

**Minutes of the Academy Committee Meeting  
held on Wednesday 9 December at 7.30am via Microsoft Teams**

Membership	Initials	Governor category	Absence
Mrs S Cooper	SC	Parent Governor	A
Mrs H Ind	HI	Appointed Governor	
Mr M Sumner	MS	Appointed Governor	
Mrs R Webb (Chair of Governors)	RW	Appointed Governor	
Mr N Buckley	NB	Appointed Governor	A
Mrs E Shipstone	ES	Appointed Governor	
<i>Parent governor vacancy</i>			
<i>2 x Appointed governor vacancy</i>			
<i>Staff governor vacancy</i>			

In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Mrs C Saxelby	CS	Senior Principal	
Mrs J Leonard	JL	Principal	
Mrs J Sharp	JS	Assistant Principal	A
Miss K Bagnall	KB	Business Operations Manager	A
Mr M Hoad	MH	Vice Principal	
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Clerk and Advisor to the Committee	
Miss Sherrie Hopkins	ES	<i>Observer – PSHRE Lead</i>	
Miss Joanna Lee	JLE	<i>Observer – Head of Geography</i>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
<b>AC/16/2021</b>	<p><b>Update following central training</b> Governors were informed that both the Risk Management and the SEND / Pupil Premium (PP) training slideshows were available on SharePoint for those who were unable to attend the training.</p> <p>Clerk to send the link to the training to Mr Sumner.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>AC/17/2021</b>	<p><b>Declaration of interest</b> There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p> <p>For reference in the minutes, Mrs Cooper has recently changed jobs so an amendment to her Declaration of Interest has been completed.</p>	
<b>AC/18/2021</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies for absence were received and approved from Mrs Cooper due to work commitments. No apologies were received for Mr Buckley. No action to be taken at this time.</p>	
<b>AC/19/2021</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the AC meeting dated 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b> The minutes of the meeting that had previously been received were approved and signed by the chair.</p>	



<p><b>AC/20/2021</b></p>	<p><b>Governor admin</b>  Appointment  Mrs Shipstone’s information had been circulated in advance of the meeting following her observation of the September meeting. All members of the Academy Committee voted unanimously for the appointment of Mrs Shipstone with her term of office being 09/12/2020 to 08/12/2024.</p> <p>Vice-Chair  Having previously been asked to submit any expressions, Mrs Cooper had voiced an interest in becoming Vice-Chair for the committee. Governors voted unanimously for Mrs Cooper to be appointed. Due to the Scheme of Delegation the term of office will be from 09/12/2020 to 30/09/2021.</p> <p>Link governor –  The Chair thanked Mrs Ind for her hard work and continued support in the role as the Safeguarding and SEN link governor. Mrs Ind informed governors that they will be in receipt of the latest report in advance of the next meeting.</p> <p>The chair highlighted a requirement for a new Health and Safety link governor due to this position now being vacant. Mr Sumner expressed an interest and the governors agreed they would be happy for Mr Sumner to take on the role. Clerk to link Mr Sumner with Mrs Bagnall to look at any outstanding requirements.</p> <p>The chair expressed an interest in having a Post-16 link governor role as it can be harder to get exceptional results due to the students arriving at the provision at a high standard. Mrs Shipstone expressed an interest in pursuing this role due to her background which the governors agreed they were happy with. Clerk to link Mrs Shipstone with Mrs McKeown (lead for P16) to help build a closer link between the setting and governors.</p> <p><b>Miss Hopkins also highlighted</b> a requirement for a Relationship &amp; Sex Education (RSE) link governor. As the PSHRE lead for Walton, Miss Hopkins is keen to have a collaborative approach to the policies with parents and governors. Again, Mrs Shipstone expressed an interest, and the governors were happy with this link. Clerk to link Mrs Shipstone and Miss Hopkins to start looking into the RSE policy.</p>	<p><b>HI / Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Clerk / KB / MS</b></p> <p><b>Clerk / CM / ES</b></p> <p><b>Clerk / SH / ES</b></p>
<p><b>AC/21/2021</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising:</b>  AC/01/2021- to note the safeguarding training was distributed to governors on 30/09/2020</p> <p>AC/053/1920 – to note the presentation and floor plan on the PAN was distributed to governors on 30/11/2020. Governors were informed that the academy are awaiting the capital plan and the site improvement plan to obtain any outcomes. There will be a further update at the beginning of 2021. Mrs Saxelby and Mr Cotton (CEO) will also be meeting with Lincolnshire Local Authority to look at place planning across Grantham, following this meeting there may be an opportunity to look at any funding from there.</p>	



