

**Minutes Local Advisory Board: Orchard & Shepherdswell**  
**25<sup>th</sup> April 2024 18.00**  
**Meeting held at Orchard Academy**  
**The fifth LAB meeting of the academic year 2023-2024**

These minutes reflect the order of the agenda and not necessarily the order of discussion

Name	Lead area	Type of governor	Term from-to	Present	No. of meetings attended
Ruth Ryan	Executive Headteacher	Headteacher	21/02/2020 – N/A	Yes	4/5
Chris Akpakwu	Vice Chair / Safeguarding	Parent	13/07/20 - 12/07/24	Apologies	3/5
Bekky Salako Joined at 6.34pm		Co-opted	14/03/24 – 13/03/28	Yes	1/1
Riyike Olateru	Chair / Adapting the curriculum for SEND, DA and EAL pupils.	Co-opted	22/06/23 - 21/06/27	Yes	5/5
Kirsty Weatherspoon		Staff Governor Shepherdswell	18/12/2023-17/12/2027	Yes	2/3
Vacancies	Staff - 1 / Parent Governor - 1 / Co-opted - 5				

Others present at the meeting

NAME	ROLE
Joshua Coleman	Chief Executive Officer - EMAT
John Lawson	Head of Education – EMAT
Paul Osborne	Governance Support Officer
Hannah Auger	Head of School - Orchard
Ellen Williams	Head of School - Shepherdswell
Barry Wardle	Clerk

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome and Introductions	Governors and EMAT staff were welcomed to the meeting and reminded that discussions were confidential until the minutes of the meeting had been formally approved by the Board.	
2. Apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from <b>Chris Akpakwu</b>	
3. Quoracy.	The meeting was quorate.	

4. Declarations of interest.	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda that had not already been declared on the annual register of interests.	
5. Minutes of the Local Advisory Board meeting held on the 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	The LAB noted some formatting issues with the minutes. PO asked BW to send a Word version of the minutes to him and he will review and fix. The LAB agreed that once actioned the minutes would be an accurate representation of the meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024.	<b>BW/PO</b>
6. Action Log from the meeting held on the 14 <sup>t</sup> 2024.	<p>1. RR/HA to arrange a meet the staff/parents/Governor opportunity at Orchard. <b>Ongoing.</b></p> <p>2. PO to add an agenda item on the July 18<sup>th</sup> LAB meeting for Orchard’s update including advice for governors for their meeting with the inspector. <b>Ongoing.</b></p> <p>3. Information to be provided via email before next meeting on number of parents using their “free hours” of Nursery time. <b>Completed</b></p> <p>4. Information on NGA Equality Policy to be forwarded to all Governors. <b>Completed and further discussed in Minute 8</b></p> <p>5. Agenda item required for 18 July 2024 Board meeting on Phase 2 of Use of GovernorHub. <b>Ongoing.</b></p> <p>6. Head of Governance to work with Chair of LAB on Governor Recruitment. <b>Ongoing and further discussed in Minute 8</b></p>	<p><b>RR/HA</b></p> <p><b>PO</b></p> <p><b>PO</b></p> <p><b>AR and Chair</b></p>
7. Headteacher’s report  School Context and behaviour	<p>i. Headteachers report. HA highlighted Orchard information. EW highlighted Shepherdswell information.</p> <p><b>SHEPHERDSWELL - Behaviour</b> Behaviour remained good; most children were calm and engaged with their learning. Staff had received further training to identify and deliver appropriate interventions to support any pupil with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues. The nursery provision had continued to grow, and actions were being taken to gain Department for Education approval of an increase in places.</p> <p><b>Gov: Is there a waiting list for a place in the Nursery and what is the effect on the school’s finances?</b> EW: There is not a waiting list, but numbers have increased. 16 of the Nursery children will join the Shepherdswell EYFS provision. The school has actively promoted its Nursery Provision through a banner outside Orchard school, ensuring its fees are less than the newly opened Local Private Nursery provision and advertising on the Local Parish Council newsletter. The Nursery is currently in a financial surplus</p> <p><b>ORCHARD - Behaviour</b> Supporting good behaviour remained a focus for Orchard staff. It was apparent that changes made to behaviour management were now having a positive</p>	

impact. There had been a reduction in the number of children out of the classroom and a noticeable drop in the number of children being sent to see the Head of school. The work of the Pastoral and Inclusion Team, the SENCo, the use of the Rainforest facility and regular Behaviour Management training were the main reasons for this improvement. A further result was a slight decrease in the number of suspensions – the Board noted that for the first time this academic year there had been no pupil suspensions for one school week.

