



**MINUTES OF THE
DYSART SCHOOL LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING
HELD VIRTUALLY ON
WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH 2023 AT 6.00PM**

Members of the LGB in attendance: Jackie Van-West (JVW) – Appointed Chair for this meeting, Leigh Edser (LE) - Principal, Tony Williams (TW), Patrick Mazzotta (PM) – joined at 6.10pm [items 7-15 only], Daniel Masillamani (DM), and Sadie Cawood (SC).

Also in attendance: Katie Swire (KS) - Clerk to the LGB, Emmet Murphy (EM) - Dysart Vice Principal [left the meeting at 7.25pm].

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jackie Van-West welcomed everyone to the meeting. Noting that Thowheetha Shaah had sent her apologies, the LGB agreed that JVW would act as Chair for this meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The LGB received and approved the apologies for absence from Thowheetha Shaah.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The LGB noted that there were no declarations of interest to be made.

4. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i. Governors noted that following a staff governor election held in December 2022, in which no applications were received, there remains a vacancy for a staff governor on the LGB. The Principal provided a further update, noting that she will follow up the vacancy and speak to staff members directly to see if anyone wishes to apply for the role. A further update on recruitment to the staff governor vacancy will be provided at the meeting in the summer term. **Action: Clerk/Principal.**

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The LGB received and approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022, circulated as **Enclosure 05**, as an accurate record.

6. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

The LGB noted that there were no matters arising.

7. a) PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The LGB received and noted the Principal's report, circulated as **Enclosure 07a**.

The Principal invited comments and questions from governors, which were noted below.

TW referred to the commentary around staffing and asked LE if the school asks departing members of staff to complete an exit questionnaire. LE noted that the school has previously had a practice of asking teachers who have resigned to undertake an exit interview, but this has not been in place for all staff. LE explained that a new online exit questionnaire has been developed centrally by OHCAT and this will now be used for all departing members of staff, to collate and gather information and identify any trends. LE further noted that common themes arising from Dysart teaching exit interviews have centred around lifestyle changes, pay, and travel. Departing staff have not expressed any dissatisfaction about the school to suggest any internal retention issues. Instead, the issues raised have related to external factors that are beyond the control of the school such as staff relocating.

PM asked if the school offers sabbaticals or extended periods of unpaid leave. LE confirmed that the school does support periods of unpaid leave and sabbaticals, where operationally possible, and members of staff have taken sabbaticals in the past. LE added that sabbaticals are discussed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that consistency of teaching and learning provision is maintained for pupils. Any sabbatical is only supported by the school for one year as staffing positions cannot be held open for longer as this can be unsettling for pupils.

b) [SEF](#)

The LGB received and noted the SEF document, circulated as **Enclosure 07b**.

TW commented on the reference to staff responding to increasing challenges within the school environment and asked for further detail on what challenges are being presented. EM explained that the increasing challenges relate to wellbeing and safeguarding, and this is reflective of a national picture, in which safeguarding and mental health concerns have increased following the Covid-19 pandemic. EM noted that there are currently three pupils on Child Protection plans and this is the highest number that the school has had at Dysart. The cases are extremely complex and there is an impact on staff in school to manage associated mental health and safeguarding concerns related to each case. LE added that there is a similar pattern across other SEND schools with an increase in mental health and safeguarding concerns and this has been compounded by the cost-of-living increases, particularly for SEND families, who are often already isolated and financially vulnerable due to one parent having to stay at home for primary carer reasons. These factors have contributed to existing challenges for SEND families.

TW referred to the SEF and the assessment of the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning as outstanding and asked who is involved in the assessment process. LE noted that internal assessments are carried out by members of the SLT as part of a continued process of self-evaluation. TW asked if there are opportunities for external validation to further evaluate

progress within the school. LE noted that the school has recently been visited by David Scott, who is a practising Ofsted Inspector and works with all OHCAT schools to benchmark progress and development areas as part of a coaching model. The recent feedback from David Scott was very helpful and the school received positive feedback in respect of how the triangulation of evidence is embedded and is apparent in all functions of the school, demonstrating that what is documented in written protocol is happening in practice. LE noted that in addition to external visits, staff are in contact with OHCAT colleagues to share best practice, as well as members of the OHCAT Senior Executive Team who visited the school, including the CEO, John Prior, who had a recent tour of both Apollo sites.

8. SAFEGUARDING

- a) The LGB received the latest version of the **Dysart school Safeguarding and Well Being Offer**, circulated as **Enclosure 08a**. JVW thanked LE and EM for compiling such a comprehensive report, noting that the level of detail in the report demonstrates the number of safeguarding initiatives in place, as well as the breadth of work around well-being that is being undertaken and developed within the school.

PM asked whether the school has considered developing mechanism to share best practice with mainstream schools to offer guidance on presenting a school's safeguarding and well-being offer. LE noted that as a school, Dysart provides lots of outreach opportunities to schools within the local community and receives funding for this work. Consideration has not been made to develop a bespoke coaching programme based on the Dysart offer, however, there may be an opportunity to investigate this in the future. LE added that in her role as Principal, she is involved in a number of working groups with a selection of mainstream schools, and this provides some opportunity to share best practice that has been developed in school.

- b) The LGB received and noted the **Dysart school Safeguarding Audit**, circulated as **Enclosure 08b**.

PM asked about the fire evacuation procedures in school, specifically, whether staff receive refresher training and whether procedures are reviewed and changed in line with developments on the school site to meet the needs of pupils. LE explained that the school runs termly fire drills to test the evacuation procedure. All staff are aware of the existing procedure and external safety walks are held to test the operation of the evacuation procedure. LE confirmed that the fire brigade has access to the blueprints for the school premises and decisions on whether to move pupils in the event of a fire drill are taken in accordance with the location of a fire to ensure that the needs of pupils are considered and balanced against the safety requirements arising from a fire drill.

TW referred to the Safeguarding Audit and noted that it was not clear when the last fire evacuation was carried out and whether a test drill had been undertaken in January 2023. LE noted that a test had been conducted this

year and agreed to check the date of the last fire drill with the school Site Team. **Action: Principal.**

9. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR VISITS:

- a) The LGB received and following portfolio reports:
- Teaching and Learning, circulated as **Enclosure 09aii.**
 - Health and Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding, circulated as **Enclosure 09iii.**
 - Finance and Resources, circulated as **Enclosure 09aiv.**
 - HR and Organisational Development, circulated as **Enclosure 09av.**

The Finance portfolio governor provided an additional verbal summary to the written report, and following questions, governors noted that:

- i. The budget deficit increased considerably and sat at £152k at the end of January 2023. This is attributed, in the main, to the exponential rise in energy and heating costs, as well as the increase to teaching and support staff salaries, agreed nationally, which was significantly above what was included in the budget forecast, with an 8% increase agreed nationally for support staff and 5% agreed for teaching staff.
- ii. Pay increases for teaching staff are still in dispute and may yet rise pending further industrial action and the outcome of further national negotiations with trade unions.
- iii. An additional £50,000 is not shown in the budget deficit for the intake of four new pupils, and this will be included in the next set of management accounts.
- iv. The ratio of expenditure on staff costs currently sits at 87%, which is above the original rate set at 82%. It is forecast that the current rate will reduce to 85% by the end of the financial year.
- v. The school currently has 44 days of financial reserves; this is forecasted to rise to 58 by the end of the financial year and sits comfortably within the 45-60 days target set by OHCAT.
- vi. A centralised Procurement Team has now been set up to gain value for money for all OHCAT schools, particularly for agency workers, which is one of the biggest procurement areas for schools. Centralised procurement arrangements are also in place for catering and cleaning services and these services are closely monitored by the procurement team to ensure adherence to service agreements and cost effectiveness.

The LGB reviewed the HR portfolio report and the key points raised, and following questions around staff survey feedback on whether staff feel valued, and general staff morale, governors noted that:

- i. Staff survey results around whether staff feel valued were spilt, with a percentage of staff indicating that they were happy, engaged, and feeling valued, and another proportion feeling that they were not always listened too in school.
- ii. Following an analysis of the survey results, the SLT held a meeting with staff to respond to some of the concerns raised in the survey, particularly around pay for support staff. LE explained to support staff that pay

structures are nationally agreed and salaries cannot be increased any further.

- iii. Support staff have been reminded of opportunities to increase their working hours and salaries, such as additional hours available through after school clubs.
- iv. Staff participated in a brainstorming session to outline how the school can support staff and reinforce how they are valued, and through this staff were reminded of the comprehensive well-being offer available to them, which will now be highlighted in a school newsletter to ensure that all staff are aware of the benefits and support services on offer.
- v. There will also be a focus on specific staff roles across the school to ensure that staff at all levels understand each role within the school and the responsibilities associated with those roles to develop a sense of value for everyone working at the school.
- vi. Staff morale and comradery was impacted by strict class bubbles implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic. This reduced the opportunity for wider team working and therefore the SLT have now introduced a series of internal team building events, as well as wider networking opportunities to reinforce links with local partner schools.
- vii. Staff have been reassured that members of the SLT are accessible and are on call to support staff throughout the day, where needed.
- viii. Support and appreciating the value of staff has been demonstrated through the school actively supporting staff who participated in recent industrial action linked to the national pay dispute.

b) Other visit reports

It was noted that several governors came into school for a series of governor's day events held in February. This was a very positive and worthwhile event that allowed governors to meet with staff and see teaching and learning activities across the school and have the opportunity to network with fellow governors on the LGB. PM noted that he visited Saturn class as part of the scheduled governor's events and the visit was inspiring; the pupils were receptive and friendly to visitors.

PM noted his intention to carry out a portfolio visit after Easter and asked whether the focus of the Business Development and Marketing role was mainly around fundraising. LE noted that the role has largely been focused around internal and external communication strategies and the school website. The Clerk added that it is proposed that the portfolio role will change to Community Engagement and Marketing as part of the governance consultation that will be discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting in July. The Clerk agreed to check whether a new role descriptor will be drafted, in line with the proposed change to the title of the portfolio role. **Action: Clerk.**

10. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- a) Governors noted that the deadline for completion of Annual Safeguarding training was 31 January 2023. Records of completion have been reviewed by the Governance team in line with governors declared

training records and all outstanding safeguarding training should be completed by the end of April 2023. **Action: Governors.**

- b) Governors noted that they should complete an additional safeguarding training module on the [Prevent Duty](#) and complete this online via the link to The Key training platform on Governor Hub by the end of April 2023. **Action: All Governors.**
- c) The LGB noted that all governors should log any training undertaken and record this on their individual profile page on Governor Hub.
- d) The LGB noted that governors should review and monitor specific training needs and provide feedback to the Clerk on any training and development requirements as appropriate.
- e) The LGB noted that the following optional online training modules are available to all governors to support further development:
 - [Induction for academy governors on local governing bodies](#) (The Key)
 - [Ofsted- Inspection Framework](#) (NGA Learning link)
 - [Holding to Account: How to question & Challenge](#) (NGA Learning Link)
 - [Monitoring and Evaluation](#) (NGA Learning Link)

11. FINANCE AND FUNDING

The LGB received and noted the:

- i. Dysart Management Accounts circulated as **Enclosure 11i.**
- ii. Dysart Summary movements report circulated as **Enclosure 11ii.**

12. OHC&AT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- i. The LGB noted that the following Family policies and procedures were approved by the OHC&AT Board on 9 December 2022 and are available to view on [GovernorHub](#):
 - Child Protection, Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Anti-Radicalisation Policy
 - Educational Visits Policy
 - Families and Visitors Code of Conduct
 - Risk Assessment Policy
 - Safeguarding Supervision Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - 16-19 Bursary Policy
 - CCTV Policy
 - Charging and Remissions Policy
 - Complaints Policy (OHCAT)
 - Complaints Policy (OHC)
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Data Protection: Practical guidance for staff
 - Fundraising Policy
 - Guidance for staff on use of photos and videos

- Investment Policy
 - Student Financial Support Funding Policy (OHC)
 - LGPS Employer Discretions Policy
 - Lone Working Policy
 - Recruitment & Selection Policy
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Fire Policy
 - Legionella Policy
- ii. The LGB received and **approved** the local Dysart School policies and procedures, as follows:
- a. Anti-Bullying Policy, circulated as **Enclosure 12iia.**
 - b. Attendance Policy, circulated as **(Enclosure 12iib.**
 - c. Behaviour Policy, circulated as **Enclosure 12iic.**
 - d. Exams Policy, circulated as **Enclosure 12iid.**
 - e. Missing Child Procedure, circulated as **Enclosure 12iie.**
 - f. Online Safety Policy, circulated as **Enclosure 12iif.**
 - g. Relationships and Sex education Policy, circulated as **Enclosure 12iig.**
 - h. SEND Policy, circulated as **Enclosure 12iih.**
 - i. Admissions Procedure, circulated as **Enclosure 12ii i.**

PM asked if the Missing Child Procedure has been enacted yet and if so, whether there are any learning points from the procedure to be followed. LE confirmed that the school has not been required to enact the procedure.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

PM asked whether there were opportunities for business development internally within the school or across the wider trust. LE agreed to follow up this query with the appropriate member of staff within the OHCAT team.

Action: Principal.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Governors noted the date of the final LGB meeting of the 2022-23 academic year as follows:

- **Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 5pm (virtual)**

15. CONFIDENTIALITY

The LGB agreed that there were no items deemed confidential or to be excluded from the published minutes.

Meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Agenda item	Action	By whom	By When
04i	Update on Staff Governor recruitment to be provided at next LGB meeting	Clerk/ Principal	28 June 2023
08b	Date of fire evacuation test to be confirmed.	Principal	Asap

09	Clerk to check whether a role descriptor is available for the new Community Engagement & Marketing portfolio role.	Clerk	28 June 2023
10a	All governors to ensure that they have completed their annual safeguarding training and logged this on their governor hub training profile.	Governors (as appropriate)	End of April 2023
10b	All Governors to completed Prevent training via the Key and accessed through Governor Hub.	All Governors	End of April 2023
13	LE to find contact details of appropriate colleague within the OHCAT team to discuss potential business development opportunities.	Principal	End of April 2023