

**Minutes of the Tuxford Academy Committee meeting
held on Monday 21 September 2020
at 5pm via Microsoft Teams**

Governor name	Initials	Governor category	A = absence
Mr A Denley	AD	Appointed	A
Mrs C Donlan-Harrison	CDH	Appointed	
Dr L Galbraith	LG	Appointed	
Mrs D Hollingsworth	DH	Appointed	
Ms K Hopper-Peart	CHP	Parent	A
Mr R Lancaster (Vice Chair)	RL	Appointed	
Mr C Parsons	CP	Parent	
Rev. G Price (Chair of Governors)	GP	Appointed	
Miss M Tivey	MT	Staff	
Mr R Twelvetrees	RT	Appointed	

In attendance: [staff or other invited persons]

Staff name	Initials	Role
Mr D Vernon	DV	Senior Principal
Mr J Hardy	OH	Principal
Mrs R Chambers	RC	Temporary Clerk and Advisor
Mrs A Elway	AKE	Head of Governance

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
AC/01/2021	<p>Training – Scheme of Delegation by Alison Elway Alison Elway started by thanking the committee for both attending the virtual governor meeting as well as thanking the committee for their support and commitment throughout lockdown with the risk assessment meetings.</p> <p>Alison Elway proceeded to project the updated Scheme of Delegation(SoD) to the governors and explained that the document hasn't been reviewed for a long time and how there is no set procedure or template for a SoD so is completely the Trusts decision as to how it is framed. The Diverse Academies SoD goes for what trustees, their committees and academy committee governors do, all the way to the CEO. Its then down to Dave Cotton, CEO, as to how he delegates those responsibilities downwards which is typically done through policies and within the policies it will state who does what.</p> <p>The governors were then highlighted to page 3 where the 4 main areas of governance have been listed. The first 3 have been used for a long time with the fourth being an addition within the last academic year. The new key area is <i>Engage with stakeholders, parent/carers, staff and students and the wider community.</i> This is a key focus for the new CEO and this will be mostly down to the Academy Committee governors and the individual academies in how this can be achieved.</p>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>Mrs Elway then referred to the implementation of governance and highlighted how the trust board has overall responsibility for setting strategy, keeping high standards of governance and that they hold the CEO to account. Academy committees hold the senior leaders to account in strategy and implementation and ensuring goals from the Academy Improvement Plans are achieved. It was then highlighted to governors the documents they could read, with the main focus on the DfE handbook, although an update is expected soon, and the Trust governance handbook and Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Within Diverse Academies there are currently 3 members with the expected appointment of another in the coming weeks. The DfE preference is that the trust has 5 and that only 1 is linked in any way to the governance structure within the multi-academy trust.</p> <p>Mrs Elway then confirmed to the committee that the Members main responsibility is to ensure the Trustee board are fulfilling their duty in holding the executive to account. The board of Trustees are the ones who are accountable to the DfE and Ofsted etc as well as their statutory duties. It was then further explained during the information on the key governance priorities where it is shown in more detail. The Trustee's role is highlighted in blue, with the governor's role being in green. This document shows how the trustees are accountable and ultimately answerable but that the governors are responsible on a local level. Within the Trust Board remit there have some items which they are unable to delegate from the Articles of Association or from a Companies House point of view.</p> <p>Alison Elway then moved on to the roles and responsibilities of the Academy Committee and emphasised that nothing had majorly changed from the previous scheme of delegation. The change has been that it has been split into the 4 key areas as noted above and that as governors they need to continue to review and challenge the senior leaders. The agendas will be set to ensure they are meeting the 4 key areas across the year. It was confirmed to the committee, how as a Trust there has always been link governors in safeguarding, health & safety and EVC but there must also be a SEND and careers link governors too.</p> <p>Where the financial performance is involved it was highlighted that the main role for the academy committee governors is to check on how they are dealing with the allocated budget and curriculum led financial planning. By doing so the governors can then highlight any cause for concern to the Trust board as well as looking at the impact and outcomes from the financial performance.