



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF CONGLETON PRIMARY ACADEMY TRUST LTD
T/A MARLFIELDS PRIMARY ACADEMY
ON WEDNESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Jane Garnett	(JG)	Member
	Margaret Gartside	(MG)	Member
	Gary Provis	(GP)	Member
TRUSTEES PRESENT:	Margaret Gartside	(MG)	Chair
	Gary Provis	(GP)	Vice Chair
	Sandie Isherwood	(SI)	Headteacher
	Sofia Angelara	(SA)	Co-opted Trustee
	Clare Foster	(CF)	Co-opted Trustee
	Chris Neild	(CN)	Co-opted Trustee
	Jessica Rosson	(JR)	Parent Trustee
	Zoe Griffiths	(ZG)	Parent Trustee
	Kelly Vincent	(KV)	Co-opted Trustee
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Sarah Lomas		Clerk to governors
	Peter Atkinson	(PA)	Auditor (Jackson Stephens)

MINUTES: PART ONE: NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

The meeting commenced at 5:45pm.

ITEM		ACTION
1.	WELCOME	
2.	<p>APOLOGIES AND ATTENDANCE</p> <p>a) Apologies were received and accepted from Michael Wall.</p> <p>Paper copies of meeting papers were requested but unavailable for the meeting. It was requested that the meeting be held in a classroom going forward to enable the interactive whiteboard to be used to display the meeting papers.</p> <p>ACTION: Future meetings to be held in a classroom with access to an interactive whiteboard.</p> <p>b) Governor attendance was reviewed and it was concluded that there were no actions to be taken. Attendance would continue to be monitored and governors noted that three consecutive absences at Trust Board meetings can lead to removal from the Board.</p>	SI
3.	<p>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations made or conflicts of interest with the business of the meeting declared by governors.</p>	
4.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no other items of business tabled for discussion at this meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR</p> <p>a) MG was nominated as Chair of the trust board. No other nominations were received. Following a vote MG was duly elected as Chair of the Trust Board for a one-year term of office.</p> <p>b) GP was nominated as Vice chair of the trust board. No other nominations were received. Following a vote GP was duly elected as Vice Chair of the trust board for a one-year term of office.</p>	



	<p>A discussion took place regarding succession planning and governors were encouraged to shadow Chair and Vice Chair roles going forward with the intention that MG and GP would step down as trustees but continue in their role as members.</p> <p>It was noted that governors can take on additional responsibilities before taking on a leadership role and that this applies to other roles within the board such as Chairs and Vice Chairs of the standing committees.</p> <p>It was commented that governor numbers are stable at present and governor attendance has been good. It was emphasised that the Chair and Vice Chair understand how busy people are with their lives outside of school but there is a reliance on current members to put themselves forward for leadership roles in the future.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>a) Governors were updated on changes to the membership of the board as follows: MR has contacted MG and SI to request a leave of absence to the end of the academic year due to working commitments which have resulted in her being unable to commit fully to the role of trustee. Governors approved the leave of absence for MR to be reviewed at the trust board meeting in the summer term 2024. ACTION: Add review of MR's role of governor to the summer term meeting 2024.</p> <p>b) It was noted that there are two vacancies for trustees and that adverts have been issued for these roles. It was agreed that a review of the advert content would be undertaken to ensure that this is relevant to the current vacancies. ACTION: Forward the advert text for trustee vacancies to MG, GP and SI for review. ACTION: Continue to monitor the live adverts and report back on any expressions of interest.</p> <p>Q: Could the vacancies be advertised on the school website and on Facebook? A: Yes, this is possible. ACTION: Add governor adverts to the school website and to the school Facebook page.</p> <p>SA confirmed that she had emailed the clerk immediately prior to the meeting to state her intention to step down from the board. Governors offered their support to SA and enquired as to the reasons for stepping down and whether any actions could be taken to support her to continue in her role as trustee.</p> <p>Q: What are the main areas of concern in considering resigning? A: It has been difficult to find time to read the papers ahead of meetings and this causes a feeling of being unprepared. SA stated that she was not certain that she brought value to the meetings.</p> <p>Governors reassured SA that her questioning is good and that it is extremely useful to have a viewpoint from outside of education which SA brings to the board. It was expressed that SA is early in her tenure as governor and that experience will be built over time. SA was reassured that her contributions are valuable and even governors with significant experience meet challenges due to the changing nature of education.</p> <p>Governors offered their support and requested that SA consider any areas of interest she may like to develop and to make a final decision following further consideration. It was agreed that SA would take some further time to consider matters but that there were difficulties in trying to balance her workload and family commitments. ACTION: SA to contact MG regarding governor role.</p> <p>c) Governors noted that there are no terms of office that are due to expire before the next meeting.</p> <p>d) The school confirmed that they are responsible for updating GIAS with any changes to membership and that GIAS was up to date.</p> <p>e) Succession planning was discussed under Item 5 with governors encouraged to consider shadowing leadership roles going forward.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk Clerk</p> <p>SI</p> <p>SA</p>



7.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>a) The minutes from the previous Trust Board meeting on 28.06.23 were confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Governors approved the minutes. A copy of the minutes was signed by the chair and retained by the school.</p> <p>b) The action log for the previous meeting was reviewed and the following items were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 5 – The action for KV to contact SI to arrange a visit to review her role and the equality statement was carried forward. ACTION: KV to contact SI to arrange a visit to discuss link role and review the equality statement. • Item 5 – The action relating to the MG arranging meetings for Trustees to discuss topics as appropriate was carried forward. ACTION: MG to arrange meetings for Trustees to discuss topics as appropriate. • Item 8 – It was confirmed that subject reports would be reviewed following the meeting. ACTION: Governors to review subject reports following the meeting. • Item 12 – The action relating to arranging training on monitoring visits was carried forward. ACTION: Contact AG via ECM Consultants to organise dates for governor monitoring visit training. • It was also confirmed that a governor walking week will be organised for the spring term. ACTION: Organise dates for the spring term governor walking week. 	<p>KV</p> <p>MG</p> <p>All govs</p> <p>SI</p> <p>SI</p>
8.	<p>CHAIR'S ACTION (If Chair's action has been approved)</p> <p>a) There had been no chairs actions taken since the last Trust board meeting and therefore no report to receive.</p> <p>b) Governors approved the chairs power to act for the academic year 2023-24.</p>	
9.	<p>COMMITTEES & NOMINATED GOVERNORS</p> <p>a) It was confirmed that the membership of committees for 2023-24 had been confirmed during the summer term trust board meeting and there were no changes to report.</p> <p>b) The chairs for the standing committees had been approved at committee level and were confirmed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of the Curriculum Committee – JR • Chair of the Resources Committee – CN <p>c) The review of the Scheme of Delegation detailing the functions to be delegated to LGBs, Trust Board committees and individuals by the Trust board had been undertaken at the summer term meeting and there were no changes proposed.</p> <p>d) The terms of reference for the standing committees had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting and reviewed at committee level. Governors ratified the recommendation to approve the terms of reference for the following committees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Resources Committee ii. Curriculum Committee <p>e) The terms of reference for the following committees had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting by a Governor Hub:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Pay Committee ii. Executive Headteacher's Performance Management Panel (including confirmation of the external advisor where necessary) iii. Appeals Committee iv. Complaints Committee v. Pupil Exclusions Committee vi. Staff Grievance Committee <p>There were no changes proposed to the terms of reference and governors approved the above listed terms of reference for 2023-24.</p>	
10.	<p>GOVERNORS CODE OF CONDUCT</p> <p>The code of conduct for the trust had been circulated to governors for review at the start of the academic year. The clerk confirmed that all governors had signed to agree to the code of conduct proposed online via the online confirmations function on Governor Hub.</p>	