The school remained focussed on improving parental engagement and creating a more positive reputation in the local community. Staff were available at the start and end of the school day to talk with parents and resolve any immediate issues – this had impacted positively on the satisfaction of parents with the school. There had been fewer formal complaints and a concern raised by a parent with Ofsted had been quickly resolved.

**JL: What has been the impact of changes to behaviour management in the classroom**

HA: It has been positive and behaviour in all classes has improved. The three Early Career Teachers have had a bespoke coaching package, staff meetings have focussed on practical methods that can be used in class and great support and interventions have been provided by the Thompson Team.

**JL: How do you know that the impact of the changes to behaviour management are being successful?**

HA: Senior staff regularly visit all classrooms and have commented on the improved tangible calmness of pupils in class. Talking with pupils has provided evidence on their growing enjoyment of learning and far few staff have been seeking immediate intervention from the Senior Leadership Team for a classroom behaviour incident. Another piece of evidence is that 7 of the children with a Behaviour Plan in December 2023 no longer require one. Whilst the Senior Leadership Team accept that there is still much to do, it was clear that behaviour across all classes had improved.

**Gov: What will be the impact on SATs for the 7 children in Year 6 with Behaviour Plans?**

HA: Four of these children will reach their expected standard in the SATs, the other three children's behaviour currently was a barrier to their progress and the school continued to support these pupils.

**Gov: Is poor behaviour more prevalent in some Years?**

HA: Possibly due to the consequences of Covid-19 pandemic poor behaviour is generally more prevalent in Years 5 and 6.

**Gov: What Year Groups create the most parental complaints?**

HA: The school has investigated five formal complaints, three of these were from Year 5. Two of these Year 5 families who have made complaints are

currently in the process of seeking, with the full support of the school, an alternative school for their child. Occasionally it would seem parents sometimes fail to accept that their child may have been more involved as the perpetrator and not the victim of a particular poor behaviour incident.

### **SHEPHERDSWELL – Attendance**

Attendance was at 97.5% (National 94.2%) and the recent Safeguarding Audit carried out by the Trust confirmed that its attendance processes were robust and effective. Persistent Absence had again considerably reduced – 2.4% (National 16.5%). It was stated that parent contracts and robust attendance procedures were responsible for these positive changes. An example was given of the impact on non-attendance from just one pupil whose family had moved out of the immediate area resulting in non-attendance. It was hoped that this child had started at their new school on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Celebration of attendance happened in weekly assemblies and attendance and punctuality information was given weekly to all parents.

### **ORCHARD – Attendance**

Orchards had continued to receive very useful advice and support from Shepherdswell colleagues on the management of attendance. The new Attendance Team which supported both schools had been very pro-active and helped the attendance to be better than the national level of 94.2%. (Current attendance was 94.7%). Persistent Absence of 19.61% though remained above the national figure of 16.4% . A full explanation was provided on the impact on attendance and Persistent Absence by just four children, it was noted that none of these children were SEND or Pupil Progress children. Staff continued to ensure that the attendance procedures were robustly implemented.

**JC: The Trust is supporting the improvement of attendance at both schools and staff are pleased with the progress being made.**

### **SHEPHERDSWELL – Staffing**

The two Early Career Teachers continued to make excellent progress and they remained on track to pass their second term at the school. Both these teachers had commented on the very positive and useful support they had received from mentors in other EMAT schools. It was hoped that the member of office staff currently undergoing treatment for a serious illness would return to work, initially on a limited timetable, in May 2024.

### **ORCHARD – Staffing**

The contract of a Year 4 Teacher, initially recruited from a Supply Agency, had been terminated at the end of the 2024 Spring Term due to issues raised by other staff, parents and children about this teachers' professional conduct. An internal Higher Learning Teaching Assistant would cover this position for the 2024 Summer Term. Changes had also occurred in lunchtime and after school staffing – the newly appointed staff member would cover both these roles. The

school still had 2 Early Career Teachers – one of them was meeting all agreed targets the other’s probation had been extended due to ongoing concerns about their attendance record. An HLTA had received a management letter due to concerns about their professional conduct in relation to behaviour management in the classroom setting.

