



Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Term 4
Held On Wednesday 2nd April, 2025 at 5pm in Mexico class

1. Record of conflict of interests:

The members were asked to declare any interests to any of the items on the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared at the meeting.

Welcome by: Alan Mulrooney (AMul), Chair of Governors to:

Mel Hay (MH), Vice Chair

Lorraine Walker (LW), Clerk to Governors

Alyssia Mepstead (AMep), Head Teacher

Esther Hogg (EH), LA appointed Governor

Andrew Lowson (AL)), Co-opted Governor

Caz Smith (CS), Staff Governor

Craig Sunley (CSun), Co-opted Governor

Dani Crouch (DC), Deputy Head – Co-opted Governor

Sarah Ellison (SE), Business Manager

Apologies: Heather Noble (HN), Co-opted Governor

Sophie Jarrett (SJ), Welfare Officer

Is the meeting quorate? Are apologies accepted?

The meeting is quorate. Apologies were accepted.

2. Governor focus – Attendance:

Apologies received from SJ. Report given – data from September 1.9.24 to 1.4.25.

Whole school attendance is 93%. National is 94.7%. LA average attendance is 93%, so Lainesmead is in line with the LA.

Authorised absence – 5.5%.

Unauthorised absence – 3%.

Persistently absent 65 (90% or lower) - (this includes children on EH, CHIN and CP).

Severely absent 2 (50% or lower) – (SEN/PTT)

Holiday requests 16 - 15 unauthorised, 1 is with HT for decision.

38 x stage 1 letters sent, 8 x stage 2 letters sent and 2 x stage 3 letters sent. 11 x punctuality stage 1 letters sent and 11 x to be sent. Reasons given as transport issues, slept in and parents unwell.

Challenges – parental engagement, term time holidays and lateness, although this is improving.

Lots of families want to go abroad, especially those who have families overseas. As a school we are not struggling with attendance. We have a clear response that is monitored by AMep. Some of our children have health needs which affects the numbers, the children on a part time timetable also affect the numbers.

5 families have the EWO involved. There has been 1 x home visit and 2 x door knocks.

3. SDP focus – AI:

As a school, we feel strongly about using AI, it is time saving and helps to reduce the workload greatly. A twilight session was held for staff in September 2024. They found it very useful – 4.59/5. Teachers learned how AI can help in creating lesson plans, activities, resources and WAGOLL examples (what a good one looks like). It can also help write difficult emails. As well as reducing the workload, teachers reflected on the potential of AI enhancing teaching efficiency. AI can also be used to develop accurate probes and support planning, set SMART targets and activities for SEN. AMep introduced AI to the other Compass HTs, with Aaron delivering training, and an AI Compass TD day is happening after Easter. Crowdys Hill School have already had another AI twilight session for their staff, which was run by Aaron.

CHALLENGE: Is there anything in Primary Education to say that schools should use AI?

The DfE are looking at the curriculum. Our IT spend needs to be analysed. Children are already disappointed that the lack of technology is not supporting their in school learning. Lainesmead needs 1 x device per child, but that is not possible at the moment.

AI will help teachers by reducing their workload which in turn improves staff well-being.

CHALLENGE: Are you using AI to analyse policies?

No, the Key is used for that purpose. The Key is reassuring and knows everything.

CHALLENGE: Is it your intention to utilise AI more throughout the school?

Similar to social media, the age restrictions for children are 13+ years. It will only be used as a teaching tool at present until the age restrictions have been reviewed/changed. It will be used during Science and Technology week again this year, so children get a taster of it.

AI is a very effective tool. The pace of change will quicken. The skills that children will need are not met in the current curriculum. To prepare children for their future lives and careers, we have to introduce them to AI and teach them how to use it effectively. But there is a total lack of funding for technology.

Some ways AI has been used to support Sam Eatwell's workload this academic year include: E-Safety tips, parent overviews, maths questions, morning starters, WAGOLLs for English, Thrive activity ideas, turning a paragraph into another language for a parent and grammar examples.

4. QA Review Q&A:

Challenge in Maths will be a focus area on the SDP for the next academic year.

The QA review will be put on the school website for parents to read.