<p>11.</p>	<p>PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <p>a) Governors confirmed receipt of the minutes from the following committees which had been circulated via Governor Hub:</p> <p>i. Resources Committee 11.10.23 – The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and governors approved the minutes. ACTION: Bring paper copy of the Resources Committee minutes from 11.10.23 to the next resources committee meeting in the spring term to be signed by the chair and retained by the school.</p> <p>ii. Curriculum Committee 08.11.23 – The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and governors approved the minutes. ACTION: Bring a paper copy of the Curriculum Committee minutes from 08.11.23 to the next curriculum committee meeting in the spring term to be signed by the chair and retained by the school.</p> <p>iii. Resources Committee 15.11.23 - The clerk confirmed that the minutes from the Resources Committee on 15.11.23 were being finalised and would be forwarded to GP and SI for approval following this meeting. ACTION: Add approval of Resources Committee minutes from 15.11.23 to the next Resources Committee agenda in the spring term.</p> <p>b) There were no other reports from committees to be received at this meeting.</p> <p>c) There were no recommendations from committees requiring Trust Board approval.</p> <p>d) Governors noted that the following reports were included within the Headteacher’s report which would be discussed under Part 2 of this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND • Safeguarding 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>FINANCIAL/COMPLIANCE MATTERS</p> <p>a) Governors confirmed that they had all read the Academy Trust Handbook which was circulated prior to the meeting via Governor Hub.</p> <p>b) The school confirmed the submission of the land and buildings collection tool in line with the deadline of 8th of November 2023. A copy of the documentation had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting via Governor Hub.</p> <p>c) The review of the audited accounts was covered within the AGM meeting.</p> <p>d) The school confirmed that the audited financial statements would be published on school website in line with the 31.01.24 deadline.</p> <p>e) The purchase of annual contracts was discussed. It was noted that the Resources Committee approved the change to a new site maintenance provider. Notice has been given to the current contractor Countrywide and the contract with the new provider will commence in the spring term.</p> <p>Governors also noted that the school have changed catering provision from Dolce to Appetito which was discussed and approved at the Resources Committee meeting. The new catering services are not under contract as the company is used as an ordering service whereby the school order meals as required which are prepared off site, delivered to school and reheated on the premises. This service can be stopped and recommenced at any time.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p>PART ONE HEADTEACHER’S REPORT</p> <p>The headteacher's report was circulated to governors prior to the meeting for review and questions were invited on any items within the report. It was confirmed that the detail of the report has been discussed in detail at both the curriculum and resources committees.</p> <p>Q: In terms of the figures and attendance data is there anything specific that governors need to be aware of?</p> <p>A: There are areas of concern and the school is aware of all ongoing issues with regard to attendance. Procedures are in place for monitoring and the detail was discussed at the Curriculum Committee.</p>	