	<p>AC/064/1920 – to note the FARS report was distributed to governors on 09/11/2020</p> <p>AC/08/2021 – to note the PIXL data was distributed to governors on 01/10/2020</p> <p>AC/09/2021 – to note the safeguarding report was distributed to governors on 01/10/2020</p> <p>AC/10/2021 – to note the risk register was distributed to governors on 01/10/2020</p>	
<p><b>AC/22/2021</b></p>	<p><b>New Trust vision / mission statement</b></p> <p>Mrs Leonard shared the new Trust values, visions and mission statement on the screen and explained to the governors that the project to create these had been doing alongside both the academies and the Principal's. Mrs Saxelby added that the Trust took on board the vision statements from each individual academy and worked these in together, whilst not removing any identity from each academy. Governors were also informed that the vision and mission statement do link in with the AIP and the 4 key strategic objectives.</p> <p>Mrs Leonard to share the vision document with governors.</p>	<p><b>JL</b></p>
<p><b>AC/23/2021</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding; culture &amp; compliance inc. approval safeguarding audit to LA</b></p> <p>Mrs Leonard highlighted to governors that the safeguarding audit had been completed alongside Mrs Dolby and Mrs Ind and had been shared to governors in advance of the meeting. Walton do currently complete a Nottinghamshire County Council audit to follow in line with other academies in the Trust. The audit is a useful tool to ensure the academy is tight in all areas of safeguarding.</p> <p><b>Mrs Cooper queried</b> the significant spike in reported concerns in September which is representing a 53% increase in comparison to the prior year. Mrs Leonard informed governors that the spike in September was expected and the academy do usually anticipate a jump in cases due to new students arriving at the academy from Primary school. When a student joins the academy, any previous safeguarding issues get logged on My Concern so there is a record. In the 2020 admissions there is a large increase in SEND and disadvantaged students as well as more students who have previously been an open safeguarding case receiving support from external agencies. Another reason has been the length of time the students have been out of education. My Concern was continuously used throughout the lockdown period, however now the students have returned to the setting, the staff are seeing a spike in cases with anxiety-based refusal which has stemmed from not only the length of time the students were away from school but also the challenges some of the students faced at home. <b>Mrs Cooper further asked</b> how October and November compare. Mrs Leonard confirmed that October and November are inline with the same period last year. The majority of the initial spike has been dealt with there are a few students still receiving ongoing support from the pastoral team.</p>	



