

## The Federation of Abbey Schools Academy Trust

### Governing Body Minutes

**Date:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 5.00 pm

**Present Governors:** Mrs E de la Motte, Mr J Briggs, Dr L Bryant, Mr M Fryer, Mrs N McDowell, Mr N Little, Mrs C Stow Smith, Mrs S Howe and Mr G Buchanan.

**Also facilitating the Board meeting:** Mrs L Hawksby (Governance Professional) and Mrs C Hurworth (EPM).

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF DISCUSSION</u> <u>(Note meeting held in person: Junior Staff Room, Junior Building, The Federation of Abbey Schools.)</u>	<u>ACTION BY</u>
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Directors Mrs R Kershaw and Mrs R Hall.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Notification of Items of Other Business</b></p> <p>There were no items of any other business.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Declarations of Interests:</b></p> <p><b>Declaration of personal or pecuniary interests in any matters arising from the Agenda of the current meeting</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interests declared.</p> <p><b>Declaration of any updates for the Register of Business Interests.</b></p> <p>There were no updates for the Register of Business Interests.</p>	

<p style="color: red;">CQ</p>	<p><b>(Note: with the permission of the Chair It was agreed to consider the following item next from the Agenda.)</b></p> <p><b>4. Management Accounts and Autumn Term Budget Monitoring Report</b></p> <p>Mrs C Hurworth (EPM) provided an update on the July, August, September and October 2021 Management Accounts which were noted by the Board.</p> <p>She also provided an Autumn Term budget monitoring report for the Board. It was noted that that the National Funding Formula (NFF) for 2022/23 increases were in line with the budget assumptions used to produce the Trust's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). A delay in the move to a hard NFF was noted with the DfE (Department for Education) launching a consultation over the summer on the next stage of completing the reform.</p> <p>It was also reported that the pay freeze, with regard to Teacher's Pay award for 2021/22, may be lifted after the Chancellor had announced his latest spending review. The Board therefore requested that it would be prudent to include any potential increase within the budget. The Support Staff pay award was still in negotiations but any potential increase had already been budget for.</p> <p>The Board noted that energy costs had increased due to wholesale gas pricing. The Trust's latest projections included the expectation of these increased costs.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted the 2020/21 outturn position.</li> <li>b) Confirmed receipt of the monthly management accounts, cash flows, balance sheets, aged debtors and creditors reports</li> <li>c) Noted the 2021/22 revenue budget forecast position.</li> <li>d) Noted the 2021/22 capital position.</li> <li>e) Noted the reserves position.</li> <li>f) Noted the cash flow projection.</li> <li>g) That any potential increase in the Teacher's Pay Award be budgeted for, in case the current pay freeze were lifted after the Chancellors' latest funding review.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Head Teacher/ C.Hurworth</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Head Teacher/ C.Hurworth</b></p>
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	<p><i>(Note: Mrs C.Hurworth left the meeting at 5.15 pm)</i></p> <p><b>5. Approval of Minutes</b></p> <p><b>a) Approval of Board Minutes – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021.</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September and Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record by the Chair.</p> <p><b>b) Matters Arising –</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising from consideration of the above minutes.</p> <p><b>6. Reports of Committees:</b></p> <p><b>a.) Audit &amp; Finance Committee and Pay Review Sub-Committee – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Audit &amp; Finance Committee reported on the issues and key recommendations from the meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and the Pay Review Sub-Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021.</p> <p>It was noted that a retendering exercise would be carried out for the external auditor this academic year in line with the Academy Trusts Handbook latest recommendations.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the issues and key recommendations from the Audit &amp; Finance Committee meeting and Pay Review Sub-Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 be noted.</p> <p><b>b.)Teaching &amp; Learning Committee – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Teaching &amp; Learning Committee reported on the issues and key recommendations from the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.</p> <p>It was noted that home learning may have to be re-instated into the Risk Register if the national Covid situation were to escalate further.</p>	