	<p>It is important that governors know the issues surrounding attendance and the profile of pupils within the school. The school has improved their attendance procedures and have engaged local authority support. There are letters issued to parents regularly and fines are being issued. The school explained that holiday requests are not approved under any circumstances, but parents do still submit requests. Following any requests from parents the paperwork is forwarded to the local authority.</p> <p>Governor Comment: The fines applicable will not be a deterrent for some families.</p> <p>The school confirmed that holidays are not the main cause of attendance issues but that the complex nature of the profile of pupils within the school causes the majority of issues. The school continue to support families with complex issues to ensure that pupils attend wherever possible. Governors noted the target of 94% attendance for pupils.</p> <p>Persistent absentees are an ongoing issue, and this is an area that the school are monitoring carefully.</p> <p>Governor Comment: There are only a small number of persistent absentees but this has a big impact on the overall attendance figures.</p> <p>ACTION: Include the head teachers report only within Part 2 going forward.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>PUPIL PERFORMANCE AND SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p> <p>a) The data relating to external assessments had been circulated to governors for review prior to the meeting and discussed in detail at the Curriculum Committee meeting on 08.11.23. There were no questions at this meeting relating to the assessment data.</p> <p>b) Governors noted that a date was to be scheduled for governors to meet to evaluate the impact of the school development plan for 2022-23.</p> <p>It was suggested that the meeting could take place prior to another governor meeting. It was noted that it would be necessary for the headteacher to discuss with staff their thoughts on the impact of the 2022-23 SDP and to request that staff submit comments which can be discussed by the board. Governors expressed that it would be difficult for governors to assess the impact of the SDP without staff input.</p> <p>ACTION: Meet with staff to discuss and evaluate the impact of the 2022-23 SDP And request staff comments to be submitted for review by governors.</p> <p>ACTION: Notify governors of the format and timings of the SDP review meeting to take place as a pre meeting prior to the next trust board meeting in the spring term on 27.03.23.</p> <p>c) It was confirmed that the SDP for 2023-24 has already been approved as it forms part of the wider 2022-2025 plan.</p> <p>d) The school confirmed that work on the school's self evaluation form (SEF) is underway and this will be brought to the next Resources Committee meeting in the spring term. Governors also noted that the SEF could be submitted to Ofsted if governors requested this.</p> <p>Q: Can the SEF be uploaded to Governor Hub for review by all governors? A: Yes, this can be uploaded onto Governor Hub ahead of the next Resources Committee meeting.</p>	<p>SI</p> <p>SI</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>Q&A ON HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE There were no additional questions on the headteacher's report or school performance.</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER / EXTERNAL ADVISER The school confirmed that there was no formal report to receive from the school improvement partner (SIP) at this meeting.</p> <p>A visit was undertaken last week where the SIP worked with subject leaders in maths, English and science and they also undertook work with the SENCO.</p> <p>Q: Has the school received any verbal feedback from the visit?</p>	