	<p><b>Mrs Cooper noted</b> that in the September meeting, the overall support given to students was discussed. On the recent data provided there is a specific trend in the year 11 &amp; 12 groups so <b>questioned</b> the Principal on any focused activity which is being undertaken. Mrs Leonard shared the data on the screen for the year 11, 12 and 13 groups showing the spike which has been led mostly by anxiety, emotional health, mental health, and wellbeing. The governors were also informed of a spike in year 8 which is due to a change in demographic as the year group have a large proportion of disadvantaged and SEND students. Mrs Leonard further explained that the students in year 11 and 12 suffered most from the lockdown with the general feeling amongst the year 12 students is that, as they didn't have the opportunity to get into P16 through the 'traditional channels', they don't feel as though they have earned their place. The feeling within the year 11 group is that this year will end down the Centre Assessed Grade route again so the academy is working hard to assure students that the exams will happen. For the Post16 students there is a wellbeing library and a dedicated pastoral team with the main aim to continue to raise aspirations and motivate the students to receive the best grades.</p> <p><b>The chair queried</b> if parents were being informed of the shared knowledge of the year group collectively especially when it comes to the extra anxieties. Mrs Leonard explained to governors how the academy has always ensured parents receive the same level of communication as both the staff and students. When updates are received by the government, the academy has been passing any information on to parents within the same day too. The GCSE exam open evening usually takes place in October however due to Covid this was virtual, but parents were informed on they can both prepare and support students throughout this time. The recent termly bulletin was also on safeguarding. <b>The chair requested</b> for the governors to be on the distribution list of the bulletin. It was agreed for the Clerk to distribute the weekly bulletins to governors so they can see the full communication to parents.</p> <p>For reference in the minutes, <b>Mrs Cooper added</b> that as a parent governor the school's communication to parents has been excellent throughout. The switch to remote learning as a result self-isolation of the year 11 group was also well executed.</p>	<p>Clerk / KB</p>
<p>AC/24/2021</p>	<p><b>COVID bridging plan including use of additional intervention funding</b> Mr Hoad informed governors that the curriculum has maintained as planned with no changes being made to a normal autumn term start. The only minor change has been that in the 3 key practical subjects (science, IT and music) in KS3, the lessons have been delivered in non-practical spaces e.g., science being delivered in non-lab spaces, but the curriculum has been adapted to allow this. With year 10 and year 11 bubble closures there has been extra capacity for the year 7, 8 and 9 lessons to be in the IT, science and music practical spaces which has received great feedback from the students. From January, if Covid does not become more challenging, there is a plan for years 7 and 8 to have weekly time in the science labs with less of a need for practical lessons with the year 9 group due to the way the curriculum is set. By organising it this way it has helped to protect the KS4 and KS5 provision.</p>	



Mr Hoad emphasised that gap analysis is embedded into the culture for Walton so there has not been a need for much focus on what the students have missed throughout lockdown due to the strength in the delivery of the remote learning. Due to this being embedded, there is a natural focus on the gaps rather than it being an additional process.

**Mrs Ind queried** if there has been much impact from the length of time the students have been out of the setting and whether the recent mock exams are in line with previous data. Mrs Leonard explained to governors that the marking process hasn't been completed yet due to the mock exams still ongoing with needing more space for the exams. The academy is completing the data analysis and evaluation by the 11<sup>th</sup> January. This data set (number 2) is a key data point as is tangible and accurate in terms of where the students are at. At data point 1, there was a warning due to not having any formal, validated data at the time. Following these mock exams there will be a complete ranking per student and per subject which will be preparation for Centre Assessed Grades again just in case of exceptional circumstances e.g., a student missing a paper due to Covid. From this ranking, the critical cohorts will also be identified with a targeted intervention put in place to ensure the students make the progress they should.

**Mrs Ind further asked** if there will be a second set of mock exams in January / February and if those would be a refinement from the current set. Mrs Leonard confirmed that the next mocks will be in the Spring term prior to Easter which will provide students with another chance to get used to exams whilst formally looking at any final knowledge gaps. The students are being informed of their knowledge gaps so there is a deeper understanding of what can be done in the remaining time.

**Mrs Ind highlighted** a concern after Scotland announced the use of Centre Assessed Grades for this academic year. Mrs Leonard explained that the system worked well for Walton in the previous academic year and she has confidence in the Centre Assessed Grades as the academy had the tangible data to make the professional decision. By doing the 2 sets of mock exams this builds on the data the academy have on each student just in case. Mr Hoad added that the consistent progression throughout the academic year is assisted by the various data sets and by having the two sets of mocks will help to evidence the academies decision in the Centre Assessed Grades.

**The Chair queried** the additional catch up funding that has been put in place by the Government for schools including how much the academy received and where the academy is spending the money. Mrs Leonard informed governors that based on the DfE calculations the academy would receive £54k. Based on what the team thought would make a real difference within the academy, the plan was to use the budget on the following;

- Targeted 1:1 support and mentoring using the academy's own staff
- Whole year group approaches including Tassomai which the academy had used previously for Science but now to be used for Science, Maths and English. This system helps in revision and gap filling.
- Additional external support including counselling for certain students.



