2 Update on mental Health issues during lockdown** LJ reported that during the present lockdown it was evident that it was parents who were experiencing poor mental health, more than the students, due to feelings of sadness, fatigue and feeling trapped in the current COVID climate. Pastoral Support Co-ordinators are updated by the Year Leaders about the quantity of work that is being completed remotely. They have followed up offering support and guidance. The tutor teams are calling parents and learners on a fortnightly basis and feeding back to the Year Leaders and PASCOs. Any safeguarding and/or welfare concerns are then followed up immediately.

**Governor Challenge- Do you think that you are supporting well by signposting?** LJ-

There have been an increase in referrals to early help, Family Intervention Team workers and Y-smart. These are all based on individual needs.

We have invited all students that fit the DfE criteria in to school, even offering part-time attendance to facilitate the need to stay in contact with and provide support for key worker, vulnerable students and their families/carers. The PASCO's have been doing a lot of work with parents.

**Governors' asked: How are the older girls who had been self-harming coping?** LJ-

There had been no further hospital admissions. These students are on the vulnerable list, and have been accessing School, even if this has been for one day a week.

**JH wanted it noted that contact from School staff had been very supportive.**

**JP reiterated that she had received numerous, positive feedback on the support for whole families in the community.**

**Governors' asked: What about parents who were unable to ask for help?** LJ- We have received feedback from a parent/carer questionnaire. These have proved informative, and we could look to increase these in the future. Heads of year, PASCO's and tutors have been having virtual meetings, telephone conversations and text messaging to communicate with parents and carers.

## **8. Headteacher's Report – Lockdown Version**

**8.1 Risk Assessments-** In line with Devon baseline assessments, then personally amended. Continuous on-site inspections have taken place.

Individual and group assessments below:

- Individual staff risk assessments have been implemented.
- All staff have been invited to discuss any concerns with the Head, or their line manager.
- Clinically, extremely vulnerable-working from home, with independent measures put in place
- All PE activities have been COVID risk assessed

In the main, people have been happy with what we are doing. All staff have become accustomed to our new cleaning and testing routines to prevent infection. We are awaiting guidelines regarding mass testing when we re-open fully.

**8.2.1 and 8.2.2 Remote Learning Strategy, Engagement and Participation.** Following the usual in-school timetable, teachers post remote learning tasks on Classcharts first thing in

the morning for their classes that day. This allows students/parents to mirror the in-school timetable and maintain a routine. Each remote lesson is designed to take one hour for students to complete; thus students receive five hours of remote learning each day. Students receive a combination of reading, writing, recorded presentations by the teacher to view as videos, links to external video content explaining the topic (e.g. Hegarty Maths and Oak Academy), projects or challenges (e.g. physical challenges for PE), drawing tasks (art), online quizzes and more, depending on the subject and content being taught. Some remote learning work has been printed and posted to students, according to suitability of the work for this and requests from students/parents.

Tutors are also hosting online meetings with their tutor groups through Google Meet. To promote reading, our tutor time anthologies are posted on Classcharts, the library is operational through Click and Collect system, and LJ has presented a video assembly on the importance of reading. 80% of students have been engaged with home learning. It was clear from the start that the pre-recorded lessons were better received than the live lessons by parents, especially when juggling more than one child at home. A mixture seems to be the best balance.

**Governors' asked: Are many Children struggling with technology, and lack of devices?** LJ- We have given out another 50 devices. We have families sharing devices.

There is digital poverty; in some cases three children are sharing one laptop. We have taken up offers from phone companies to enable students to have Wi-fi.

**Governors' asked: Have you applied for laptops from the third round of the Get help with technology from the DFE?**

We had 56 Laptops, and 90 School/refurbished laptops to lend to students. We are looking at the Wi-Fi offer, as some students are without. Kevin Cumming has worked tirelessly to coordinate and facilitate this role out of devices.

**8.3 Keyworker and Vulnerable Children.** Overall, the behaviour of the learners has been exemplary. The vast majority of learners have met the expectations of the school on a daily basis (uniform, behaviour, core values). Students engage in a 30-40 minute PE lesson each day, EHCP/SEND learners have an intervention plan where the SEND department support their progress. Other vulnerable learners have a weekly mentoring meeting with a PASCO to support their wellbeing. A teacher is present in each bubble and they will intervene, support and motivate each learner, and will spend some time with all learners keeping them in their bubbles throughout the day, and must adhere to the COVID safety procedures.

**8.4 School Improvement Progress.** LJ reported that huge progress had taken place in the SEND department, with the completion of the new staff handbook. This contains everything that staff require to support students with SEND. This document contains personalised pupil passports, exam access arrangements and the code of practice.

