

**Minutes of the virtual Academy Committee Meeting of
Westbridge Academy
Wednesday 20 July 2022 at 1700**

Name	Position	Attendance
Mitchell Broughton (MB)	Staff Governor	Present
Donal Daly (Head)	Head of School	Present
Vicky Harrison (VH)	Parent Governor	Present
Carina Saner (CofG)	Co-opted Governor, Chair	Present
Eve Warren (EW)	Co-opted Governor	Present
Oliver William (OW)	Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair	Present
Rosie Yorke (RY)	Co-opted Governor	Present
Miz Mann (MM)	Executive Headteacher	Present
Gaynor Newnham (C2G)	Governance Clerk	Present

Item	Minute	Action
STEP First – We are all one team		
1.	<p>Welcome and Update (<i>people</i>)</p> <p>The Chair of Governors (CofG) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.</p> <p>Governors consented to the virtual meeting being electronically recorded. This recording will be used by the Governance Team and deleted once the draft minutes are completed.</p> <p>CofG confirmed virtual meeting protocol e.g., mute microphones, wear headphones and ensure a confidential, quiet area.</p> <p>No notification was received by the CofG of any other business to be discussed later in the agenda.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies and Quorum (<i>people</i>)</p> <p>Governors confirmed they had added their attendance to this meeting via The Trust Governor (TTG).</p> <p>No apologies were received.</p> <p>The CofG confirmed the meeting to be quorate.</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and/or Conflict of Interests (<i>people/accountability/compliance</i>)</p> <p>Governors were asked to declare any pecuniary or personal interests in any agenda item for this meeting. None were declared.</p>	
4.	<p>Board of Trustees' Update</p> <p>Governors noted the Board of Trustees update since Spring Term 2022.</p>	

STEP Way – We all agree to do things like this	
5.	<p>Governors Membership</p> <p>Governors noted the following membership changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosie Yorke is now Safeguarding Lead alongside other roles • Eve Warren is a Co-opted Governor from 19 July 2022, with a Well-being focus <p>Action: SC2G to update TTG accordingly.</p> <p>Governors noted 1 parent governor vacancy.</p> <p>It was reported that there is one potential governor, and it is hoped that they will be recruited for September.</p> <p>The Governance team are in the process of dividing the parent and staff application so applicants do not feel overwhelmed with the application and information required.</p> <p>Action: SC2G to share draft version when completed.</p> <p>CS asked if an Associate Governor with skills in communication and marketing could be considered – governors agreed that this would be positive.</p> <p>Action: SC2G to recruit an Associate Governor with skills in communication and marketing.</p>
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6.	<p>Minutes</p> <p>Governors agreed and approved the minutes of the 30 March 2022 as an accurate account of the meeting.</p> <p>Governors noted the PDF version of the minutes uploaded to TTG will now replace the signed version and will be available to auditors for inspection should the need arise.</p> <p>Governors noted all action points were completed.</p>
7.	<p>Report from Head</p> <p>Governors noted the written reports from DD and confirmed they had read them.</p> <p>DD summarised that there has been a very successful year; pedagogy and staffing have been addressed and, despite COVID, there have been successes. KS2 outcomes were positive compared to 2016-18, Trust and national results, and KS1, Phonics, EYFS, and Y4 times-tables were all successful.</p> <p>Overall, persistent absence (PA) was confirmed as 24.8% - in line with STEP and national data. Persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils is 23.2%. The EWO and Office Manager refine systems so that the data is more easily accessible in future.</p> <p>Governors noted that there were no bullying incidents recorded on CPOMS last year, and 12 this year, and asked why this was. It was explained that there were less children in school last year and, this year, children have been more open about reporting incidents and if any incidents were referred to by children as 'bullying' then this is how</p>

they would be recorded.. Once they were identified and investigated, the SLT believed they were not bullying, and there is not a bullying problem in the school. This will be addressed via PSHE, parents’ workshops etc.

Pupil voice about behaviour regulation was positive.

Number on roll for September has increased by 10 this year, to 185.

MM reported that SEND PA is above Trust average and national. There are key SEND families at the school who will be monitored and intervened with as needed. These families received early help intervention and case studies are available.

