



**LAURANCE HAINES SCHOOL  
LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD via Zoom**

**ON Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7pm via Zoom**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Governor Type</b>	<b>Attended</b>
Jo Ball (AHT)	Associate Member	Attended
Mrs Sharon Carlyon (COO)	COO	Attended
Mr Andrew Chappell	Trustee - observer	Attended
Mrs Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Attended
Ms Monika Delginova	Staff (Support) Governor	Attended
Mr Michael Dobner (chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Mr Seb Gray (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Mrs Olivia Gunner	Staff governor	Attended
Mrs Gill Heath	Co-opted governor	Attended
Mrs Becky Makinson	Co-opted governor	Apologies
Ms Bathsheba Mensah	Parent governor	Attended
Mr James Roach (CEO)	CEO	Attended
Miss Denise Shaw	Parent governor	Attended

**Documents for information only**

Clerks update documents  
IMAT minutes

**Documents for comment**

Agenda 11.11.20 and supporting document  
Minutes from 16.09.20  
HCC Pupil planning numbers  
7. Headteachers report  
7. Staff council minutes  
8. LHS plan 2020-21  
9. Governor visit report – Denise Shaw  
10. Website audit checklist  
13. Trust risk register  
14. Termly safeguarding report  
15. School site inspection checklist  
16. Policies

- Home school agreement
- Send Information Report
- Health and safety policy
- Business continuity plan

18. Academies governance role descriptors

**Governor challenge is highlighted in yellow**

*Governor actions are highlighted in italic*

LHS – Laurance Haines School      CTS – Cherry Tree School      BFS – Beechfield School

The meeting started at 7.05pm

**Actions**

## 1. Welcome, apologies and consent

James, Sharon and Andrew were welcomed from the Trust. The meeting was quorate. Becky Makinson sent apologies.

## 2. Notification of any other business - None

## 3. Conflict of interest with agenda items to be declared - None

## 4. New pecuniary business interests to be recorded – None reported

## 5. Minutes of the last meeting 16.9.20 and matters arising

Minutes were approved and will be signed by the Chair of governors electronically via Governor Hub. All matters arising were completed except the actions for the Trust board as they have yet to meet.

Item 5. Michael Dobner was elected as chair for a year's term  
Bathsheba Mensah was elected as vice-chair for a year's term

*The clerk will present to the Trust board*

**Clerk (Trust board)**

Item 10. G: The IMAT logo is not very clear on a phone; can this be improved?  
The Instagram account for the IMAT comes up with a name attached (Laura Springate)?  
*The clerk will take to the Trustees for review*

**Clerk (Trust)**

Item 10. G: Will the websites be updated, audited?  
HT: Yes, we can review and as the websites are being updated this should be completed.  
*The clerk will check with the COO*

**Clerk (Trust)**

Item 10: G: There is not an exclusions policy on the school website, can this be reviewed as it doesn't meet the DFE requirements?  
*The clerk will check with the COO*

**Clerk (Trust)**

## 6. Response from Trust regarding LGC comments – there has been no Trust meeting as yet

## 7. Headteacher report including

- an overview of COVID reopening plans, risk assessment and catch up premium
- Marketing Plan

Verbal update from the HT alongside the written report:

- There has been a larger than usual amount of movement in pupil numbers over the last term. The HT explained families and children have been moving out of county, and consequently the school, which has had a financial impact on the school budget of around £32,000. This is now a priority for the school and a reforecasting exercise has been carried out to ensure the budget reflects income accurately. There have been 5 children (with 3 pending) who have joined the school in the last month which is a positive.

*7.19pm Denise Shaw left the meeting*

- Staffing update – the HT explained the changes in staffing for the school over the term. The School Business Officer who was expected to take up post has had to withdraw due to personal reasons so the role will be readvertised. A teacher to support catch up has been employed. The HT explained the expected return dates for staff who are on long term sick. The team have worked remarkably well covering the workload and ensuring the children have been able to receive a high-quality education with gaps in staffing.
- The AHT explained the changes to the curriculum and the support of the Cornerstones package. The Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) learning has been promoted across the school which is enthusing the children. This is supporting the improved representation of the school's community and the staff are continuing to look for improved resources to support children.

7.20pm Denise Shaw joined the meeting

- G: Could we have some information relating to the anti-bullying week?  
HT: It will be sent to governors via the school newsletter
- Pastoral offer for children and families – The HT explained that the pastoral care is strong at LHS and the school ensures that there is support in place for the whole school community. The HT thanked Denise for her questions around this area.
- Eco Warriors – Monika Delginova, who is leading on this area, explained that the Council took place remotely and that it worked very well. The school is hoping that the Mayor will be part of the next council meeting. Which will also promote the Eco Schools Green Flag Award which the school is applying for reaccreditation for. All the schools in the Trust are working together and ensuring that best practice is shared across the three schools.
- Covid update – The HT gave an update regarding the challenges which have been faced by the school and the community. The school team have been incredibly patient and supportive of each other. There have been training sessions around google classroom to ensure staff feel confident should a bubble be closed. The experience of the other schools in the Trust have been shared to ensure the provision remotely is of a high quality for all the schools.