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	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the issues and key recommendations from the Teaching &amp; Learning Committee meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 be noted.</p> <p><b>7. Chair’s Report</b></p> <p>The Chair advised she had no new updates to report.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Chair’s report be noted.</p> <p><b>8. Head Teacher’s Report</b></p> <p>The Head Teacher provided an update report on key school issues. He advised that more pupils had been added to the SEN (Special Educational Needs) register.</p> <p>He advised that the school had procured a cyber-security firm and had recently passed its cyber security test. He reported that support staff had been impacted by Covid and illness this term, however staff had worked hard to cover any shortfalls in staffing.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p><b>9. Safeguarding</b></p> <p>The Head Teacher reported on the latest safeguarding updates. It was noted In October the Deputy Head Teacher had attended bereavement training, ‘A Positive Approach to Helping Children &amp; Young People Grieve’ at St Teresa’s Hospice. The training provided useful resources and a framework to support carrying out an audit and creating an action plan, as well as practical resources and strategies that could be used to support pupils dealing with grief.</p> <p>The school continued to signpost staff and parents to support for emotional health and wellbeing through weekly communication bulletins and add useful links to the school website.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
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<p><b>10.</b></p> <p><b>Governors' Monitoring – November 2021</b></p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that a number of Directors had been into school in early November this term in relation to their monitoring role</p> <p>A number of reports of their visits had been written up by Directors and were reported back to the Board at the meeting. The enthusiasm of the pupils for their learning had been noted by the Directors.</p> <p><b>CQ</b></p> <p>It was noted that the Teaching &amp; Learning Committee had requested that in future monitoring it would be helpful to look at the work of pupils who had different interventions and how the pupils were being challenged. The Head Teacher agreed this would be done.</p> <p>It was noted that the Governors would next be talking to their designated subject leads, in their monitoring/learning role, on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 via Zoom, with a timetable and links to be forwarded shortly.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>a) That the report be noted.</p> <p>b) That future monitoring would also include considering how pupils had been challenged and the work of pupils who had different interventions.</p> <p>c) That a timetable and zoom links be forwarded for the designated subject leaders discussions due to take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022.</p>	<p><b>Governors' Monitoring – November 2021</b></p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that a number of Directors had been into school in early November this term in relation to their monitoring role</p> <p>A number of reports of their visits had been written up by Directors and were reported back to the Board at the meeting. The enthusiasm of the pupils for their learning had been noted by the Directors.</p> <p>It was noted that the Teaching &amp; Learning Committee had requested that in future monitoring it would be helpful to look at the work of pupils who had different interventions and how the pupils were being challenged. The Head Teacher agreed this would be done.</p> <p>It was noted that the Governors would next be talking to their designated subject leads, in their monitoring/learning role, on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 via Zoom, with a timetable and links to be forwarded shortly.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>a) That the report be noted.</p> <p>b) That future monitoring would also include considering how pupils had been challenged and the work of pupils who had different interventions.</p> <p>c) That a timetable and zoom links be forwarded for the designated subject leaders discussions due to take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022.</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher/ Directors</i></p> <p><i>Head Teacher/ Governance Professional</i></p>
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>School Development Plan (SDP) and School Evaluation Form (SEF).</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the School Development Plan (SDP) and School Evaluation Form (SEF). The SDP is a live document and has been updated following actions completed in the Autumn Term. It was noted that with regards to SEND pupils (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), inclusion continued to be a key action. SEND plans were up to date this term and were currently being sent out to parent/carers.</p> <p>The SEF had been updated and the judgements had been removed following a recommendation following the documents' latest review.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	

<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Current Numbers on Roll</b></p> <p>The current numbers on roll for each year group were available in the Head Teacher’s report and were considered by the Board. Current numbers on roll were noted to be good.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety Accident Statistics</b></p> <p>The latest Health &amp; Safety Accident statistics were noted by the Board.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>Training Feedback</b></p> <p>The following training provided by Darlington Borough Council had been undertaken this term by Directors:</p> <p>R.Kershaw - Preparing for Ofsted inspections N. Carbert - Induction for new governors</p> <p>The following Directors had attended the Head Teacher’s Ofsted Teaching held on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021 :-</p> <p>Mrs E. de la Motte Mrs R. Kershaw Mr J. Briggs Dr L. Bryant Mrs N McDowell Mrs R.Hall Mrs C. Stow Smith Mr G. Buchanan</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p><b>Asbestos Management Plan</b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Asbestos Management Plan.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the asbestos Management Plan be approved.</p>	<p><i>Business Team/ Head Teacher</i></p>

<p><b>16.</b></p>	<p><b>Commissioning an External Review in line with the latest Academy Trust Handbook</b></p> <p>The Board were advised by the Governance Professional that the latest Academy Trust Handbook had emphasised the value of external reviews of governance (ERG) for trusts. It is the Department for Educations strong preference that external reviews of governance are conducted routinely as part of a wider programme of self-assessment and improvement and are especially important before for example a Board undertakes any significant change such as before a multi-academy trust (MAT) grows significantly. It is for the Board to decide how the external review will take place, to commission and pay for it. The review should be independent and objective, with the findings also reported to the Members.</p> <p>An ERG is conducted by an experienced governance expert who is external to, and independent of, the Board and the executive leaders. The review will examine the governance structure, operations and performance across the Board, working closely with the Board, Executive Leader and the Governance Professional to improve the board's performance</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That an external review of Governance be carried out and an appropriate reviewer commence to be identified.</p>	<p><i>Governance professional/ Directors/ Head Teacher</i></p>
<p><b>17.</b></p>	<p><b>Federation of Abbey School's email addresses</b></p> <p>The Board noted that each Director would be issued a Federation of Abbey Schools' email address.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That it be noted all Directors would be issued with a Federation of Abbey Schools email address.</p>	<p><i>IT / Governance Professional</i></p>
<p><b>18.</b></p>	<p><b>Governor Report Back – Central Record for Recruitment &amp; Vetting</b></p> <p>Director Mike Fryer advised that he had a telephone meeting with Mrs C Rochester in the Business Team this term, who administers the Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting. She advised that spot checks were undertaken by EPM as part of the School's Service Level Agreement with them to ensure statutory compliance and that no issues had been identified.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted and that no issues had been identified.</p>	

19.	<p><b>Annual Report</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That consideration of this report be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022.</p>	
20.	<p><b>Educational Visits Policy</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the Educational Visits Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Educational Visits Policy be approved.</p>	<i>Head Teacher</i>
21.	<p><b>Administration of Medicine Policy</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the Administration of Medicine Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Administration of Medicine Policy be approved.</p>	<i>Head Teacher</i>
22.	<p><b>First Aid</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the First Aid Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the First Aid Policy be approved.</p>	<i>Head Teacher</i>
23.	<p><b>Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy be approved.</p>	<i>Head Teacher</i>
24.	<p><b>GDPR Policies</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the General Data Protection Policies (GDPR).</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the GDPR policies be approved.</p>	<i>Head Teacher</i>



<p>25.</p>	<p><b>Capability of Teaching Staff – deferred from 17<sup>th</sup> November Board meeting</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the Capability of Teaching Staff Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Capability of Teaching Staff Policy be approved.</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher</i></p>
<p>26.</p>	<p><b>Capability of Support Staff – deferred from 17<sup>th</sup> November Board meeting</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the Capability of Support Staff Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Capability of Support Staff Policy be approved.</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher</i></p>
<p>27.</p>	<p><b>Disciplinary and Grievance – deferred from 17<sup>th</sup> November Board meeting</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board to the Disciplinary and Grievance Policy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure be approved.</p> <p><i>(Note: Prior to consideration of item 28 below – Performance Management Report - the Head Teacher, Mr J Briggs, declared a pecuniary interest, left the meeting and took no part in the discussions.)</i></p>	<p><i>Head Teacher</i></p>
<p>28.</p>	<p><b>Performance Management Report (including Head Teacher’s Performance Review.)</b></p> <p>Director L Bryant reported to the Board that the Pay Review Sub-Committee had met on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and that pay progression for teaching staff had been approved as all targets had been met.</p> <p>He further advised that the Head Teacher’s Performance Review was been held later that term with members of the Pay Review Sub-Committee and external advisor Mr D.Lowes. All of the Head Teacher’s objectives had been met and therefore he had progressed up a point on the pay scale. Challenging objectives had been set for the Head Teacher’s next performance review period.</p>	

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p><i>(The Head Teacher returned to the meeting following discussion of the above item)</i></p> <p><b>29. Agenda Items for Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>Standing Items and Policies</p> <p><b>30. Approval of Documents for Public Inspection</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Agenda, supporting documents and approved Minutes be made available for public inspection with the exception of any papers/reports relating to Minute 4 above: Management Accounts and Autumn Term Budget Monitoring Report due to their commercial sensitivity in accordance with article 125 c and Minute 13 above: Health &amp; Safety Accident Statistics due to it the possibility of to identifying a person due to the nature of the accident and therefore should be formally excluded from public inspection in accordance with Article 125 c.</p> <p><b>31. Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>That the next meeting of the Board be held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 at 5.30 pm.</p> <p><b>The meeting concluded at 6.45pm</b></p> <p>Approved by the Governing Body</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Signature (Chair): _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p>	<p><i>Governance Professional</i></p> <p><i>Governance Professional</i></p> <p><i>Governance Professional</i></p>
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Note: the CQ abbreviation stands for – Challenging Question by the Board.