



St Laurence School Academy Trust
Full Governing Board meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 December 2022 at the school

Governors present: I Maher Roberts (chair), K Kilgallen, D Roberts, T Lerwill, T Farrer, L Ash, T Chatfield, S Cooper, M Lee, C Hamilton, P Lambert, M Dooley, J Abecassis

Apologies: M Smith, M Peters

Clerk: R Beesley

Observers: L Wicks, A Ensom, A Craddock (governor nominees)

09/22 Minutes of previous meeting 12 10 22, actions and matters arising (IMR).
The minutes were agreed for accuracy and virtually signed off by the chair.
There were no actions.

10/22 Audit and accounts sign-off (introduced by KK)
Governors noted that they had seen the following:

1. Letter of representation
2. SLS Final Accounts
3. Audit completion management letter
4. Financial summary Joe Scaife letter 23 November, read to FGB and noted.

The documents were signed by TFR and IMR.

Comment, on additional reserves, these will be spent on toilet facilities, security provision (an Ofsted note), multi-use games area and the improvement of Home Field (Estates strategy)

Question, is it acceptable to have £1m in the reserves, after the spending?

R – yes, these are 3 years of reserves and they are to be spent, Ofsted mentioned this, note that the spending figures are estimates.

Clarification, p6, a B+ was the overall attainment grade for A level.

R - It may be that a solid grade might be the limit, so B.

Comment, Bishop Fleming (external auditor) do a good job and are very complimentary to LLM and the finance team. Governors wished to note their thanks to the whole finance team under LLM's leadership

T Lerwill was thanked for his contribution to the work of FFE and the audit overview.

11/22 Head's report (TFR)

Highlights of the term were: a positive Strategy Day, the SIP is being implemented in a collaborate way, Sixth Form applications are now at 220 (160 at this time last year), 188 from internal, year 11 students. The 1-4 system is to be used in the post-16 meetings to gauge the certainty of progression to the Sixth Form

Question, what is the reason for increase in internal candidates?

R – in-school marketing and good relationships with current year 12. This year 11 cohort is a stronger academic year.

News on Staffing, as there was no appointment of HoD computing, the school would advertise in the Spring.

Teacher recruitment was a strategic concern. Recently, UWE had lost its Initial Teacher Training accreditation.

Mobile device policy had proved successful during the mock exams and Ofsted had commented positively on this

There are 18 Ukrainian students and all are students staying in the UK, longer term.

A parental complaint had been resolved but on another, legal advice had been taken.

The site safety aspect of the Condition Improvement Fund bid had drawn very positive comments from Ofsted.

Ofsted inspection, these were confidential comments with a mid-January publication date.

For students, good relationships, teaching and learning in the classroom was good, they felt safe, there were opportunities for student leadership,

On the curriculum, English, science, maths, MFL and history had deep dives. A concern was that maths attainment not as good as English and science. The new HoD, MFL had given a very good account.

On SEND, staff had knowledge and supported student, there was no visible difference in how the books of SEND and PP students books were marked or feedback given.

Sixth form and PSHE into Core (Sixth Form PSHE) was good, careers education and guidance was good, the focus on the reading of the lower 20% attaining students was good.

Behaviour was calm, orderly and polite, in lessons it was good, the behaviour policy was good, staff lived out the school vision with strong relationships.

The wider curriculum offer was strong.

Careers was good because of the meeting of the [Baker clause](#) and [Gatsby benchmarking](#).

PP priorities were clear and the approach to [STEM](#) was developed

Safeguarding was proactive and staff were experienced. PSHE was tailored to classes, the Single Central Record was complete and online safety was good. Ofsted judged this to be effective

On staff workload, there was a positive emphasis on wellbeing, leaders supported staff, all staff felt this and that SLT were investing in staff.

On day two, the SLT were invited to write the school's area of development. This would be, at times, some pupils in some areas do not retain depth of knowledge and some do not learn as much as other, leaders should help teachers, help students learn and remember more.

Question, how should governors reward staff for this result and their significant efforts?

R – TFR had provides a breakfast plus notes of thanks were put in the staff briefing. HoDs subject to a deep dive had specific thanks from SLT. Staff and parents get the report on the same day. It would then

be possible to review school marketing, PR and brochures to incorporate comments from both SIAMS and Ofsted reports.

Question, how can the FGB thank staff?

R – personal letters of thanks are well appreciated.

Action, Staff list to governors.

It was noted that this was a thorough inspection, specifically a wide range of students were spoken to in class and in more informal settings.