	<p>- Increase the ability to provide wrap around care in the pastoral capacity.</p> <p>From a budgeting perspective, the additional funding was already within the budget, which was already tight, therefore meaning the additional things the academy wanted to do did not seem feasible. Mrs Leonard was able to inform governors that through other funding streams including the uplift in Pupil Premium and SEND funding, the plans detailed within the catch-up funding have been able to continue.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked for clarification</b> that the £54k that was assigned to Walton from the DfE for intervention funding, is sat centrally in the Trust and the academy itself has not seen any of it. Mrs Leonard confirmed this was the case and the academy has not received this funding.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked</b> for this to be escalated to the Trust.</p>	Clerk
AC/25/2021	<p><b>Targets 2021</b></p> <p>In advance of the meeting, both the academic and pastoral targets had been shared with governors. Mrs Leonard detailed that the Progress 8 score is currently at 1 which may not seem aspirational however it was stressed that the academy have used the FFT5 data and from a target point of view for the current year 11's this score is aspirational. Using the data analysis from data point 1, the academy did review the targets for progress 8 and this will be relooked at when the data has been analysed from data point 2. Governors were informed that the Post 16 targets are aspirational enough based on the targeted data for this year and this will show another significant rise in the overall grades. The pastoral targets are hopeful with everyone in academy working towards achieving them especially around attendance and exclusions.</p> <p>Mrs Leonard further detailed that Walton remains in a strong position and are still driving towards school improvement with a lot being achieved since September. There was one key element that Mrs Leonard wanted to highlight to governors that due to maternity leave there is not a SENDCO lead on site. The academy is receiving support from Mrs Truseler, the Strategic Lead for SEND across the Trust. There is also a lack of networking across the Trust which Mrs Saxelby has raised to the Senior Leadership Team especially for new leaders within the academy.</p> <p><b>The Chair queried</b> that Post 16 lessons are not always covered and that Covid could magnify this. Mr Hoad confirmed that all lessons are covered as a starting point but there may be an element of remote independent learning for short periods if there is a short absence. If there is a longer absence then it is being covered by a member of staff, however all students can access the work. <b>The chair further asked</b> if it was subject specific of which Mr Hoad confirmed it was based on absence due to illness not vacancies within the staffing structure.</p>	
AC/26/2021	<p><b>Quality of education update</b></p> <p>There were no questions from the governors on the quality of education.</p>	
AC/27/2021	<p><b>In year admissions (Autumn term entry and planned Spring)</b></p>	