Update on AIP

DD reported that:

- the AIP has been RAG-rated and most targets have been met. Attendance and PA are an ongoing concern; there have been small improvements and each child represents a large percentage of the school population. Attendance will remain on the AIP
- Pupil articulation of learning needs refinement. Children are getting better at understanding questions and explaining learning. The pedagogical approach means this will be built on.
- Anti-racism will continue to be a priority in line with the STEP Compass priority. We are focussing on parental engagement to increase their engagement, staff to work towards achieving the Race Charter mark in the new AIP, and parental engagement will be developed to increase their awareness.
- The focus next year will be on consolidation of this year’s new strategies

MM explained that:

Writing at greater depth is a national issue and will be a focus of our AIP

- Key staff will study for National Professional Qualifications and an experienced strong leader from another STEP Academy has joined Westbridge and will be leading on English and KS1
- Work to the early years’ outdoor area is scheduled, and includes a timber trail, mud kitchen, sand tray. Some funds have been set aside to update outdoor areas and maximise learning opportunities. This will include playground markings, and an Early Years’ story telling area. In response to a question, it was confirmed that the toilets will be improved. Governors agreed that the enhanced environment will be good for the children and the community, as well as visitors/ prospective parents

Reflections on STEP Way statement

DD explained that he feels the statement encapsulates what leaders are trying to achieve – parental engagement will be built on next year. Governors agreed that feedback at the recent Governor Day showed that the statement is resonating and working well.

A governor asked if DD is pleased with the KS2 SATs results. DD confirmed that the children and staff have worked very hard to secure good outcomes. The cohort's Y5 was disrupted and the Trust has enabled a sense of urgency to be developed. Some children were only 2 marks away from greater depth. Governors noted the positives, and that all pupils are being brought up together, in line with the strategy. Governors are delighted with the results, which are a testament to the school's progress as part of STEP and bode well for next year.

DD reported that Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) was lower than expected but there are plans for next year. GPS was not the focus in the pandemic, though GPS at greater depth was better than expected. Governors asked what has been done to enable the good results to be achieved and it was explained that, in addition to the actions described in previous discussions, there has been monitoring and quality assurance, and pupil progress meetings, so that everyone is held to account.

A governor asked about vulnerable groups' data and it was explained that pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) achieved highly in writing at expected standard, at 75%, against an overall score of 69%. Governors noted that there must be more pupils with English as a first language at early stages struggling, than other EAL pupils, and how that will be addressed. DD explained that the category is based on what the parents write on the form. Many children do not have the typical problems as they have been spoken to in English from a young age and went through the nursery system. It was also explained that some non-EAL pupils have SEND/attendance issues. There are 26 EAL children at the school, but 12 have been born and raised here. Staff know the children well and there is a narrative behind the data. MM also explained that it can take 7 years for a child to acquire English language skills. One child joined this year, with English at an early stage of development.

Governors noted that SEND and PPG children achieved good results. DD explained that some reasons for children to be classified as SEND do not impact learning, and some children with SEMH (Social, Emotional, and Mental Health) concerns can perform well, academically. Some, with different problems, may never catch up to their peers due to the nature of their learning difficulty.

Governors asked about the KS1 results, and it was explained that staff are generally happy, as there was disruption due to COVID and changes of teachers last year. Gaps were consolidated to enable progress, and the class size increased from 18 to 22 children by the end of the year. 4 joined from abroad, 1 with learning difficulties. Those that joined from abroad the previous year have done very well. There is room to improve greater depth outcomes, but children do better the longer they are at the school. A governor asked if the data includes the children taken out and it was explained that, with children removed, the outcome was 68% - there will be an update

