

9

# Swift Academies

*Success will inspire future triumphs*

## Standards Committee

Held at The Rydal Academy

4.30pm, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

### MINUTES

Present (Directors)	Derek Bell, Tim Fisher and Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer).
in attendance	John Armitage: Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy Rachel Somerville: Head of School, Hurworth School Stuart Rawle: Deputy Head, Longfield Academy Angela Sweeten: Head Teacher, Longfield Academy Laura Hawksby: Governance & Policy Officer

Item	Description of discussion	Action by
1.	<p><b>Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present.</b></p> <p>Directors were reminded that three Directors were required in order that decisions could be taken during this meeting of the Standards Committee of Swift Academies. Three (3) Directors were present.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Apologies for absence and their acceptance and welcome</b></p> <p>It was reported by the Governance &amp; Policy Officer that apologies for absence had been received from Directors Julie Cornelius and Kelly-Ann Lyle.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the apologies received.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Election of Vice Chair</b></p> <p>Further to Minute 4 (5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 Standards Committee) it had been agreed by Directors to defer the appointment of the Vice Chair of the Standards committee until this meeting.</p>	

Swift Academies  
Registered office address:  
Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

Company Registration Number 07533271

Page 1 of 7

denotes support and challenge provided by Directors

	<p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> to defer the appointment of the Vice- Chair of the Standards Committee until the first meeting of the Committee after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 as there would be a new Board of Directors following the joining of Swift Academies with Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College.</p> <p><b>4. Notification of Items of Other Business</b></p> <p>There was 1 item of urgent other business: Academy Trust Governance Guide, which was considered at Minute 13 below.</p> <p><b>5. Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests</b></p> <p><b>a) Register of Interest</b></p> <p>Directors and those present were reminded that they should complete the Register of Interest annually to declare any relevant business or pecuniary interest and close family relationship between members and / or other Trustees and / or employees. Registers should be updated during the academic year should circumstances change.</p> <p>All Directors present had submitted a Register of Interest.</p> <p><b>b) To declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting</b></p> <p>Directors and those present were reminded that they should declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were received.</p> <p><b>6. Approval of Minutes</b></p> <p>Draft Minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 had been shared with Directors prior to this meeting, with a copy held on file. It was noted that all actions had been completed.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting and should be signed by the Chair of this meeting.</p> <p><b>7. Membership Document</b></p> <p>The Governance &amp; Policy Officer provided an update on the Longfield Academy Local Governing Body membership and advised that following a Parent Governor election that Stephen Goodman had been duly elected as a Longfield Parent Governor as of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. It was also noted that Governor Nicola Bales (Chair) had been duly appointed by Directors as a General Governor as of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</p>	<p>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</p>
--	---	--



92

<p>8.</p>	<p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the report be noted.</p> <p><b>Longfield Academy</b></p> <p><b>a.) Head Teacher's Report</b></p> <p>S. Rawle (Deputy Head, Longfield Academy) provided a comprehensive report to the Standards Committee. Directors considered and noted the Head Teacher's reports from the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024, copies of which are retained on file.</p> <p>The Deputy Head advised Longfield Academy's 8 Ofsted priorities have either been fully addressed or are in the process of being embedded. Directors advised that they were pleased all eight of the strands continued to be addressed and that the school was also moving forward. Directors questioned how Senior Leadership ensure that progress made to address the Ofsted priorities is shared with staff and the Deputy Head Teacher replied that they are continually embedded with staff through a range of activities, meetings and conversations.</p> <p>Pupil numbers on roll had increased since the beginning of the Academic Year (up by 10). Attendance was just slightly above national average with the Academy continuing to work to bring down serious persistent absences. Suspensions were impacting on attendance by about 0.56 %</p> <p>Directors noted suspensions were higher at the start of the Academic Year and the Deputy Head Teacher advised when data was analysed the school can identify that the suspensions included pupils who have now been permanently excluded and the suspensions have decreased. The Deputy Head reported that 'Choices' continued to be used and implemented effectively by staff.</p> <p>Permanent Exclusion figures were noted by the Committee. Directors questioned whether there were case studies for each of the Permanent exclusions to aid understanding of the Academy's approach ? The Deputy Head advised there was, and permanent exclusions were only implemented when all intervention and support strategies have been exhausted, with the school having a duty to stop disruption and ensure the safety of students/staff. There were many cases where Permanent Exclusions had been avoided due to interventions. Permanent Exclusions were noted to be rising regionally and nationally.</p> <p>Safeguarding referrals were noted to have increased. Year 11 Mocks had just been completed and the school was focusing on Science and History. Year 11 are completing how to revise workshops, interventions and tutoring to aid in their preparations for exams.</p>	
-----------	--	--

Senior Leadership at Longfield continue to meet weekly with the Chief Executive Officer to discuss the implementation of school strategy.

It was noted that the SEF (Self Evaluation Form) were included in the Head Teacher's reports.

Longfield Academy Risk Register

Directors considered and noted the Longfield Academy Risk Register.

EDP Autumn Visit report

Directors considered and noted the School Improvement Partner report from the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023. The Deputy Head advised that there was another School Improvement Partner visit which would be completed on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 focusing on how the 8 Ofsted identified areas were being addressed and on the next steps that were being undertaken in the schools' improvement journey

Directors **RESOLVED** that the Head Teacher's report be noted.

