

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXCALIBUR LOCAL  
GOVERNING BOARD HELD AT THE SCHOOL  
ON 20<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023 at 17.30.**

Name	Governor Category	Designated Role	End of Term of Office
Gail Whittingham	Co-opted Governor	Vice Chair	26 June 2026
Juliet Jones	Headteacher	Headteacher	n/a
Gill Burgess	Co-opted Governor		1 December 2024
Rachel Hackney	Co-opted Governor		3 July 2025
Simon Cotterill	Co-opted Governor		24 November 2023
Philip Yeomans	Parent Governor		5 May 2026
Rachel Morrison	Parent Governor		20 March 2027
Anna McArdle	Staff Governor		24 September 2023
Sue Lambeth	Clerk		n/a
Yvonne Hilditch	SBM		n/a

**PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

	Item
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies and Any Other Business</b></p> <p>The Vice Chair welcomed governors, Louise Gohr (Chancery CEO) and the new Parent Governor Rachel Morrison to the meeting and introductions were made.</p> <p>Apologies received from Jo Bain, Kate Jepson and Liz Martindale (Director) were accepted. Serena Hallam was not in attendance.</p> <p>No other items of Part One business were requested.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Staff/Pupil Presentations</b></p> <p><u>Pupil Safeguarding Team</u> The presentation by the team was carried forward to the Summer 1 meeting.</p> <p><u>Computing Lead</u> Rachel Hilditch presented the new computing curriculum in the school, the aim which was to prepare pupils for the future and equip them with knowledge and skills for life, to develop creativity, resilience and problem-solving and critical thinking skills. A half-termly skills and digital literacy knowledge map had been produced. A key focus was that pupils should know how to stay safe online and resources from the National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE) were used. The range of topics encouraged progression across the key strands of computer science, digital literacy and information technology.</p>

	<p>Each class had one session in the IT suite per week and children had access to further technologies such as hybrids, iPads, programmable toys such as BeeBots, sferos, crumbles and Microbits. Pupils had ample opportunities to apply their learning across the curriculum, and equipment and staff training were kept up to date. Training was undertaken and cascaded to other staff.</p> <p>One hour lesson per week was devoted purely to the computing curriculum, and the work produced uploaded to the student shared drive. A deep dive had taken place and pupils were able to verbalise what they had done. Pupil voice revealed that all pupils enjoyed computing lessons, would like longer lessons and Key Stage 2 (KS2) pupils felt challenged.</p> <p>Work was ongoing on an online safety programme to be introduced into computing and PSHE. In this, key issues such as digital communication, cyberbullying, online safety, security, plagiarism and social media would be addressed. A virtual reality workshop was planned for 22<sup>nd</sup> May with virtual reality headsets to immerse pupils in their History and Geography topics e.g. Vikings. The work of various year groups was shared with governors.</p> <p>Governors were assured that assessments took place at the end of each unit of work and medium and long term plans were in place.</p> <p><b>Q: Are resources shared between groups?</b> A: Yes, hybrids are shared across classes.</p> <p><b>Q: Are computing objectives also taught through topics?</b> A: Yes. Moving forwards cross curricular links will be looked at more creatively.</p> <p>The Head advised that pupils were tackling programming and were extremely confident and capable. Progression across year groups was in place together with a cohesive approach.</p> <p>Governors thanked Rachel for her presentation.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Compliance Items</b></p> <p><u>Conflicts of interest</u> There were no potential pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest between an individual and the governing board as a whole in connection with the business to be discussed during the meeting.</p> <p><u>Membership</u> <b>The appointment of the new Parent Governor, Rachel Morrison, was approved</b> with effect from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The SBM confirmed that Disclosure and Barring Service checks were underway.</p> <p><b>The re-appointment of Jo Bain to the LGB was confirmed from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023.</b></p>