</p> <p>In the new Scheme of Delegation, there has been an update on the terms of office of which will come in to effect from January. From then the maximum term of office is 2 x 4 year terms but when governors have completed this term they are able to transfer to another academy committee or apply to be a Trustee if there are any vacancies. If you are in the position of being the chair then you can serve an additional 4 year term of office. Vice-chairs and staff governors are also now optional and are at the discretion of the chair. The membership of a committee was also confirmed at a minimum of 5</p>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>governors with a maximum of 10. It was also re-emphasised that the governors must attend a meeting within a 6-month period and if there is no good reason for non-attendance the governors can be removed from the committee.</p> <p><i>Mrs Hollingsworth joined the meeting at 17.23.</i></p> <p>Mr Lancaster questioned if there was an identified person within the trust board who was directly linked with Tuxford Academy as in the past it was supposed to be in place. Mrs Elway responded confirming that there was not an identified person at the moment but there is a discussion on whether there will be in the future.</p> <p>Rev. Price further asked if the new SoD still makes a provision for p16 reps as there isn't any mention. Mrs Elway confirmed there wasn't any mention, but Tuxford Academy can implement this if they wish. Some academies do and some don't, but it was confirmed she was happy for Tuxford Academy to have them.</p> <p><i>Mrs Elway was thanked for her attendance and she left the meeting at 17.27.</i></p>	
AC/02/2021	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and approved from Mrs Hopper-Peart due to work commitments. There were no apologies were sent for Mr A Denley.</p>	
AC/03/2021	<p>Declaration of interest There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.</p>	
AC/04/2021	<p>Governor Admin Code of conduct & declaration of interest All governors were reminded to complete both the code of conduct and declaration of interest.</p> <p>Chair of Governors re-election The governors voted unanimously to re-appoint Rev. G Price as the Chair of Governors for a one-year term of office which will come to an end at the first autumn term Academy Committee meeting in 2021.</p> <p>Confirmation of the dates The dates for the rest of the 2020-21 meetings to be distributed to the committee.</p>	Clerk
AC/05/2021	<p>Minutes of the AC meeting dated 3 February 2020 The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the Chair.</p>	
AC/06/2021	<p>Matters arising <i>AC/50/19-20 –</i> Ms Addison's attendance at a governor meeting is to be discussed under agenda item AC/07/2021.</p> <p><i>AC/53/19-20 –</i></p>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>Mr Hardy confirmed to the governors that the behaviour policy had been updated with a COVID-19 appendix which is now live on the academy website. In the future the academy will update the policy as they are keen to have a structure in place for moving forward rather than there just being a short-term response.</p> <p><i>AC/54/19-20 –</i> To note there was not a report created following the visit to P16. Mrs Hollingsworth is halfway through writing a report following a safeguarding visit and once completed the report will distributed to the committee. Mrs Hollingsworth is also attending the academy on 24/09/20 for the Single Central Record.</p>	<p>DH / Clerk</p>
<p>AC/07/2021</p>	<p>Report from Principal: Questions had been sent in advance of the meeting which were submitted by Mr Lancaster. The questions will be attached to the minutes for reference</p> <p>Exam update Mr Hardy began by explaining the process behind the grades of which students received. Due to COVID-19 it was not a normal process so he explained to the governors that it is hard to look at the grades in a per subject matter like they would traditionally do. He projected on to the screen the results and the data surrounding them. Mr Hardy then further explained that the academy had followed guidance and took an honest approach so that the grades provided were in line with previous years and what they thought the students would genuinely get.</p> <p>At this point Mr Hardy took the agenda out of order and discussed the P16 report / results first.</p> <p>P16 report</p> <p>Mr Hardy displayed the KS5 results on to the screen and put the information into context whilst also explaining that some additional data had arrived at the academy today (21/09/20). The data was further explained to the governors explaining that value added is how much the school added value to the students of which in 2018 it was -0.08 and in 2020 was 0.2. The governors were informed that different schools took different approaches depending on how schools followed the guidance. The algorithm Tuxford Academy used did improve the grades that the students received which shows they played fair and consistent with previous years, however there are still a number of concerns from parents about grades.</p> <p>Mr Hardy informed the governors that out of all the students who had chosen to go to university, only two ended up not going. One had chosen to stay at Tuxford Academy to better their grades and to reapply in the next academic year and the other student changed their mind and has gone down a different pathway.