**8.5.1 Pupil Progress.** When looking at progress it is much harder to ascertain an accurate picture as comparison is not like for like and student experiences for each cohort will have been vastly different. Pupil Premium students still lag behind non Pupil Premium students by an equivalent amount as the gap in progress is remaining around the 0.5 mark.

**8.5.2 Pupil Numbers and Mobility.** Since the previous LGC meeting we have seen an increase in the number of learners attending the school (increase of 4). We have also ended one managed move, with the Year 10 learner returning to Sidmouth CC (Nov 20). We do not have any learners on managed moves at other schools. We have two learners (1x Yr8 and 1x Yr10) accessing an alternative provision because of the need for medical intervention.

**8.6 Safeguarding.** With the implementation of the safeguarding annex, when students are dual registered we are taking responsibility to know where those students are.

**8.7 Staffing- Including Staff Wellbeing.** At present staffing is stable. Emma Collins will continue to cover English until the new English teacher starts in September. Vincent Parkes is retiring at half term. This Science role is being covered internally by an increase in Science hours. Adrian Bennett will be moving across to Science. This helps the budget-to remain in credit.

Admin is stretched due to illness and bereavement.

Probation reviews have now been completed.

Amanda Woodward now has a wellbeing room on site. Staff are able to refer to her and see her remotely or for socially distanced face to face appointments. Already staff have been engaging in appointments with her.

**8.8 Other.** None

**8.9 Threats.** We are concerned about the lower number coming into Y7 in September 2021 and await the final March allocation figures. It is essential that our numbers grow as financial security is a significant threat. The impact of COVID on the Canteen has been huge.

## **9. Academy Improvement Plan/Post Ofsted Plans**

**9.1** An aspirational 3 year KS3 curriculum structure has been implemented. Supporting our disadvantaged students is always a priority. Reading is becoming embedded into the daily expectation of an Axe Valley student – including during remote learning. Library usage has increased by over 600% compared to the same term last academic year.

**Governors' noted that at the last inspection Ofsted felt that governance was weak, what support can governors provide?** LJ- More challenge and skills support. The LGC is feeling much more supportive, and we are moving forward.

## **10. Governor Development**

**10.1 Safeguarding training completed-**AB to complete level 3 safeguarding training.

Clerk to check with Business Manager who has completed level 2 safeguarding training and collate the information.

**10.2 Chairs Update.** JL explained the trust had appointed a trust wide IT manager.

**10.3 Development for the year ahead. Link governors to be re-evaluated to work with SLT.** To be reviewed at the meeting in April, due to lockdown

**10.4 Trust Update.** The trust is advertising for a Head of Modern, Foreign Languages at Holyrood academy. Part of this role will be to manage MFL across the trust. JL explained that the trust was keen to build positive support and networks across the trust. This has already had a positive effect on Secondary leadership teams across the trust. LJ explained that this enabled head to quality assure trust wide. LJ praised the support from Uffculme School, especially Lorraine Heath. LJ stated the secondary network had been a positive process during COVID.

**10.5 Clerks business.** None.

## 11. Policies

**11.1 SEND Policy** - Governors **APPROVED** the SEND policy

**11.2 Remote Learning Policy – NOTED.** Delegated to SLT

**11.3 Careers Policy –** Governors **APPROVED** the policy and complimented LJ on the quality of the content.

**11.4 E-Safety Policy –** Noted. Trust Policy.

**11.5 Supporting Children with Medical Conditions –** Noted.

**11.6 Children with Additional Needs when Unable to attend School –** Governors **APPROVED** the policy

**11.7 First Aid –** Trust policy. For information as the policy is still in date.

**11.8 Safeguarding Annex –** Governors unanimously **APPROVED** the annex to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

**11.9 Biometrics –** This is a new policy, that LJ believed the school needed to approve. Since the agenda was circulated it has been confirmed that it is not needed at present.

## 12. Any urgent business brought forward by the chair

It was agreed to revisit the Governance Development Plan. JW will try to find the draft plan. A working party of JL, JP, MH JW AB will meet to look at producing a new Governance Development Plan.

## 13. Meeting Summary

**13.1** To reflect on the effectiveness of the meeting with regard to the scheme of Delegation from the Trust Board and the impact the meeting will have on outcomes for pupils in the School.

The LGC felt that the School were supporting pupils well under challenging conditions

### **13.2 Items for the next meeting**

Jon Scott will be invited to give a presentation on improvements to the use of Pupil Premium before the next meeting

## 14. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 @ 5pm

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

**ACTIONS**

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
6.0	Email Staff inviting Governor applications	LJ	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021
8.1	To write to Kevin Cumming on behalf of the governors for his commitment and work suppling IT devices	JL	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
9.1	To find Governor Development Plan documents and send to the LGC	JW/JP	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
10.1	Liaise with JLX to check all governors have completed level 2 safeguarding training	JG	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
13.2	To invite Jon Scott to the next meeting	JG	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021