**Gov: Where the concerns about the Year 4 teachers to do with safeguarding?**

HA: No; the concerns were low level – such as inappropriate use of the telephone in lessons. Advice and support had been given but not acted upon.

**Gov: How serious is a management letter?**

HA: In effect it is a formal warning – it makes it clear how the behaviour of the recipient is not in line with school policy.

**Gov: Have the two ECT Teachers at Orchard benefitted from previously working at the school?**

HA: Most certainly. One of these teachers worked the two years previously at the school as a Teaching Assistant; the other ECT completed her “teaching practice” at Orchard. Both teachers are positive, eager to learn and enjoying delivering Quality Teaching.

**SHEPHERDSWELL – Data Headlines**

The school’s target for its EYFS children was 70% to reach Good Level of Development. This target was deemed achievable as currently 59% of pupils had clearly reached this level. Information was shared on the support and intervention strategies currently being used to assist the five children working below their expected level of development – these included a bespoke curriculum/timetable; specific training for Support staff; 1:1 Fast Track Phonics sessions and videos for their parents on how they can support their phonics learning outside the classroom. Considerable staff training and professional support was also being offered and received from the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Teaching and Learning.

Every teacher at the school was aware of the attainment and progress being made for every child in their class. This information was then used to ensure that every child was being appropriately supported and challenged within the classroom. It was further noted that attainment and progress in Maths remained below the expected level, but Governors were assured that the ongoing targeted interventions would improve these results. The Board also noted that whilst some SEND students had yet to reach their expected level of Development, they had nevertheless made considerable progress from their original starting point at the beginning of the school year.

**JL: Are you on track to achieve your Good Level of Development targets?**

EW: The Good Level of Development for English will certainly be met, we are of the view that with the interventions in place the target for Maths will also

ii. Date Headlines

be achieved. Governors need to be aware that we do have some very high needs children and some of our new children have more Special needs than we first thought.

RR: Teaching is adapted to suit the needs of our children. Time has been allowed for additional lesson planning for our 4 high needs children. Shepherdswell have identified the issues with Read, Write Inc and staff are giving the required support for retrieval, fluency and comprehension. We have regular Pupil Progress meetings, and every effort is made to ensure that children are in the right learning group.

**JL: Have you tapped into the support available from the Central Team for help with the delivery of Read, Write Inc?**

EW: The support has been invaluable. The analysis of those children just below their expected level of development has been used to provide bespoke interventions. Staff have been able to use a range of stratagems which we believe will allow us to successfully achieve our targets.

### **ORCHARD – Data headlines**

Progress is being made, especially in Year 2 where the teacher as a result of the support received is more confident in her assessment decisions. Clear evidence has been seen of Quality First Teaching and book checks have confirmed progress. Further work had been taking place with Pupil Premium children and their progress was on track.

**Gov: Is it possible to have a list of the abbreviations used in the information provided for the meeting on Data Headlines?**

JL: This will be provided in the next report. There is also going to be a Data Training Session for Governors during the 2024 Summer term.

**Gov: What support is in place in relation to the Year 4 Multiplication test?**

HA: At the moment children are not at the right level and we have increased interventions and made good use of the skills and experience of the new Assistant Headteacher. Daily practice is occurring, and staff have focussed on assisting children with the pressure of quick questioning.

**Gov: Will the SATs results be in line with your expectations?**

HA: Children completed another Mock SATs exam before Easter and whilst this did show that some children had made good progress, it also identified those students who still need some “last minute” intervention work. This is now taking place for Maths, English and Test Technique. A lot of work is being completed in these last few weeks and staff are in many cases working with individual children to ensure that they achieve the very best possible result. We remain confident that our ambitious targets will be achieved.