</p>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>KS4 results. Mr Hardy then moved on to the KS4 results and informed governors that the guidance was followed, and Tuxford Academy ended up with 0.38 progress score. Out of all the results there was approximately 100 students that ended up with improved grades when the government amended the scoring process. It was then further commented by Mr Hardy that it was a slightly weaker year group which is reflected in the data, but they still did really well. Mr Hardy acknowledged that it is the first time in a long time that the academy has been below national average however he surmised that nationally, a lot of academies over predicted and over gave grades to the students before further reiterating that the grades the students got were good grades and they have all managed to get on to their next footpath.</p> <p>Mr Vernon added that the data from FFT was sent out over weekend and they have recognised there is a mistake in the data, so the academy is currently waiting for a further update. With this update, it might affect the overall progress score. The academy won't be held to account but hopes in a way they are in terms of leadership and management in how it has been addressed by school.</p> <p>Ms Galbraith queried the fact that 4 / 5 years ago the Academy took pride in how good they were at predicting grades but given the fact we don't know what it is happening in the future then would it be worth considering again? Especially if the academy can see which subjects have accurate predictions on exams seen as it is unknown if the academy will need to make predictions on the next cohort. And finally did the academy feel confident the right children didn't get the right grades as parents and students need to know that the work they are putting in is being recognised? Mr Hardy replied informing the governors that there has to a level of confidence from parents in the process that the academy went through. The process that the academy went through with KS4, is that FFT had looked at previous years data and came up with distribution graphs for the subjects to work with including how many grade 1,2,3 etc for each individual subject. This data was then used to predict what this year's graph would look like. The academy then used that graph to decide how the grade distribution should look for this year which was how the students roughly ended up with grades they did. The process prior to that was that the teachers had to have a rank order per subject. To meet the distribution, the students do move within the rank order moving between grade boundaries to meet distributions. Ms Galbraith further queried as to why the teachers could not give the grades. Mr Hardy further explained that the teachers did the grades and then they looked at the rank order into a whole subject context. There were some students who could have got higher grades however if the teachers did not have the evidence in March to produce the grades then they had to go with the evidence they had. A lot of the parental concerns regarding the process was that their kids would have made a larger gain from March until the exams however the evidence was not there in March which is what they were going from. Miss Tivey reiterated what Mr Hardy was saying. In her role within the academy she looked at books and mocks what students had done in year 11 and 13 and confirmed it was all done based on the evidence they had. It was acknowledged that some students may have worked hard</p>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>between March and the exam time but this wasn't guaranteed and explained how she could only assure governors that it was a fair process.</p> <p>Mr Parsons suggested that although the students who have been through this have gone on to the right pathways whilst still not knowing what could happen during the next year, what lessons have the academy learnt and what steps are being put in to ensure the students have the evidence now? Mr Hardy highlighted that it is clear the academy need to have more formalised assessments within subject areas to look at so that staff have greater evidence to make judgement on. It has also taught the academy that teachers need to be more considerate over their predicted grades and also hopes that teachers will be more considerate in UCAS applications.</p> <p>Mr Parsons further enquired that it has never been as important for any mock tests and revision so how are the academy getting the students into that mindset that there isn't necessarily always the extra time in the run up to the exams for revision. Miss Tivey responded by ensuring they are always reiterating to the students that they do not know what will happen so they cannot wait until last 3 weeks / months to do a massive splurge in revision.</p> <p>It was agreed that Mr Hardy would send out the new FFT data when it has been updated and received by the academy.