	<p>A prospective governor Tom Egglely, a former local Headteacher would be visiting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March with a view to attending the next meeting. It was felt that his skillset would enhance the group.</p> <p>Mike Cross was currently taking leave of absence due to family circumstances.</p> <p><u>Outstanding Trust Governor Compliance</u> All governor profiles were up to date on Trust Governor.</p> <p><u>Chair's Action</u> The Chair reported that she had taken no actions since the last meeting but had taken part in the Headteacher interim performance management review.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Part One minutes, matters arising and actions</b></p> <p>The Part One minutes of the Spring 1 LGB meeting were reviewed, <b>agreed</b> to be an accurate account.</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the Spring 1 LGB meeting.</p> <p>Actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair requested further comments from governors on Priority 7 of the SSDP.</li> <li>• The pupil safeguarding team would be invited to the Summer 1 LGB meeting.</li> <li>• The pupil voice around OPAL with less confident children would take place early in the summer term.</li> <li>• A meeting with the Pupil Premium lead had taken place.</li> <li>• MC would be reminded to complete and record statutory safeguarding training.</li> <li>• A meeting with the Head and the LGB Chair had taken place to discuss the Chancery top slice and the CMAT Top Slice Explained document had been produced and uploaded to this meeting. The CEO assured governors that the CMAT Board of Directors reviewed the top slice each year and also in between if necessary. The document showed top-slice spending at the current time. The LGB re-iterated their concerns in light of potential future cost savings necessary at the school. YH confirmed that the budget was created on an annual basis which then determined the level of top slice, and this information was presented to the Heads and then the Directors. At that point there was an appeal mechanism. The leadership of the trust and the central team were looking to support schools in making savings, and the CEO confirmed that the trust only took what was absolutely necessary. Unfortunately savings needed to be made nationally, as many costs were outside the control of the trust.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>ACTION:</b> To advise Jenny or the HT of intended attendance at the Chancery Governor Conference on 9<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To visit school as much as possible and meet staff and pupils. (all)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To review the SEF and send comments to the Chair. (all)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To send comments on Priority 7 of the SSDP and the diary of reports from governors to the Chair. (All ex SC and GB)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To invite the pupil safeguarding team to the Summer 1 LGB meeting.(HT)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To undertake pupil voice around OPAL with less confident children in the summer term. (JB)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To complete and record statutory safeguarding training. (MC)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To remind MC to complete and record evidence of the completion of statutory safeguarding training. (SBM)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To check the SCR re GB's completion of safeguarding training. (SBM)</p> <p>The format of governor visits to the school was discussed and shared. If in person visits were not possible Teams calls would also be acceptable. New governors were invited to accompany more experienced governors on their visits.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Headteacher Report</u></b></p> <p>The Headteacher report had been made available on TTG, and the Head requested questions.</p> <p><b>Q: Is one pupil still attending alternative provision?</b> A: Yes, this placement is due to end this term. Weekly reports have been given and weekly visits have taken place. Transition back into school is planned for the summer 1 term and the school will work with Cornerstones sensitively. A graduated approach will be adopted.</p> <p><b>Q: Is staff absence higher than last year?</b> A: A discussion will take place under Part 2 of the meeting. A comparison with other trust schools is not available.</p> <p><b>Q: What is the school view of the impact of the Read, Write Inc. scheme?</b> A: School is pleased with the impact which will be visible in the data capture taking place in the current week. The Reception class is doing particularly well. Phonics screening has taken place using the 2019 paper with Year 1, and an aspirational but realistic target of 90% has been set. Interventions are in place for pupils who require them and RWI is delivered for 40 minutes each day. Regular monitoring is taking place and the school is working with Lacey Green around coaching staff in the scheme's delivery.</p> <p><b>Q: What level of attendance is classed as persistent absence?</b> A: Below 90% attendance.</p> <p><b>Q: Is there any correlation nationally between safeguarding and persistent absence?</b></p>