PO



<p>iii. Safeguarding</p> <p>B. Performance Reports</p>	<p><b>Gov: Can Governors come in to school to check that the administration and organisation of SATs is correct?</b> RR: Governors are welcome to come into school and times and dates will be sent out by EMAT for such visits.</p> <p><b>SHEPHERDSWELL – School Improvement Plan</b> The school is on track to meet all its targets as evidenced by the Mid-Year Review by EMAT staff on 18 March 2024. The school has continued to go from strength to strength. Leadership skills have improved; Collection and sharing of information has increased and benefitted all teachers. The Leadership of the school had taken rapid actions to address the recommendations in the recent Safeguarding and Mid-Year Reviews.</p> <p><b>ORCHARD – School Improvement Plan</b> The Leadership had worked very hard to introduce or further develop a range of systems/structure and guidance to ensure that all staff were aware of the school expectations. Considerable support was being offered to all teachers to ensure that Quality First Education was achieved in all lessons at all times. The school is clearly making progress, and whilst there is still much to do, it is clear that real progress is being made due to the relentless actions of Senior staff at the school.</p> <p><b>SHEPHERDSWELL and ORCHARD – SAFEGUARDING</b> The Board noted that the recent Safeguarding Reports on both schools (March 2024) had showed that there were no urgent or serious safeguarding issues at either school.</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE REPORT</b> The Board received a Performance Report on both schools which provided detailed information on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil Numbers – Orchard – 354; Shepherdswell – 143</li> <li>Numbers of EAL; SEN students; EHCPs and Disadvantaged children</li> <li>Pupil Attendance</li> <li>Staffing – numbers and attendance</li> <li>Effectiveness of Leadership and Management</li> <li>Quality of Teaching and Learning</li> <li>Exclusions</li> <li>Statutory Data relating to Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare</li> <li>Governance</li> <li>Parental Complaints</li> <li>Community and Parental Engagement</li> </ul> <p>Governors asked the following question:</p>	<p>RR</p>
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	<p><b>Gov: Have both schools practiced a lockdown?</b> HE/EW: These have taken place at both schools and all the children responded very well. Another lockdown practice will take place during the 2024 summer term.</p>	
8. Governor Updates – i. visits	<p><b>GOVERNOR VISIT AND LEAD AREAS</b> Mr C Akpakwu had completed a Safeguarding visit at both schools and his report would be made available at the next meeting. Ms Weatherspoon had spoken with staff responsible for the delivery of the Attendance strategy and would finish her visits on this matter by the next Board meeting</p> <p>It was noted that Ms Salako would decide by the time of the next LAB meeting on which area she wished to oversee.</p>	<p><b>CA KW</b></p> <p><b>BS</b></p>
ii. Termly Trust Governance meeting	Governors were informed the Termly Trust Governance Meeting would take place at Orchard school on 22 May 2024 between 18.00 – 19.30.	
iii. EMATers Award	Governors were encouraged to nominate for one of the many categories in the Annual EMATers Celebration Award scheme	<b>All Govs</b>
iv. Equality Training	Governors were reminded to complete the NGA Equality Training as soon as possible – the link to the training had been sent to them on 5 April 2024.	<b>All Govs</b>
v. Term Dates	Governors noted the Term dates for the academic year 2025 – 2026.	
vi. Governor Training	Governors were asked to ensure their training records now kept on GovernorHub were up to date. If required help would be made available from EMAT staff.	<b>All Govs &amp; PO</b>
vii. Governance Survey	Governors were encouraged to complete the Governance survey	<b>All Govs</b>
vii. Governor Recruitment	<p>The Board noted that the Chair and Ms Rigler had attended a number of meetings to encourage people to become school governors. Some excellent connections had been made with businesses in Milton Keynes – these were being further explored and it was hoped that these actions would result in more volunteers to join the Local Advisory Board. The Chair and Ms Rigler were thanked for their help and involvement. It was further noted that Mr Osborne would directly contact a number of companies and organisations in Milton Keynes to encourage their involvement in school governance.</p> <p>The Board was informed that a parent from Shepherdswell had completed an application form to become a Parent Governor. If no further parent sought nomination this person would attend the next Local Advisory Board meeting as the new Parent Governor.</p>	<b>Chair/AR/ PO</b>