</p> <p>Safeguarding; culture & compliance / Safe Recruitment Mr Hardy confirmed to the committee that there were no safeguarding issues to report. The staff within the academy are doing their EduCare modules to keep their training up to date. In regard to the students there are currently 52 students off with COVID related issues.</p> <p>Admission policy It was confirmed by the governors that there is nothing to change to the admissions policy for the 22-23 academic year.</p> <p>Risk Register inc Health & Safety, staff & pupil well-being, GDPR Mr Hardy advised there are several anxious students in school and whilst these aren't all necessarily due to COVID but also around the general anxiety of being back in school after such a long time, the senior leadership team are working on an extensive plan of what they can do to help the students as well as the staff. It was also highlighted that there are also some very concerned staff across the academy including those who have been in self-isolation up to the beginning of August and then one month later they are back in school with 1500 students and 200 staff. The governors agreed this is a very daunting experience and asked for a further update at the next time as to how the extensive plan is being achieved.</p> <p>Academy Review Meeting Report Mr Hardy explained to the governors that the academy had a visit from Neil Holmes, Cat Thornton and Gary Corban who came in and discussed the Academy Improvement Plan, CPD plans and primarily the COVID plans. There was also a discussion around the way the academy can support the students as well as how the Trust can support the academy at this time. Mr</p>	<p>OH</p> <p>OH</p>

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>Hardy did inform the governors that he had highlighted the issue around staff anxiety and the number of staff that might be in the high-risk category dependent upon future government updates. The concern around the COVID testing system was also emphasised with results currently taking approx. 5 days to come through which has an impact on the academy. Mr Vernon also supported this by further highlighting that since Mr Cotton had taken over as CEO he has a key focus on improving the culture of the trust so this meeting was an opportunity to share openly and honestly where they have concerns moving forward, where there are capacity issues and where as Senior Principal and Principal what they feel Tuxford would benefit from.</p> <p>AIP for 2019/2020 and draft AIP for 2020/2021 Mr Hardy had circulated the AIP to the governors in advance of the meeting. There are 3 main school priorities –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral system – which was created 10 years ago so they are currently looking back at it and making sure it is still appropriate for now. There is now also a focus on year 11 students as they have had to separate each year group. They are also realigning it around new expectations and the new Ofsted criteria whilst also making sure the new pastoral curriculum is much clearer to staff, students, and parents. • Teaching and learning – this is around the implementation and development following the work on the academic curriculum last year. • Parental engagements and community and how this can be developed further. <p>The other 2 priorities are –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID appendix which is trying to catch everything that the academy is doing this year. • Professional development of the staff. This sits much more with the leadership team as they are trying to develop the next set of leaders as part of succession plans. <p>Rev. Price questioned if the teaching and learning priority is where Ms Addison’s curriculum plan across the Trust comes into play. Mr Hardy confirmed this was correct as is the same with Mr Tegerdine who also has a role leading the teaching & learning as well as CPD across the trust. Rev. Price then asked if both would like to attend the next meeting at the beginning to update the governors.</p> <p>Policy appendices It was noted there were no updates on the policy appendices.</p> <p>Governor training plan The governors were updated on the Trust plan for training. There will be whole Trust training prior to every academy committee meeting for governors to attend and then at each committee meeting the training will be putting it all into a local context.</p>	<p>OH / Clerk</p>
AC/08/2021	Report from chair/update from governors - SEM/Trust information, feedback on training attended, forthcoming events	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>Rev. Price informed the governors that he had received communication from a parent with concerns for lack of social distancing within the academy of which the Principal, Senior Principal and local MP had also been copied in too. Rev. Price confirmed he was happy with the response that the Principal had gone back to the parent with. Mr Hardy highlighted to the governors that this is just an example of the anxieties that both the students and parents are having. He further confirmed the academy are doing as much as they can in terms of segregating the school with the additional measures of the different dining spaces, recreation areas and the amended times for the school day to limit all the students arriving and leaving at the same time. It was explained that the government guidance is for the academy to treat each year as a year group bubble but that the bubbles do not need to social distance. By having the separate year groups they are being fully compliant.