	<p>Governors were informed there has been 5 students leave Walton since September and 18 students join. There is a dedicated member of staff who keeps a log of when people are leaving and arriving at the academy and any relevant information to this.</p> <p>For September 2021, Mrs Leonard explained there are 580 applications for 180 places with this being broken down into 189 first choices and 230 second choices. This is testament to all the hard work of which the academy has done over the 4/5 years.</p>	
<b>AC/28/2021</b>	<p><b>Link governor visit updates / reports</b></p> <p>As per agenda item AC/20/2021, Mrs Ind has recently conducted a safeguarding audit and the report to be distributed to governors prior to the next meeting.</p>	<b>HI</b>
<b>AC/29/2021</b>	<p><b>Approval of AIP for 2020/21</b></p> <p>Mrs Leonard explained to governors that the AIP is a live document and the academy do evaluate each section as each term comes to an end. Once the formal evaluation has been completed this will be updated on the AIP document to help ensure the academy are moving towards the objectives and actions constantly.</p> <p>For the minutes, following some questions from Mrs Cooper, the AIP for Walton was approved by governors with the understanding it is a live document.</p> <p>The governors were also informed that Walton's school improvement journey including the AIP was presented through the We Are In Beta platform on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December which is a national online network for schools. The webinar was entitled 'Coasting to Flying' and it detailed Walton's rapid and sustained improvement over the past 4 to 5 years and how the school improvement systems have driven this. The governors congratulated the academy on this fantastic acknowledgement of the hard work that has been done.</p>	
<b>AC/30/2021</b>	<p><b>Any academy specific items including policy appendix ratification &amp; any audit results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Charging and Remissions, Pay and Reward, Capability, Staff Grievance, Concerns and Complaints, Anti-bullying, Exclusion</b></li> </ul> <p>The above Diverse Academies policies were updated by the Trust on the 2nd and 14th October and are available on the Trust website. Governors were informed of these updates on the 14th October 2020.</p> <p>Governors had received an updated version of Walton's Emergency Plan however there was an error with an existing governor's name being on the document. The chair asked for the document to be amended and then the committee could sign it off.</p>	<b>JL / RW</b>
<b>AC/31/2021</b>	<p><b>Staff inc stall wellbeing survey evaluation and actions &amp; governor stakeholder involvement</b></p> <p>Mrs Leonard informed governors that a staff survey had been completed in term 1 which asked staff for their opinions and thoughts on the systems and communication. The key points of feedback were that;</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From a leadership point of view the staff felt they were being lead strongly.</li> <li>- The staff stated at the beginning there was a lot to take in information wise, which was down to the leadership team choosing to over-communicate to ensure the staff had all the information. After the first few weeks, the communication eased off due to the information being embedded.</li> <li>- Staff were also complimentary on the forms of communication that are being used in the way of bulletins, video recordings and live briefings on Microsoft Teams. At the start of the year there were no meetings to allow staff time to get their head round everything, but these have now been gradually added back in.</li> <li>- Other comments was that staff no longer have their own dedicated teaching spaces to help protect the bubbles. Governors were also informed that within each classroom, teachers have a yellow box to stand in, so they do not move around too much which has taken teachers out of their comfort zones</li> </ul> <p><i>Miss Lee left the meeting at 8.44am.</i></p> <p><b>The Chair asked</b> Miss Hopkins if she had completed the evaluation and if it is usual for the staff to have an opportunity for their voices to be heard. Miss Hopkins confirmed she did complete the evaluation and the staff survey is an annual occurrence, so it is a usual opportunity for their voices to be heard collectively by the Senior Leadership Team. <b>The chair further asked</b> if the staff had seen the feedback of which Miss Hopkins confirmed they received the charter, so the collective picture has been seen.</p>	
<p><b>AC/32/2021</b></p>	<p><b>Finance: Management Accounts</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Cooper stated</b> that the year-to-date income has been exceeded and further <b>queried</b> if this is a continuing trend. Mrs Leonard confirmed that there has been an increase in teaching costs due to the national pay increase which had to be considered which was not in the first budget initially. There has been an increase in income from SEND &amp; PP students which is not reflected in the first budget, but it is in the management accounts which puts the academy in a small surplus of circa £4k. There has also been changes in staffing including savings with re-appointments but governors could be assured it was not a continuing trend and Mrs Leonard was happy that all is accounted for.</p>	
<p><b>AC/33/2021</b></p>	<p><b>How has the AC held senior leaders to account?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covid finances especially around the intervention funding</li> <li>- Safeguarding particularly around student mental health</li> <li>- Exam planning and plans for any potential Centre Assessed Grades</li> </ul>	
<p><b>AC/34/2021</b></p>	<p><b>Previous report feedback from Trustees</b></p> <p>Governors were informed of the feedback from Trustees following the previous committee report. Within the Scheme of Delegation, the Trustees take ownership for most decisions, the governors thanked the Trustees for the feedback but would appreciate more detail to give assurance on the governance at Trustee level for what is happening at Walton especially in key subjects like the budget which has a significant impact on the academy.</p>	





<b>AC/35/2021</b>	<b>Complete report to Trustees</b> AC members discussed the report and agreed to add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concern about the bridge funding</li><li>• Celebrate - Sharing AIP on a national level</li></ul>	
<b>AC/36/2021</b>	<b>Determination of Confidentiality</b> <b>Equalities Act consideration</b> <b>7 Nolan Principles</b> AC members considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There were no confidential items discussed</li><li>• There had been no Equalities Act implications</li><li>• Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the 7 Nolan Principles.</li></ul>	
	<b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> Academy Committee meeting Wednesday 3 February 2021 at 7.30am.  The meeting closed at 8.59am.	

Signed by Chair:

Date: