



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 14th March 2024 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)

Alan Broomhead (AB)

Jesse Cleverly (JC)

Alan Dunstan (AD) – Chair of Meeting

Kathryn Foster (KF)

Vicki Hamilton (VH)

Sarah Parish (SP)

Lucy Phipps (LP)

Christine Reeves (CRe)

Catherine Roche (CRo)

Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)

Clive Watts (CW)

Apologies:

Deborah Allen (DA)

Linda Burton (LB)

Hayley Scott (HS)

Victoria Vaughan (VV)

In attendance:

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Trustee challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Quorum was confirmed.
- Apologies tendered were accepted
- No trustee declared a material interest in any agenda item

2. ATB meeting, 25th January 2024

2.1. ATB minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed by AD and filed in school.

2.2. Review of Actions/matters arising. Unless otherwise discussed, assigned actions had been completed. Matters arising not covered by the current agenda were considered:

- SB will circulate the two possible dates for the Trustee Open Day, 16th or 23rd April

Signed

Date

3. Headteacher's Section: SB presented the report which had previously been circulated. Discussion raised the following points:

- The school's Management Information System (MIS) is switching to new provider Satchel One, this is a significant project. Satchel is currently showing less usability than the outgoing product, but this was expected during the transition phase. One of the main issues at the moment is the lack of reporting functionality, a lot of reports are having to be requested from Satchel. As more improvements are made to Satchel, the functionality will develop.
- The upcoming Year 7 admissions for 2024/25 were heavily oversubscribed, even though it is a planned bulge year. All children of staff, and siblings of current students, have been offered a place. The number of students with an EHCP is increasing, with 10 in the upcoming year 7. **Given the trend in increasing number of children with EHCPs, should Langtree be thinking about its capacity in terms of resources available?** SB replied that this is considered, meetings with the families take place and an assessment is made as to whether Langtree can meet the needs. Ultimately, if the family want their child to come to Langtree there is little that can be done. **Is Langtree doing enough to support vulnerable learners?** VH said that the P&C committee have asked for a breakdown of EHCP pupils and their progress to review at the next meeting. **Action:** SB to hold a 'Spotlight' session for Trustees on the performance of vulnerable students and the statistics we use to track progress. Specifically, CW asked for data on pupil attendance. i.e. what is the success/achievement of those with 75%, 50% and 25% attendance.
- Within Behaviour, there have been a small number of difficult students who have been quite testing. However, the suspension and exclusion record is in line with recent years.
- Heather Banyard, an experienced TA, is a welcome addition to the team.
- Huge thanks to Trustees Hayley Scott and Jesse Cleverley. HS did a talk about being a Crime Scene Investigator as part of the recent Forensic Science Creativity day, and JC has placed an excellent article about the Drama Studio in the Henley Standard.
- **Is the high number of staff absence likely to improve in the near future?** Yes, there are various reintegration plans in place where necessary, the situation is slowly improving.
- Staff member Sue Pembleton has independently sourced a grant and is running an evening Functional Maths class for parents/carers.

4. Trustee Approval

- a) Re-appointment of Trustees – Alan Broomhead and Sarah Parish. Trustees unanimously agreed to renew the term of office for AB and SP and thanked them for their continued work for Langtree.
- b) Pension Payment appeal – a briefing document outlining the appeal was circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. AB highlighted the key factors, also noting that the F&GP committee discussed the appeal at the February meeting and the recommendation made. Trustees discussed the case at length, including checking the process that had been followed and whether Local Authority and/or legal advice had been sought by Langtree. Having reviewed and discussed the evidence, Trustees agreed with the recommendation made by the F&GP committee and unanimously ratified the decision to reject the appeal.

5. Trustee Updates

AD signposted the Langtree School Academy Trustee Governing Board 2023/24 document, noting that the updated version, as at 1st March, has been uploaded to the school website.

6. Committee Reports

Finance and General Purposes: Minutes of 22nd February 2024 had been circulated.

- The 2023/24 budget has changed from an anticipated surplus of £23,000 (reported at the January ATB meeting) to a small deficit of £9,000. This position should improve slightly by year end. Carolyn, School Business Manager, is closely looking at items of spend going forwards to try and reduce the deficit where possible.
- The approved budget projection vs. the forecast was reviewed. Some funding, such as the teacher's pension increase, have been confirmed since the last review. The position has improved compared to when the budget was approved – the overall position over 5 years is now much healthier.
- The MIS migration over to Satchel One is going fairly well, having been live for about a month. Chris Nonweiller has worked tirelessly on the project, he has handled the roll out really well and should be commended for his work.
- Policies reviewed and approved: Pensions Discretions, Data Protection, Business Continuity Plan, Debt Recovery

Curriculum and Standards: Minutes of 27th February 2024 had been circulated.