	<p>A: National data is unavailable but it is not necessarily the case for the pupils at the school.</p> <p><b>Q: Are patterns of absence investigated?</b> A: Yes. Steps are in place for pupils whose absence is anxiety related. The LA are drafting a joint letter for parents of pupils with persistent absence to be signed by themselves and Heads. The vulnerable pupil list is updated in light of attendance and all pupils are monitored. Fixed penalty notices have been issued by Cheshire East (CE).</p> <p><b>Q: Has the school received support from CE?</b> A: The local authority has an Attendance Officer in post; however, the authority had other priorities as well as attendance. School is providing bespoke support.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the school bespoke approach to attendance and its priority was at extremely high level. The Head advised that persistent absence nationally was 23.1%, compared to 7% at Excalibur. There is no appreciable difference in attendance for PP and non-PP pupils.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b><u>Finance</u></b> The SBM reported that the January management accounts were available on TTG.</p> <p>The latest forecast was a deficit of £48k compared to the original forecast of £10k deficit. Not included were the suggested increment for non-teaching staff of £1925 and the teacher pay award which was likely to be higher than predicted last year. All of these had now been built into the February account which would show a deficit of £55k. Further detailed accounts had been attached to the meeting.</p> <p>The virements agreed by governors after the previous meeting and those in the January management accounts agreed by directors in their Finance Committee meeting were shown and would be recommended to the forthcoming CMAT Directors' meeting.</p> <p>The 5-year forecast was also included, together with an explanation of account codes. The forecast for 2023/24 was a loss of £61k. A Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) would be received for the summer term and a complete academic year which was intended to cover increases in power costs. After that the amount would be absorbed into the General Annual Grant (GAG) funding. The school was forecast to run out of funds in August 2024.</p> <p>A meeting to discuss the budget for 2023/24 had taken place during the previous week.</p> <p><b>Q: What are Friends of Excalibur currently raising money for?</b></p>

	<p>A: They raised funds through a disco, a bake sale and an Easter hat parade in order to help to pay for the life education van and other extra activities to enhance the experience of being at Excalibur School.</p> <p>Alsager Ladies Circle had offered to assist with reading for pleasure, and the possibility of a reading caravan and other options were being explored.</p> <p>GB arrived at the meeting at 18.21.</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Health and Safety (H&amp;S)</b> There were no urgent H&amp;S issues to report.</p> <p>The Chair had completed a H&amp;S walk during the previous week and a report would be provided.</p> <p>The March 2023 H&amp;S compliance report from the Every system had been added to TTG to show the mandatory compliance situation. Governors' attention was drawn to the compliance activities added by the trust to ensure schools were carrying out their mandatory compliance responsibilities, and YH confirmed that school items were green or amber. Amber items were those requiring attention within the forthcoming week. YH advised that checks on the system were carried out on a weekly basis in order to identify ambers and reds, and items turned green once action had been taken and evidence supplied.</p> <p>An external fire risk assessment had taken place as discussed at the previous meeting. The two issues raised were to be followed up with the Site Manager and uploaded to Every and would be highlighted until completed. YH confirmed that the current fire risk was considered acceptable. Currently a school H&amp;S report on a trust-wide format similar to that of the HT report was being devised which would show all compliance issues for each term and which would be presented to governors on a termly basis. Details of mandatory training e.g. legionella would be included.</p>
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Reports from Governors with Specific Responsibilities</b> <u>Statutory</u> <u>Pupil Premium (PP)</u> GW reported that she had met with Mrs Rogers and examined the progress of those pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding through the reports provided. The breakdown of expenditure was included in the PP strategy document on the school website. Details of individual support for pupils had been discussed, and progress in individual development was included.</p> <p><b>Q: What is the reason for the large amount within the PP budget put aside for Continuing Professional Development (CPD), recruitment and retention?</b> A: The headings of recruitment and retention were part of the compulsory standard DfE template; however, the main expenditure relates to staff training.</p>