</p> <p><i>Ms Galbraith left the meeting at 6.30pm</i></p> <p>Mr Vernon added to what Mr Hardy had said by saying how fantastic the secondary schools are dealing with the bubbles. There are 1500 students in a building with 4 corridors, which shows how much of a military operation it is. Mr Vernon went on to discuss the 1 confirmed case of COVID as everyone within the academy knew it would create increased levels of anxiety. 13 days later and there are currently no further cases, so he was pleased with how it the academy had dealt with it. There were only 26 students who were sent home out the 240-student year group which is a credit to the staff. Miss Tivey explained that the academy has a dashboard which has electronic version of seating plans which is really useful in the eventuality of a COVID case. Each year group also has their own toilet and while it is understandably distressing, the government guidance only states a need for a year group bubble and no requirement for social distancing within that. The students are also in a good routine with sanitising their hands-on entry and exit of each room and all the windows and doors in each classroom are open for ventilation. Mr Twelvetrees commented that he was in complete agreement with what was being said and that between 70-80% of the time it is only symptomatic so could have had 4/5 cases. Mr Parsons commented that it needed to be acknowledged that the level of engagement and the way the academy have implemented procedures is outstanding. Feedback from both the students and parents had suggested that everything inside the school is well controlled, however the stairwell routing is starting to become a pinch point. There is also a problem in regard to, the low level adherence to masks on the buses and also when students leave the premises. The academy has staggered the start and end times of the academic day, however all the students are regrouping at the end of the road. Mr Parsons proceeded to then ask is there is anything more that can be done especially with the face mask adherence. Rev Price further highlighted that the leadership team are getting on the bus to ensure the students have their masks on but then the minute they leave the school gates they remove them. Mr Hardy explained some buses are able to take videos and if they provide the academy with the footage then they will ban the student from using the bus however it is the bus company that own the footage so the onus is on them. Mr Vernon added that he hopes the students are holding each other to account. As an academy they can only</p>	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
	<p>educate the students and work from the information they are sharing. Miss Tivey highlighted that the pastoral team do educate the students on the importance of wearing the masks, so it is constantly being stressed to them. Mr Parsons stated that children do not think it is cool to wear a mask so how are the academy approaching that mentality? Mr Parsons is also keeping an eye on the parent's admin social media account and has enforced a zero approach to any comments around COVID.</p> <p>Mr Lancaster asked how as a committee they can see how things are being done in the academy if they are unable to visit. Mr Vernon added that both himself and Mr Hardy would confirm the process for a member of the committee to attend the academy to see on behalf of the governors. Mr Parsons was nominated on behalf of the governors to go for a site visit. Mr Vernon / Mr Hardy to confirm the visit.</p> <p>Mr Lancaster asked if Ofsted are still able to visit. Mr Hardy confirmed they officially can from October. Mr Vernon further added that they do expect this change as under current guidelines they would be unable to complete a full visit.</p>	DV / OH
AC/09/2021	<p>What has been discussed to impact on outcomes for students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes • Health and safety • COVID updates / policies • Teaching and learning • Communication strategies • Risk assessment • Behaviour policy 	
AC/10/2021	<p>How have governors held the school leaders to account? Data dives</p>	
AC/11/2021	<p>Complete report to trustees The committee have completed the report to trustees in particular questioning the reason behind shortening the term of office and also then length of time you can be a chair.</p>	
AC/12/2021	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Monday 7 December 2020 at 5pm via Microsoft Teams</p>	
AC/13/2021	<p>Determination of confidentiality of business Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was Resolved: There had been no confidentiality implications. There had been no Equality Act implications Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 6.51pm.</p>	