- New Trustee Deb Allen was warmly welcomed to her first committee meeting.
- Sarah Darkins, new Head of Food Technology, presented to the committee. Sarah had previously been a Langtree science teacher for 20 years. Sarah spoke enthusiastically about how she is developing Food Tech within the school. As well as a GCSE there is also an option to study Langtree-based award Cooking for Life which isn't accredited. There are 19 students taking the GCSE and 16 taking Cooking for Life. Sarah is very inspirational.
- Langtree's mobile phone policy was talked about in light of recent discussions taking place within government. Instead of banning phones away for students, Langtree endeavours to teach them to be responsible phone users.
- Policies reviewed and approved: SEND, Remote Learning

Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 21st February 2024 had been circulated.

- The committee is pursuing the idea of including fertility treatment within a staff policy. The inclusion of fertility treatment is becoming more prevalent in corporate policies and the committee feel it should be recognised at Langtree.
- To celebrate what Langtree does, and to strengthen the connection with the local community, the committee were hoping that the recent new trustees might be interested in organising a regular piece in the local newspaper. KF said that she would like to be involved once she has more time available.
- Interventions are in place for all students who have attendance concerns.

- How school dealt with a pupil who brought cannabis into school was considered. The student could have been excluded but because they are due to take GCSEs in the summer the HT and DHT felt that an off-site declaration was more suited. **Has the student got off lightly?** VH said that she didn't believe so, no, they are being made to work hard. They are not allowed to attend the prom or any other school events.
- It was noted that it would be helpful for the committee to know about staff sickness levels (not names or specifics) to help identify if there are any prevalent trends. **Do you think teaching staff morale is suffering due to additional pressure?** LP said that she believes stress levels are where they normally are for this time of year. SB said that it is a difficult time with some students being really challenging. Staff absence has probably added to the pressure, with more disruption for both children and teachers.
- Policies reviewed and approved were: SEND, Equality & Diversity.
- The Attendance policy has been postponed until after the Trustee Open Day which will look into pupil attendance at Langtree.

Drama Studio update

- JC said that the Drama Studio article has been published in the Henley Standard. The hope is that the article will raise awareness and attract more people to the project. JC has also spoken to a journalist at BBC South who may be interested in running a piece on it. JC is also in conversations with the architect to potentially place an article in The Guardian newspaper.

6. Approval of statutory policies

- The Data Protection Policy was reviewed and approved by the F&GP committee. The policy was approved by the Academy Trust Board. **Have there been any recent data breaches?** SB said that there have been a couple of minor ones over the last three years, these have been reported to the ICO.
- The SEND Policy was reviewed by both the C&S and P&C committees. The policy was approved by the Academy Trust Board.

AOB

- VH reminded Trustees that a Permanent Exclusion could happen at any time and Trustees would be expected to convene a hearing panel at short notice. The NGA Learning Link provides a really good training which is ideal for Trustees to complete annually.
Action: JCu to circulate the NGA Learning Link webpage to Trustees.
- AD noted that the Academy Trust Governance Guide replaces the Governance Handbook. There is nothing new that Trustees need to do. If Trustees wanted to read the guide then Section 4, which covers roles and responsibilities, is very useful and a good place to start.
- AD reminded Trustees of the Easy Fundraising email which HS circulated on 7th March
- Declaration of Interest Forms should be completed and sent to JC. During last year's audit it was discovered that some declarations made differed from those recorded with Companies House, this needs to be corrected.

- We are talking to a potential new trustee, who is unable to attend the next ATB meeting. When the recruitment process is completed AD will circulate her CV with a request for Trustee approval of her appointment (to be ratified at ATB), so that she can attend the April P&C meeting.

Finally, AD thanked SB and all trustees for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 20:50

Date of next meeting: Thursday 9th May, 7:00pm

ACTIONS LIST from ATB meeting, 14th March 2024:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
3b	'Spotlight' on the performance of vulnerable students	SB	April 2024
4a	Amend Trustee Board document and upload to website	JCu	May 2024
7a	Circulate NGA Learning Link for Exclusions training	JCu	ASAP
5a (From 01/24 mtg)	Research Diversity training	JCu	ASAP
5a (From 01/24 mtg)	Formulate targeted training for weaker areas	JCu/AD	ASAP
5b (From 01/24 mtg)	Provide a summary of strategic findings from SLT's MAT visits	SB	June 2024
5b (From 01/24 mtg)	Consider drawing up a high-level Strategic Action Plan for Langtree's next steps	AD/CRo/SB	April 2024
6.0	Approved Policies <i>to go on school website</i> : Data Protection, SEND	JCu	ASAP
	Committees to review the FGB Scheme of Delegation at the start of the Academic year (alongside Terms of Reference)	Committees	September