7.28pm Sheba Mensah joined the meeting

- Attendance is between 96% and 98% at present which is very positive. The school is not sure exactly why the attendance is so high. The governors felt that the safe environment in the school is supporting parents in feeling confident in letting children return.
- G: The gap in learning does not seem to be as high as nationally and this is due to the excellent provision during the lock down and quick response to any new government guidance.  
HT: The school has been able to work as a part of a team with the other schools which has made the process supportive. The SLT has also worked hard to ensure that the decisions made are for the safety of the staff, children and parents. There is a general feeling of safeness across the board.
- The HIP meeting was a very supportive process and the feedback has been used in the creation of the School plan.
- G: Why is there a link for attendance?  
HT: It is part of the Arbor report and is a live link so that governors can see the most up to date information.
- The COO explained that as a result of the trust day there was a request for further information to be added to the finance report relating to the schools. *The HT asked that governor's comment on Governor Hub relating to any live data streams would you like to see on reports?*

**Clerk/ All governors**

- G: Is there enough challenge from the HIP visit?  
CEO: There has been a change in the way HIP's approach their visits to schools to be more supportive but they are still very challenging.  
HT: The process is always challenging and enables us to review our practice and improve.
- The Marketing video for LHS was shown to governors at the meeting. Governors were very impressed with the video. It will be used to attract parents and staff to the school. It will initially be on the school website and then sent to all parents. A landing page is being created which new parents will see as soon as they look at the website and it will be included there.  
Governors thanked the Trust for funding the videos. The CEO thanked the marketing manager for all her work.

## **8. Review and update School Plan/ discuss targets**

The HT explained the reasoning for the school plan including key points

- The curriculum has not been narrowed as a result of Covid-19
- The targets can still be achieved if the children are required to work remotely.
- G: Page two, should the middle column be changed to the same title as above?  
HT: Yes, I will update
- G: I am very pleased to see the strap line to ensure the workload is reduced as this has been clear in training attended that it should be a school priority.  
HT: We always monitor the workload and try and ensure that procedures are reviewed to see whether there is a smarter way to work.

- The HT will present the work being completed around the objectives every meeting and would like comments from governors to form part of the plan and be fed back to the staff. This will enable governors to lead on the school plan.

## 9. Governor visit reports to include an update from the chair on recent Trust day

- Denise Shaw and Jo Ball were thanked for meeting and the report on Pupil premium children. The governor fed back that the school has always been very supportive of all children and the school could be marketed on the offer for Pupil premium children which is excellent. The parent learning should also form part of the schools marketing as we are one of the only schools to provide this provision. In particular Facebook could be used to market the school.

*The HT will speak to the wider school team and Marketing manager regarding community promotion of the school. The COO explained that this is an action for the marketing manager already.*

HT

- The Chair explained that he attended the Trust Day and that it was a very productive meeting. The Chairs will continue to meet over the year to share good practice. The CEO explained that it was very positive to have the Chairs present to feed into the Trust plan. One of the targets is to strengthen governance across the Trust. The Chairs all presented information relating to their school and there were very different approaches which was interesting.
- Gill Heath had been visiting prior to the second lock down and will continue once the second lock down has finished. Coffee mornings will restart for parents as soon as possible.
- Sheba explained that there had been a plan for SEN parents across the three schools to meet with the SENCo and SEND governors and this will be actioned once possible.

## 10. Governor to complete a school website audit

The website is being updated by the Marketing manager to ensure that there is a landing page for new parents which will be in place in the coming week and by school admin to ensure that the website is compliant which is a requirement of the ESFA. *Denise Shaw volunteered to complete the website audit once notified by the COO*

Denise Shaw/ COO

## Standing items:

### 11. Items from Trust board meeting

Governors posed the following questions to Trustees:

G: When will the marketing be ready for new parents as pupil numbers are a risk?

COO: The marketing manager was working on other areas due to Covid-19 in the summer term. The landing page for each of the three schools will be in place by the end of the week.

As governors have seen the marketing videos are now complete which has been an enormous piece of work. We are aware that the admissions application window opened on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, however, with the other pressures on the schools at present this is the earliest time they could be available and obtain the high standard we have been aiming for. In the interim a page has been put in place to direct parents to the appropriate pages of the website and this has been advertised on social media. We are very proud of the information which will be included in the landing page as it reflects the school personality and the excellent support for children and families. It will include the marketing video, a welcome from the HT, a nursery tour and lots of other pertinent information.

HT: As we have been unable to show parents around school, I have been inviting parents to Zoom conversations so that I can give them information around the school.

G: In relation to the marketing plan, could we have a copy so that we can ensure the timescales etc are met and we can ensure that risk is mitigated in relation to pupil numbers?

COO: *The Marketing plan is a working document for the Trust overall but the HT can pull together the strands for the school and present to governors.* The full Trust risk register was shown to governors for information. In future the 'red risks' will be sent to governors for review and we are hoping they will use their local knowledge to pass on any concerns they may have to Trustees. The ESFA is keen to see a conversation relating to risk through governance boards for Trusts and we support this as a key area for development moving forward.