	<p>circulated. MM explained that KS1 scores were slightly low compared to the Trust average, due to the arrival of one child who had to be included in the data.</p> <p>Governors commended the excellent results and said that they look forward to how this will be communicated to prospective parents.</p> <p>Governors noted that the school has made huge progress against STEP standards and asked when OFSTED might come and how new colleagues were being prepared. DD explained that he would expect an inspection in September or October. 2 new staff have been in place for 6-8 weeks already and 2 are already with STEP. The year will start with recapping on prior learning. There is strong leadership and the middle leaders will be strengthened. Mentors for the new staff are proving to be successful; the new teachers will have a good knowledge of the school, and next year will be even better than this one.</p> <p>A governor described their recent experience of OFSTED at another school, explaining that the curriculum was a focus, and there was discussion of prior learning. Subject leaders were interviewed. It was explained that children at Westbridge have strategies to help them to keep track of their knowledge across the subjects. They always speak well about their learning and are also eloquent about consent and bullying. The Head of School explained that he expects a rigorous inspection, but the team are confident, committed and there is evidence to support the improvements that have been made.</p> <p>A governor asked how the new members of staff will be told about the extraordinary progress children have made, and DD explained that they see the routines and rise to expectations. There are induction processes and mentors, and people are held to account in a positive way. New staff are aware of the journey, and there will be ongoing supportive mechanisms. New staff are enthusiastic and motivated. MM added that, last term there was a meeting about the journey of WBA since joining STEP, which will be repeated in September. Governors noted that the staff do not appear to feel pressurised. Everything is secure and contained, with a safe, calm, and focused environment and culture. DD explained that staff are all very strong. Nothing new will be introduced next year, but some tweaks will be made to current practice.</p> <p>The staff governor explained that staff feel confident. They understand the journey the school has made, and the new staff will be able to develop subject knowledge. It may be positive for Early Career Teachers to have OFSTED soon. Phase meetings include discussions about OFSTED and look at the rationale for actions. The agenda has been simplified and this has brought strong outcomes. Staff know what their priorities are.</p> <p>The CofG thanked Heads for their reports.</p>	
8.	<p>Safeguarding and SEND</p> <p>Governor noted there were no reports available for this meeting, though RY has completed a report which was not shared due to timescales. RY explained that her</p>	

	<p>visit to YR showed that children were calm, focused, and purposeful while applying phonics in books. Staff training in SEND is up to date and the process of identifying needs is being followed well.</p> <p>Governors asked if the number of EHCPs is lower than national, and if this might increase. It was reported that there are 2/3 in process that are expected to be approved. One has been attending an hour a day to receive support and it is hoped they will move to a special school, as they are currently being educated a year group below chronological age. The 2 remaining applications should be processed soon. It was noted that these children are impacting on the attendance data.</p> <p>RY reported that she is in the process of completing the NSPCC safeguarding course. There will be a full safeguarding audit and SCR check in the autumn. There was a question about the safeguarding policy on the website, which expires in July. DD explained that the updated policy will be online tomorrow. Action: RY to add safeguarding training to her TTG profile.</p>	4
9.	<p>Standards, Curriculum & Pupil Premium Governor noted the standards visit report submitted by OW.</p> <p>OW explained that he completed a learning walk to look at enrichment and wider learning opportunities. DD thanked OW for the comprehensive and purposeful report and explained that the enrichment agenda will be built on next year and mistakes will be learned from, such as not having 2 events in the same day.</p> <p>Governors asked if anything is missing from the children’s experience, and it was explained that coastal visits will be planned to other STEP schools. These may include a stay overnight in a school hall. Funding opportunities for this will be explored. It is also planned to improve opportunities for children to swim which have been affected due to Covid and local availability.</p> <p>Governors commended the staff who take the children on trips, as this involves lots of work and organisation. It was confirmed that staff are willing to take children out and there have been good comments from the public. Sleep-ins, and PGL trips have been successful.</p>	
10.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement / Community Governors noted stakeholder engagement visit reports submitted by VH, who was impressed with pupil engagement on the learning walk they completed and reported that parents are impressed by and grateful for the range of opportunities for the children. It was also explained that parents welcome the chance to go into school, and the children also enjoy it. Some comments had been made about late notice for some events, though this was due to the weather and will be improved in future.</p> <p>Governors asked if there has been any progress on improving communications with parents, particularly those with poor literacy and EAL, which was discussed at the</p>	