Challenge Partners is really impressed with how Lainesmead is operating. Leadership is very positive – everything stems from good leadership. Leadership at all levels is exemplary and inspirational. Middle leaders feel well supported and empowered. Leadership would be even better if staff promoted links between what children are learning and their future aspirations for future careers.

Staff felt happy, confident and comfortable to chat with the QA Review team. They were not under pressure or worried and there was a real buzz around the school. Middle/Senior leaders wanted to show off what is going well at Lainesmead and they all volunteered to take part in the review.

Quality of provision and outcomes and quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs – this is more effective for an academy set up. Lainesmead met most of the criteria, apart from teachers working in other schools, this is easier to prove in an academy set up. It would be even better if all pupils were routinely challenged throughout maths lessons and if good practice in eliciting responses from the whole class was shared across the school. No key improvements were identified for disadvantaged pupils or pupils with additional needs.

Governors commented that it was good to see such a positive QA review. It qualifies what they see happening on visits to school and the strengths that we know the school has.

5. Review actions/approval of minutes dated 12.2.25/matters arising:

Minutes dated 12.2.25 approved.

ACTION: SEND update in T5 FGB.

ACTION: Signed bank statements to be given to LW for filing with the minutes. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: SFVS to be read and comments sent to SE. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: Admissions inc Nursery policy to be moved to T4. Additions included and approved. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: Racism findings to be reported by DC in T5 FGB.

ACTION: AL, HN and AMul to be reminded to complete the SFVS. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: Invite to be sent to Governors regarding the National College 'Online Safety' training. Email sent 24.3.25. CSun has completed the training. 1 more Governor to complete. CSun will also complete the Cyber Security training with the National College.

ACTION: MH to send Prevent training certificate to LW. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: Check if HN has any appropriate training certificates. Prevent certificate received. HN will complete Safeguarding training with the National College.

ACTION: Governors to confirm which LA training course they would like to attend. CSun to attend Finance training on 3.6.25. LW to book.

ACTION: Confirmation needed regarding catering equipment and boiler services. Due April 2025.

6. Policies:

Complaints (parental) statutory – approved.

CHALLENGE: On P5 is says: when complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the next school day. In some cases (summer holidays) this may mean the

complaint is received outside of the 4 weeks time limit on making complaints, even if made straight away by a parent. Wouldn't it be helpful to clarify how a complaint could be handled in this situation?

The policy will be updated to say the following: when complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the next school day. If a complaint is submitted during the summer holidays and this means it falls outside the usual 4 weeks' time limit, we will acknowledge receipt of the complaint but clarify it will not be processed until the start of the next term and that this will count as the submission date.

CHALLENGE: On p12 it says this policy will be reviewed every 2 years but we are reviewing it yearly.

Moving forward, it will be reviewed bi-annually.

CHALLENGE: On p16 the sentence highlighted doesn't make sense.

It has been changed to: the complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible.

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs statutory – approved.

CHALLENGE :On p5, how frequently will IHCPs now be reviewed as the 'annual review' part is being removed?

The school follows School Nursing guidance for this, as required by school staff (SENCO).

First Aid statutory – approved in T1 FGB.

Redundancy – approved.

CHALLENGE: Should we add to P3 that on occasions Governors from other schools will be brought in to meet the 3 non committee Governor requirements for the Appeals panel?

Yes, this will be added.

Admissions inc Nursery statutory – approved.

Prevent Statement – to be put on the Hub for approval.

CHALLENGE: Do the local risks (ie. knife crime) have a scoring in terms of impact and likelihood and mitigations the school has in place specific to them?

ACTION: AMep will review the statement and upload to the Hub for Governor approval.

7. Parent Voice:

93% agree/strongly agree their child is happy at school.

88% agree/strongly agree their child feels safe at school.

73% agree/strongly agree the school ensures children are well behaved. 19% disagree with the statement.

68% reported no bullying at school.

87% agree/strongly agree that parents are made aware of their children's progress during the year.

71% agree/strongly agree that their SEN child is given the support they need to succeed.

73% agree/strongly agree that the school has high expectations of their children.