9.

**Hurworth School**

**a) Head Teacher's Report**

The Head of School of Hurworth provided a comprehensive report to the Standards Committee, which is held on file.

The Head of School advised there was a slight decrease in pupil numbers, however the school remains over PAN. Attendance remained above the national average, with strategies and plans in place for all students who were serious persistent absentees.

Directors noted Year 11 data was up when compared to last year's previous cohort. Support continued to be in place for all Year 11 students through to their final examination, including access to external providers for students who were struggling to access school.

The Head of School reported that increased transport costs were a pressure on the schools budget.

Directors noted that Trauma Informed Practice continued to be embedded as a whole school initiative.

It was noted that the SEF (Self Evaluation Form) was included in the Head Teacher's report.

**Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

Page 4 of 7

denotes support and challenge provided by Directors



<p>10.</p> <p>11.</p>	<p><u>Hurworth School Risk Register</u></p> <p>Directors considered and noted the Hurworth School Risk Register.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Head of Schools' report be noted.</p> <p><b>The Rydal Academy</b></p> <p>The Head Teacher of Rydal provided a comprehensive report to the Standards Committee, which is held on file.</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that pupil numbers were slightly down from this time last year, with the highest intake being in nursery. In Year pupil numbers had increased.</p> <p>Absences were noted to be higher than in the same time period from the last academic year, however Special Educational Needs and Traveller pupils' attendance had improved. Suspensions were tracking higher in this academic year than they have previously. The 'Choices' behaviour system had positively impacted the reduction of potential suspensions and exclusions</p> <p>The Head Teacher reported that the Reception baseline was noted to be low for the current cohort compared to previous years. School led tutoring continued to be targeted at supporting Disadvantaged pupils. It was noted that the times Tables Rock Stars programme was having a positive impact on retention of multiplication facts.</p> <p><u>Self-Evaluation Form /Action Plan</u></p> <p>Directors considered and noted the Rydal SEF (Self Evaluation Form) and Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Rydal School Risk Register</u></p> <p>Directors considered and noted the Rydal School Risk Register.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Head Teacher's report be noted.</p> <p><b>Chief Executive Officer's Report:</b></p> <p><b>a.) Trust Development Update</b></p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provided a verbal update on the coming together of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College and Swift Academies as Inicio Academies. He advised that Governors at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form</p>	
-----------------------	---	--

	<p>College had completed and approved the due diligence of Swift Academies, approved the Transfer Agreement and dissolution of the College. Work was ongoing for the bringing together of the two institutions including amalgamation of policies, development of the Inicio Academies website, creation of Inicio Academy ID badges and Inicio email addresses. Swift Directors would be considering due diligence of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form and approval would be sought to the formation of Inicio Academies with relevant appointments/resignations of the new Board/Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College Local Governing Body at a meeting of Swift Board of Directors on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. Discussions were continuing with other schools potentially joining the Trust</p> <p>Subject to the approval of the conversion of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College to Academy status to join Inicio Academies, the first meeting of the Inicio Board of Directors would be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and a MAT (Multi Academy Trust) Development Day would be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Chief Executive Officer's Trust Development update be noted.</p> <p><b>b) Scheme of Delegation</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Directors to the Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the report be noted.</p> <p><b>c) Trust Development Plan</b></p> <p>Consideration was given by the Directors to the Trust Development Plan.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the report be noted.</p> <p><b>12. Policies for Approval/Review/Information</b></p> <p><b>a.) Policies for information</b></p> <p>The following policies were noted and approved for information: Code of Conduct Directors, Code of Conduct LGB, Curriculum Policy, Cyber Security Policy, Drugs Education Policy, No Smoking at Work Policy, Political Indoctrination and Visiting Speaker Policy, Pupil Premium Policy, GDPR Data Protection Policy, Infection Control Policy and Freedom of Information Policy.</p> <p><b>b.) Policies for Approval</b></p> <p>The following policies were approved: Flexible Working Policy and Family Friendly Policy.</p>	<p>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</p>
--	--	--

<p>13.</p>	<p><b>Item of Other Business - Academy Trust Governance Guide</b></p> <p>The Governance &amp; Policy Officer advised that as of the 7<sup>th</sup> March the DfE (Department for Education) had published guides to replace the Governance Handbook. There were two separate guides now for Maintained and Academy Trusts. The Academy Trust Governance guide is structured around the DfE's Trust Quality Descriptions and did not introduce any policy change. The purpose of governance has replaced the previous three core functions for those who govern: to provide strategic leadership, accountability and assurance, and strategic engagement.</p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the report be noted.</p>	
<p>14.</p>	<p><b>Approval of Documents for Inspection</b></p> <p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the agenda, approved minutes and supporting documents be made available for public inspection with the exception of information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers.</p>	<p>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p><b>Date and time of future meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT Development Session – Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 5.00 pm Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College</li> <li>• Board of Directors – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 5.00 pm Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College</li> <li>• Standards – Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 4.30 pm, Hurworth School</li> </ul> <p>The meeting concluded at 6.20 pm</p> <p>These minutes were approved by the Standards Committee, as follows:</p> <p>Signed by: (Chair) <u>TF</u></p> <p>On: (date) <u>20/6/24</u></p> <p>Printed name: <u>TIM FISHER</u></p>	<p>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</p>