	<p>The LAB noted that Mr Akpakwu’s term of office would end in July 2024 and asked if he could be approached to ascertain his plans.</p>	<p><b>PO</b></p>
<p>9. Parent/Carer and Pupil Surveys</p>	<p>The Board received the Pupil and Parent Surveys completed in February 2024. The Parental surveys of Shepherdswell school were very impressive and showed overwhelming satisfaction by parents for the work of the school.</p> <p>It was apparent from the Orchard parental survey that views of a very small number of unhappy parents, also expressed on social media, had skewed the results. Senior Management were of the view that the Parent survey did not capture the quite cohort of parents who were satisfied that their children were getting a good education at Orchard Academy.</p> <p>It was evident to Orchard Academy Senior Staff that some parents had not accepted the schools’ expectations of pupil behaviour and that were not able to accept that perhaps their child had taken a more active part in a poor behaviour incident. Senior staff accepted that the overall Parental Survey results were “not good enough” and the great efforts being made to improve the image of the school would continue. <b>Governors asked if the Parental Survey data could be presented by Year Group as there was a view that parents who had expressed dissatisfaction appeared to only have children in Years 5 &amp; 6.</b></p> <p>Governors noted that the results of the Orchard Academy Childrens survey had been much more positive with 92% of students stating they would recommend the school to a friend.</p>	<p><b>HA &amp; EMAT</b></p>
<p>10. Internal and External Reports</p>	<p>The Board received the Shepherdswell and Orchard Academies Mid-Year Reviews – both had taken place on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</p> <p>The Board received the reports of S Watermans visit to both schools on 22 March 2024. Governors asked the following question:</p> <p><b>Gov: What has been the impact of the twice termly visits by S Waterman?</b>        RR: Staff have been able to develop a shared pedagogy; receive a lot of ideas and develop a longer-term strategy for Teaching and Learning . The visits have also allowed Senior Staff to identify priorities and they have improved accountability within the school and the Trust. Ms Waterman’s visits are just one of the many ways the schools are positively supported by the Trust – they have been invaluable in confirming that the changes that have been introduced are appropriate and working.</p>	

11. Suggestions for future agenda items	There were no further suggestions.	
12. Any Other Business	<p>All Governors were invited and actively encouraged to attend the End of Year Reviews for both schools – Shepherdswell 24 June 2024 – 10.00 – 12.00 and Orchards 24 June 2024 – 1.30 – 3.30.</p> <p>The Board was invited to attend the 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Family Picnic at Shepherdswell school.</p>	
13. Dates of meetings	<p>The Board would meet next on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 18.00 hours.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7.36pm</p>	

Minutes agreed as a true representation and signed

Signature

Print Name

Date

The meeting closed at 19.36

#### Actions from the meeting for O&S held 25/04/2024

Action	Owner
1. BW to send Word Version of Minutes of 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 for corrections to formatting. Page 2.	BW/PO
2. RR and HA to arrange a meet the staff/parents/Governor opportunity at Orchard on the evening of the first LAB meeting in September 2024. Page 2.	RR/HA
3. PO to add an item on the July LAB meeting for Orchard's Ofsted Update including advice for governors for their meeting with the Inspector. Page 2.	PO
4. PO to share information regarding the launch of Phase 2 on GovernorHub at the 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 LAB meeting. Page 2.	PO
5. List of Abbreviations used in Data reports and reports from Headteachers to be provided for all Governors. Page 6.	PO
6. Governors to be provided information on dates of SAT exams and to contact the school if they wish to visit then to check on the management of these exams	PO & RR
7. Mr C Akpakwu to complete his Governor Report on Safeguarding. Page 8.	CW
8. Ms Weatherspoon to complete her Governor Report on Attendance. Page 8.	KW
9. Ms Salako to decide area of Governor Oversight before next LAB meeting. Page 8.	BS
10. Nominations can be made by any Governors for an EMATers Celebration Award. Page 8	All Govs

11. All Governors to complete NGA Equality training - link sent out 5 April 2024. Page 8.	All Govs
12. All Governors encouraged to complete the Governance Survey. Page 8	All Govs
13. Governor Recruitment – ongoing work to find new Governor via contacts with local Milton Keynes businesses and organisations to continue and report back at the next meeting. Page 8.	Chair/AR and PO
14. Mr Akpakwu to be contacted to ascertain his plans when his term of office as a Parent Governor ends in July 2024. Page 9.	PO
15. Data from Orchards Parent Survey to be by Year Group. Page 9.	HA and EMAT

DRAFT