The inspector noted the number of complaints in the [parent survey](#) free text section, TFR addressed this with the lead inspector providing context and explanation.

This was an ungraded inspection. There is now a breathing space from external review, with more freedom in the ways of working.

In terms of the school's improvement strategy, department reviews, Challenge Partners and now, progress data would form the basis of the work. Term 4, department review PE. Term 3 was to be Challenge Partners (to be postponed to summer term, ideally). The programme of SLT drop-ins would continue, on home learning.

12/22 MAT discussion update (TFR / IMR)

There was a continuing conversation with Hardenhuish and Sheldon, an agreed statement was shared with staff but the 7th of December meeting was postponed, a memorandum of understanding would be the principles for further work and this would be presented to FGB in February. The agreed statement had been shared with parents and primary schools. There had been no response from staff or parents but clearly some comment from primaries as TFR had been contacted the Regional Schools Commissioner's office.

Comments, a non-disclosure agreement was suggested, a withdrawn and termination clause was suggested, commencing with two strong secondaries as partners was simpler than having a wider group, each school had an associated trust which they were sure to ringfence for their sole benefit, the growth plan for the MAT would state some of the expected roles beyond school organisation that might effect associate staff, the model would be that of maximum developed autonomy with each school retaining their own identity.

The main point was what is best for the school(s) and not just about the White Paper (although this had been cancelled).

Question, why has the conversation been opened with those schools?

R – the White Paper prompted the more formal conversation. There is history in the school of considering the wider educational landscape and MATs. Collaboration with others could benefit students. The school looked for strong partners, to develop staff. Other schools have moved their position on MATs.

It was good to be transparent about the possible ways forward to all stakeholders.

13/22 Maths department review (TFR)

Note that maths results had declined in 2019 and then in 2022, progress is the main question, student attainment was in the 4th quintile which was weak considering the start-point of most.

This review was well timed for the Ofsted inspection.
Student voice was strong and the issues were clearly identified.
SLT will work with staff in the first department meeting.
The focus would be sharing good practice and more strength in communication and passion for the subject.
A further review would go to Standards in term 2 (2023-24), with a further set of exam data.

14/22 Committee minutes & update from Chairs

Standards (SC), on year 13, a grade B was forecast but mocks in year 12 predicted C+, so something to watch. French, Music, PE, physics had all improved. On the PP strategy, the part B response to outcomes was to be added. On Computing, the concern is year 10/11 and preparation for GCSE, the mock results (external marked) would be a key factor.

Question, what is the rationale for releasing mock results in January?

R – the marking deadline is after Christmas; it recreates results day and is easier to email parents for consistency.

FFE (KK), on the Estates strategy capital projects, there had been a positive meeting with BoA town council, with the identification of sports field excess land, as potentially for housing.

Question, are we forward thinking enough about money and land?

R – this is a five-year land-bank measure. A large chunk of money will go from reserves on existing projects. £4.5m is the cost of the Art Design Technology estates strategy plan. This would stop the ad-hoc development and is the land is furthest from the school site.

The cost of the campus plan is c£10m. As this land-bank opportunity was time limited, a decision needed to be made.

Action, Estates Plan to be circulated.

Question, what is the conclusion for the Additional Educational Needs building project?

R – there has been a complete refurbishment of the internal structure, with the heating to be replaced over the holidays.

Question, was is the extent of the Buro Happold work?

R – this is for resilience of the facilities. DR discussed the project and the possible input to the school.

C&E (PL), on online safety, the school is ahead of the curve, not only in the education of students in the 4c's of online safety but in the adoption of [Smoothwall](#) for filtering and monitoring. There was significant and robust follow-up on this. There continued to be a high volume of myConcern referrals (staff are better trained, making more reports) but this generates a lot of pressure on quite a small team. Ofsted commended on this; staff are vigilant including peripatetic staff. Governors could have confidence in the system. A thorough policy on uniform had been devised, reflecting good practice, LA guidance and reflection on equality issues. It was a reasoned policy with a pragmatic approach. (note that Strategy minutes are also in the folder)

15/22 School policies agreed by committee this term, to be noted

Uniform, C&E

Pupil Premium strategy, Standards

Policies for FGB

None for this meeting

16/22 Governing Body matters

Membership, note of nominations received, for approval. The governor nominees introduced themselves. All nominees were approved.

Training, note of options for governors, offline and other options were requests. **Action**, clerk to investigate and note to governors.

AOB

Carol service, Wednesday 14th from 6pm at Holy Trinity.

Almost 90 students are involved, it will be the first since 2019.

The meeting closed at 1815.