	<p>A: The early stages of improvements are beginning to be seen however this will be a long process. The SIP knows the challenges that are being faced and understands the context of the school. This provides the school with confidence.</p> <p>Q: The current SIP has worked with the school for a long time, does this need to be reviewed?</p> <p>A: There is a reluctance to change the SIP at this stage. The SIP has been helpful in considering the issues with writing and has confirmed that a scheme of work would not be appropriate for pupils.</p> <p>Q: Would it be worthwhile to consider a SIP who may have a different perspective?</p> <p>A: It was noted that post COVID recovery work is still underway which the SIP has been involved in. The school stated that some staff do not like the approach of the current SIP.</p> <p>Q: Why do the staff not like the SIP's approach?</p> <p>A: The staff feel the SIP provides very frank feedback and sets high expectations which are not always well received.</p> <p>Q: How long has the SIP been in place?</p> <p>A: Between five and six years.</p> <p>Q: Is the SIP employed by the Department for Education?</p> <p>A: No, the SIP is sourced by the school privately. It is a recommendation that all schools have a SIP in place to support school improvement. There are various companies or individual consultants who provide SIP services. ECM Consultants is a commonly used company who could be approached.</p> <p>The clerk confirmed that it is recommended that the SIP is changed every two to three years.</p> <p>Q: Where is the expertise of the SIP justified?</p> <p>A: The SIP is a private consultant who reviews Ofsted data and visits different schools. The SIP will question areas of weakness such as arithmetic and will set up a monitoring plan to facilitate improvements. The SIP will also suggest changes that staff need to make to improve their practice.</p> <p>Q: Is it the SIPs style that staff are not receiving well or what they are being asked to do?</p> <p>A: The school confirmed that there are elements of both the style and the tasks.</p> <p>Q: Are staff undertaking the work that is being asked of them?</p> <p>A: Yes, but when the actions have not worked staff need to be able to explain why it has not worked and there are some difficulties in staff following the recommendations from the SIP.</p> <p>Governor Comment: Given the issues that are arising in the process of school improvement this may be enhanced with an alternative SIP.</p> <p>ACTION: Review the SIP provision in the summer term and consider alternative candidates.</p> <p>ACTION: Add review of SIP provision to the summer term Trust Board agenda.</p>	SI Clerk
17.	<p>DIRECTOR'S REPORT</p> <p>Governors were briefed on items from the Director's including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCSIE • Educational Visits • Diversity Data • Prevent Training • Changes to national testing • Suspensions and Exclusions Guidance 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EHCP High needs funding• RE• Staff pay award• Admissions for Sept 2025• Pupil Premium• Sports Premium	
18.	<p>TRUST BOARD TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>a) It was confirmed that GP is the Training Link Governor.</p> <p>b) Governors noted that there are occasional issues with obtaining certificates from Modern Governor. It was also confirmed that training certificates can be forwarded to the clerk or uploaded directly to Governor Hub in the training section of individual profiles.</p> <p>CF confirmed that she had attended the Cheshire East Governor Conference on 20.10.23 which was very useful. It was confirmed that the main subject of presentations at the conference was around mental health. There was also a lot of governor challenge to the local authority. However, it was felt that the conference was an exercise in promotion of the local authority rather than supporting the schools themselves.</p> <p>Q: Have any slides been issued from the presentation that could be circulated to the board?</p> <p>A: These have not been received as yet.</p> <p>ACTION: Follow up with the school governance team regarding circulation of materials from the governor conference.</p> <p>MG confirmed that she had undertaken digital monitoring training this week. It was noted that this was a very intense topic but provided a lot of content to consider following the meeting. Whilst the content was more applicable to secondary schools there were areas of relevance to primary schools as well. This is a growing area of concern for all schools which will need to be given consideration to ensure governors meet their responsibilities for digital monitoring.</p> <p>GP, MG and KV have undertaken exclusions training within the last two years.</p> <p>Governors noted that Ofsted will question governors on recent training.</p>	Clerk
19.	<p>TRUST POLICIES</p> <p>The following policies were circulated to governors prior to the meeting for review via Governor Hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Child Protection Policy & Proceduresb) Pay Policy for Teachersc) Artd) Englishe) Mathsf) Missing Childg) Modern Foreign Languagesh) Phonics & Early Readingi) Readingj) Religion & Worldviewsk) Sciencel) Computingm) Design & Technologyn) Online Safety <p>Governors approved the above listed policies.</p> <p>The following policies were agreed to be carried over to the spring term for approval and would be reviewed at committee level ahead of formal approval at the spring term Trust Board meeting</p>	



	<p>o) Marking Policy p) Parental Involvement Policy q) Behaviour and Discipline (including suspensions and exclusions and anti-bullying)</p> <p>ACTION: Add the marking policy, parental involvement policy, and behaviour and discipline policies to the curriculum committee agenda for review in spring term.</p> <p>ACTION: Add the marking, parental involvement and behaviour and discipline policies to the spring term trust board meeting agenda for approval.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20.	<p>PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS</p> <p>The following residential visit was brought to governors for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 6 – Glan-Ilyn, 17.06.24 (1 night) <p>Governors approved the residential visit subject to the appropriate risk assessments being carried out.</p>	
21.	<p>MEETINGS</p> <p>The date of the next trust board meeting was confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wednesday 27th March 2024 at 5:30pm.	
22.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no other items of business table for discussion at this meeting.</p>	
23.	<p>IMPACT STATEMENT</p> <p>The Board of Governors helped to move the school forward in the following ways during this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of policies were reviewed in line with the agreed policy schedule and approved by governors.• The SIP provision was discussed with governors challenging the length of tenure of the SIP and an action taken to review provision in the summer term 2024.• The audited accounts were received, and confirmation of a full clean audit was provided to the board.• The school development plan was discussed with an action taken to obtain staff feedback on the impact of the 2022-23 SDP to be followed by a governor meeting to evaluate the impact prior to the next trust board meeting in the spring term.• The membership of the governing body was discussed with succession planning considered and governors encouraged to consider shadowing leadership roles.	