	<p>March AC meeting. DD explained that the events this year have helped make inroads into the local community. Coffee mornings will be built upon and used to disseminate information more effectively than an information – packed newsletter might do. MM also reported that there is a Somali parent who has been very supportive of other parents and is willing to continue to support where they can especially with any language barriers.</p> <p>A governor asked if there has been any progress with building relationships with the Somali community and the Falcon Road mosque progress. It was explained that there are key link families to work with, as seen at the Eid celebration and culture day. The parents were grateful for the opportunity. It is hoped to build better links with the mosques and other places of worship.</p> <p>MM commented that the Cultural Day was amazing and a credit to the community. Children are proud to dress in their cultural clothing, and staff and outside visitors came and spoke to the children. Westbridge diversity is celebrated and MM was proud to be involved. Well done to the team.</p> <p>DD explained that the idea for the Cultural Day came from the Pupil Parliament and it was important to them to see it through to the end. The children showed good leadership skills.</p> <p>Governors asked if there will be an end of year newsletter, which was confirmed.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>RACE Charter Mark /Equalities</p> <p>DD explained that strengthening the curriculum has enabled a focus on countries, and community, and the events showed the Race Charter in action. Next steps will be more community involvement in assemblies and coffee mornings and building strong links with other academies in the Trust. There are lots of quality reading materials which will be shared.</p> <p>MM explained that there will be more discussion at Trust level, which will feed into governance.</p> <p>It was also suggested that filling the governor vacancies will present opportunities to improve diversity.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Governors in School</p> <p>Governors thanked DD and MM for the successful day, at which governors spoke to staff and pupils and saw the improvements that have been made.</p> <p>It was agreed to arrange the next Governor Day for Wednesday 16 November, which is two weeks before the AC meeting (30 November at 5pm). The timing of the 5 October was discussed and suggested to move to 5.30pm.</p> <p>Action: CS to liaise with SC2G around timings.</p> <p><i>Since this meeting was held, it is clear that the 5 October date had to move to 13 Oct to accommodate all parties and the 30 Nov meeting is changed to 24 Nov.</i></p>	<p>5</p>

	<p>Suggestions for the Governors day were made, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sport and the wider curriculum • meet Pupil Parliament • EY's outdoor provision • DD also to look at what he would like to showcase and come back to the governors. <p>It was suggested that governors may also like to complete link visits on that day ensuring the report is submitted 10 days before the meeting.</p> <p>It was reported that there will be an OFSTED preparation meeting in September, which OW and CS will attend.</p>	
13.	<p>Term Dates</p> <p>Governors noted the term dates for 2022-23 are on the school website.</p>	
STEP Up – We all succeed together		
14.	<p>Chair's Actions / Correspondences / Updates</p> <p>The CofG reported no action had been taken on behalf of Governors, and that she will write a note to parents and staff from the AC.</p> <p>Action: CofG to write a note to parents and staff from the AC</p> <p>The CofG reported that she has received the LA link adviser report, which was positive and endorsed improvements and progress made – the adviser has known the school on its journey and sees improvements.</p> <p>The CofG updated Governors on the Chairs' and Trustees' Forum held on 24 May 2022 and explained that the minutes are with the papers. It was explained that the chairs want to support each other more and CS invited suggestions from the board. Opportunities for governors to visit other STEP schools will be explored, possibly in the spring.</p> <p>Action: RY will prepare the meet the governor page for autumn 1.</p>	6
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STEP Ahead – We invest in our future		
15.	<p>Governor Training</p> <p>Governors noted the virtual STEP in-house training took place on 15 June 2022. It was explained that there are still question marks over the Schools Bill.</p> <p>The next virtual STEP Governor Training is scheduled for 14 September 2022 6pm. It was confirmed that this will have a safeguarding focus.</p> <p>Governors were invited to suggest future training focus areas.</p>	
16.	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>The next virtual Academy Committee meeting will be confirmed.</p>	
17.	<p>Any Other Business (people)</p> <p>There were no items raised at the start of the meeting.</p>	

18.	<p>Closure</p> <p>There being no further business to discuss, the CofG thanked DD for the work completed over the year, and the good KS2 results. Governors agreed that school is about more than results and governors have seen happy children thriving in their learning environment, while being pushed to be the best versions of themselves.</p> <p>MM thanked governors for their support, and particularly the CofG, for her networking and support for the school.</p> <p>Governors were invited to attend the sports day on the 21 July 2022.</p> <p>The CofG closed the meeting at 18.36</p>	
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Item	Action Points including questions for Governance / Executive Teams and Trustees	Owner
1.	To update TTG for RY – Safeguarding Lead and EW well-being.	SC2G
2.	To share draft parent and staff nominations forms when completed.	SC2G
3.	To recruit an Associate Governor with skills in communication and marketing.	SC2G
4.	To add safeguarding training to TTG	RY
5.	To discuss timing of meeting scheduled for 5 October	CofG
6.	Write a note to parents and staff from the AC	CofG
7.	Prepare ‘meet the governor’ page for Autumn 1	RY

These minutes are a true and accurate account of the meeting.	
Name	Carina Saner
Senior Governance Clerk	Lynn Bruce
Date	24 September 2022