HT

G: What is happening about the marketing manager supporting with the recruitment of governors?

COO: I have been managing and I am in the process of pulling all the documents together. By the end of the term it will be ready. The LGC's can continue to try and recruit but there will also be a Trust recruitment plan.

CEO: We are also looking at whether there are members of staff from each school who can join another school governing body.

G: It would also be good to have governors who are more representative of the school community?

HT: Yes, that is an aim moving forward.

G: If it is member of staff, how can they be objective in their responses and not feel there is a conflict of interest?

CEO: They would be in the role for their professional development and be one step removed from the school they work in usually. Ideally, we would have more community governors in place and would not have been considering this route, however, low interest in governor roles means we are trying to look at alternative solutions.

G: Can any items be sent from the Watford Observer?

COO: Yes, school admin can forward. They are also always on the school twitter feed.

G: Are there any conditions to spending the Catch-up fund?

COO: It is not ringfenced but there will be review to ensure the funding has been spent effectively.

## 12. Finance Update

- The budget has been reforecast. There have been areas of saving alongside the concerns around the falling number of pupils on roll.
- There have been two successful CIF bids: Fire safety and Nursery boiler. The fire works have been completed including new fire doors which has improved the aesthetics in the school. The nursery boiler works are nearly complete and the team have worked very well with the restrictions on space. The COO explained the works will be completed by the end of the term. The Site manager has been fantastic at supporting the school during the works.
- G: The tree survey is that essential?  
HT: Yes, the works were RAG rated red as they were disturbing the drains so it has been an essential piece of work. It will have an impact on budget in the next few years but the tree survey is a legal responsibility which has to be completed
- The School Business officer will attend meetings to report on finances once in post.

## 13. Risk review

- Outside areas are an area of risk at present as they are due refurbishment. The nursery playground for example needs a new floor which could cost between £2000 and £6000 depending on the level of work completed. The COO explained that this can become part of the school premises plan which includes a rolling plan of refurbishment alongside any works which require completion. This allows for the works to be costed and completed in a timely manner. However, governors felt this was area was a health and safety risk and so would require more immediate resolution.
- Governors thanked the COO for her work on the document. The COO explained that risk needs to be covered across governance as a requirement of the ESFA. As a result, it is now part of the LGB agenda to allow for input from all levels of governance.

There are no new risks to be reported to Trustees

## 14. Safeguarding

The termly report to governors was distributed previously, however, there have been four new cases which have been managed during the last few days by the SLT. There are still issues coming to light as a result of lock down which the school is managing. The CEO explained that the ramifications of lock down are still coming to light and this is reflected across the county.

## 15. Health and Safety

*The H&S governor carried out a walk round with the site manager and HT. The site manager was commended for his work at the school. Governors asked that the nursery playground flooring repair be brought to the Trust as there are concerns around the H&S as children could trip*

**Clerk (Trust)**

## 16. Policy tracker review and policies due

The following policies were approved for use with comments from governors by Friday 13.11.20:

- Home school agreement – In future, this will be sent to parents electronically via Arbor to be signed by parents.
- Send Information report

The following policies were approved for use:

- Health and safety policy
- Business continuity plan (Emergency plan)

*The Equality policy was brought to the next meeting once the Trust statement has been put in place*

**Clerk (Agenda)**

## 17. Training

### TRAINING COMPLETED:

Governors reported back that they had attended Exclusions training and that it was well run.

### TRAINING FOR ALL GOVERNORS TO ENSURE THEY HAVE COMPLETED:

Training required Online Via Governor Hub

- Prevent
- An introduction to safeguarding and child protection
- Safeguarding and school governance

Training required in person to be booked online Via Governor Hub

- Induction
- Complaints
- Exclusions

### RECOMMENDED TRAINING:

*The clerk asked governors to listen to the webinar by Better Governor titled: Balancing Support with challenge during Covid-19. It relates to the strategic level of challenge which should be in place from the governors and ensuring that governors are carrying out their role appropriately during the pandemic. [https://youtu.be/CEH2Zr\\_oDP8](https://youtu.be/CEH2Zr_oDP8)*

**All governors**

## 18. Clerks update

The clerk briefly explained the new document from the DFE called 'Academies Governance role descriptors' which explains the different levels of governance within a Trust.

*The governors were reminded that the AGM will take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 6pm and is likely to be virtual. Invitations will be sent as soon as available*

**All governors**

## 19. Any other business

The chair thanked Andrew, James and Sharon for attending the meeting and their input. Andrew also thanked governors for all their work for the school.

## 20. Items to be sent to Trust/ LABs

*There are no risks to report to the Trustees*

**Clerk (Trust)**

*Governors asked that the Nursery playground be reported as a health and safety risk to the Trustees*

**Clerk**

## 21. Future Dates

LGC: (7pm)

**15th December 2020 AGM at 6pm**

Spring term:

2nd February BFS

3<sup>rd</sup> February LHS

4th February CTS

Summer term:

8th June BFS

9<sup>th</sup> June LHS

10th June CTS

Governor open day 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Meeting ended 8.59pm**