90% agree/strongly agree that their child does well at school.

77% agree/strongly agree the school lets them know how their children are doing.

87% agree/strongly agree there is a good range of subjects available to their children.

81% agree/strongly agree their child can take part in clubs and activities at school.

68% agree/strongly agree the school supports their child's wider personal development.

84% agree/strongly agree they would recommend the school to another parent.

Overall trends:

Positive – increase in satisfaction regarding bullying, SEND support and personal development.

Negative – slight decrease in overall happiness, safety, behaviour management and communication of progress.

A greater number of parents participated in the 2025 survey compared to 2022, reflecting a stronger connection between parents and the school. Many of the other percentages remain in line with previous years.

Actions to be taken (suggestions will be discussed at SLT):

Enhanced communication regarding the sharing of progress to parents at T4 parents evening.

Safety protocols to be reinforced and communicated effectively with parents.

DC to create a behaviour action plan to address the areas identified.

A parent concern form to be introduced, this will form part of the ongoing SDP work on parental engagement.

8. Head Teacher report:

CHALLENGE: Could you provide an update on how the classroom vacancy is being covered until the end of the academic year and the expected impact on leadership?

A Y4 teacher has resigned and is leaving at the end of T4. This is being covered by DC/NDW for 9 hours each per week (18 hours SLT per week short). A HLTA is covering the rest – M/W pm and Friday all day (due to PE in the morning and a short day. This means less SENCO time and less DC Deputy Head time – AMep will monitor the workload. This does mean that a Teacher redundancy is no longer needed.

ACTION: AMep to keep the Governing Body informed as to how this is going.

CHALLENGE: Could you provide context to the teacher training and support plan with an idea of your expected outcome from this?

The teacher training plan is coming to an end with no further training plan in place. The teacher support plan is being reviewed on 9.5.25 and a decision will be made to move or end the plan.

CHALLENGE: With regard to safeguarding incidents, is the neglect number of 48 high?

This high number follows safeguarding training which took place in T3. We are now able to 'tick' the reason for concern, recurrent neglect issues flag up a picture to build up a case for CP.

CHALLENGE: Do you have particular plans for those groups of children not reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and maths?

This is for the subject leaders concerned, they will investigate and plan accordingly. This is something that can be asked of them during presentation in Curriculum meetings.

CHALLENGE: Is there an update on the Compass collaboration, at the last FGB, I believe there was some uncertainty?

See 'Future Proofing' on the Head Teacher report for full details. The RSC has ruled that all Swindon Schools must join a Swindon MAT so The Cambrian Learning Trust is withdrawing from consideration with the Compass Collaboration.

9. Standing Items:

Cash flow and Bank Statements: signed bank statements received, to be attached to the minutes.

Friends of Lainesmead account: EH has agreed the statement. Approved.

Update on financial position to the end of the financial year – please see attached Confidential Minutes.

10. Premises update:

The LA is replacing the Boiler during the first week of the Easter holidays at a cost of £18,000.

The Health & Safety matrix was approved.

11. Staffing/Confidential:

Nothing to report.

12. AOB:

SATS monitoring: CSun will check if he is available for monitoring the SATS tests on 12/13/14/15 May. If not available, LW will monitor.

F40 Campaign for fairer SEND funding: The cross party campaign group f40 is encouraging Governors and Trustees to write to their local MPs to highlight the urgent need for improved funding to support the increasing number of children and young people with additional needs. F40 represents the lowest funded local authorities in England and has long advocated for a more equitable distribution of education and SEND funding.

I believe it would be beneficial for us to consider supporting this campaign as a GB and I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further at our FGB meeting.

After a discussion, it was decided that a letter be sent to our local MP, Heidi Alexander. This letter was sent on 3rd April, 2025.

BBC Wiltshire are helping a Swindon family fight for a child waiting for specialist provision. Lainesmead will not be commenting on an individual case but will prepare a statement if asked for comment.

ACTION: Governors to read and approve the statement for BBC Wiltshire when it is uploaded to the Hub by AMep.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

The date of the next FGB meeting is Wednesday 21st May 2025 at 5pm in Mexico classroom.

Signed Date
Chair of Governors