	<p><b><u>Special Educational Needs and / or Disability (SEND)</u></b>          SC had discussed SEND from a maths perspective during his link governor visit, in particular the challenges for SEND pupils. Natalie Packer had delivered CPD to the trust, and the Head and SEND Lead confirmed that all teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) had ownership of it. Additionally SEND was tested on School Improvement Visits and was a priority for the school and the governors. AM (SENCO) was thanked for her work and she confirmed that regular SEND review meetings took place and were purposeful and that the staff were well prepared. The SEND register was a fluid document and greater professional discussion was taking place in the school and staff had greater understanding.</p> <p><b><u>Others</u></b>          The maths visit report from the link governor was attached to the meeting and had been discussed at the previous meeting.</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b>          All safeguarding matters were included in the HT report.</p>
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Staff Wellbeing Update</b>          The management of staff wellbeing was continually an ongoing balance. School had a focus on reducing teacher workload. The DfE Teacher Workload Reduction Toolkit was to be examined by SLT and it was always a standing agenda item. Coaching was available across the trust for all staff, and wellbeing was always a consideration, such as not scheduling staff meetings in weeks with parents evenings.</p>
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Chancery Update</b>          Governors were advised that the purpose of this item on the LGB agenda was for governors to be aware of the benefits to the school from belonging to Chancery Multi Academy Trust, as well as receiving a termly report from the Governance and Compliance Officer on developments and activities across the trust.</p> <p>The Head reported that writing training from Jonathan Riley was impacting positively on outcomes with a more consistent approach in year groups. Leads had worked with class teachers where necessary. Maths CPD from Anthony Reddy was also impacting with resources purchased being used appropriately.</p> <p>The Assistant Head was working with the Chancery Deputy Head group and a deep dive had taken place led by the trust Head Teacher group under the guidance of Helen Scott, the external Chancery School Improvement Partner. The Assistant Head had been able to see the good curricula across the trust and had disseminated findings to other areas in the school. The CEO confirmed that this had built capacity within and outside the schools.</p> <p>A meeting of the Chancery LGB Chairs had taken place as had a meeting of the SEND link governors.</p>

<p><b>12. School Improvement</b></p>	<p>Pam Simpson, Headteacher from Monks Coppenhall School, had visited the school and carried out a geography deep dive, the report for which was attached to the meeting. The visit which involved the geography lead had been very useful and fed into the school's work on foundation subjects to ensure their rigour, robustness and progressive nature.</p> <p>The SIP visit by LG would take place on 18<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p><b>Q: Did the geography deep dive confirm the school assessment?</b> A: Yes. It was very much in line with the school assessment. The Kapow scheme of work has been used to support the class teachers and the progressive nature of the subject is visible across the school. Time for embedding will be required, after which improvement will be seen. The approach is now more discrete than the previous topic-based strategy which results in greater visibility of progression in geography and history. From the summer term all classes would receive history teaching in the same half term which will enable governors to see subject progression in displays in corridors. A visit to Monks Coppenhall is scheduled to see their displays produced. Displays do not involve additional work for staff.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the triangulation of foundation subject work was valuable. Knowledge organisers were being developed which would form the assessment document.</p> <p><b>Q: Why did the deep dive identify differences between year groups?</b> A: Feedback has gone back to class teachers. Whilst the pupil understanding of knowledge organisers was not full, their retention of the learning was.</p> <p><b>Q: Who then tests the changes put in place based on feedback?</b> A: The Assistant Head will be doing this as part of the deep dives in order to provide continual triangulation.</p>
<p><b>13. Governor Development / Training</b></p>	<p>Governors were reminded to advise Jenny Whiston or the SBM of intended attendance at the Chancery Trust Conference on 9<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p>GW confirmed she had completed part two of the Pupil Premium training.</p>
<p><b>14. School Policies</b></p>	<p>The SBM confirmed there were no school policies for approval at this meeting.</p> <p>The policy compliance listing was attached. Black indicated trust policies, and all others were school policies. The SBM confirmed that all documents were in date.</p> <p>The School Business Continuity Plan would be presented to the next meeting.</p>



	<p><b>Q: What is the relevance of documents indicated red for governors?</b>  A: This shows who has read the docs. The 'valid until date' was more relevant.</p> <p>Governors would continue to approve policies at LGB meetings.</p>
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Next meeting</b>  The dates of the next meetings of the LGB were confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer 1 – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023</li> <li>• Summer 2 – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023</li> </ul>
<p><b>16.</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  There was no further business to discuss.</p>
<p><b>17.</b></p>	<p><b>Impact statement</b>  <u>Impact of the work of the governing board on the pupils of Excalibur School since the last meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors agreed that the computing presentation demonstrated changes for pupils and governors were assured of progression, up-to-date IT provision and hard and software.</li> <li>• The maths governor visit report had highlighted the SEND discussions which had taken place and gave governors confirmation that the SEND approach was robust and challenging at appropriate levels. Governors were assured that assessment of SEND was also discussed and school recognition of the importance of accuracy to inform future teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Discussion around persistent absence and disadvantaged pupils gave governors an in depth understanding of the processes in place to ensure the best possible care for the pupils.</li> </ul>

AA left and the Part One meeting closed at 19.04.