

**Minutes of the Quality of Education & Safeguarding Committee Meeting (Oxon)**  
**Held virtually on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 11am**

**Attendees**

Alison Ashcroft	Principal DPA	Present	AA
Sarah Bellingham	Clerk	Present	Clerk
Jodie Croft	CEO	Present	JC
Lauren Cronk	Staff Governor DPA	<b>Absent</b>	LC
Sarah Gladwin	Parent Governor DPA	Present	PG
Alison Hill	Director	Present	AH
Laura Maynard	Parent Governor DPA	Present	LM
Leah Perring	Principal WPA	Present	LP
Lara Robson	Director	Present	LR

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1** JC welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was being held virtually via Zoom. The meeting was declared quorate and the Clerk was attending remotely to take the minutes.
- 1.2** JC explained that LC had sent her apologies, and these were approved.
- 1.3** It was noted that all documents to be discussed in the meeting had been circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting via e-mail.

**2. Appointment of Chair**

- 2.1** JC asked which of the committee members would be happy to take on the role of committee Chair. LR said that she would be happy to. All committee members approved this appointment (**ACTION – Clerk**). For this meeting only, JC confirmed that she would run through the agenda items.

**3. Identify Items for AOB**

- 3.1** No items were raised.

**4. Receive previous committee minutes and discuss actions not on the agenda elsewhere**

- 4.1** JC had reviewed the previous standards committee minutes and actions. Any outstanding actions had been included on the agenda.
- 4.2** JC explained that the Trust's re-branding process was underway. This would result in an amicable split from GEMS Education to form an independent trust. JC planned to share more details with parents in the new year.

4.3 The minutes of the former standards committee were approved.

**5. Receive annual schedule of policy reviews**

5.1 JC confirmed that the annual policy review schedule was contained in the Governance Handbook and set out which group was responsible for the various policy reviews and approvals. There were no policies requiring approval at this meeting.

**6. Review national test results and other published data**

6.1 JC said that because there had been no data published from the DfE or the local authority, as would normally be the case to enable a progress review, there was not much to discuss at this point so early into the first term.

**7. Principals Dashboards: summary presentations including SEND/safeguarding issues and safeguarding report**

Wantage Primary Academy

7.1 LP shared the data on her screen. She confirmed that the school had only opened on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and so the data would be limited.

*Pupil numbers*

7.2 There was just a small number of pupils at the school, with two more joining Year 1 on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September. There were far more girls than boys and this would be kept under review.

*Attendance*

7.3 There was no formal school attendance data yet. All children had been attending except for one pupil and sibling who had been isolating whilst waiting for a Covid-19 test result, which came back negative.

*Behaviour & Safeguarding*

7.4 There were no behaviour or safeguarding concerns to report. One nursery pupil was on a Child in Need (CIN) plan and the school was working closely with the family in this respect.

*Staffing & CPD*

7.5 Currently there were two teachers and two support staff, with the addition of Alison attending twice a week as the SENDCo. One more nursery TA would be sourced for January 2021 to support the new cohort of nursery pupils at that time.

7.6 The staff had already undergone extensive training. LP referred to the high quality of the Educare training in use, and to the paediatric first aid modules carried out. Training was also due to be provided to the deputy DSL to become a safeguarding lead. An NQT was currently completing her training programme, and LP was taking part in her headship programme. In addition, staff had been receiving training on school systems and the CLPE literacy programme.

**7.7 Q: How did the school opening go?**

**A:** LP explained that staff started on 1<sup>st</sup> September, albeit based temporarily at the Didcot Primary Academy site. Once the site was ready, KS1 pupils arrived on 17<sup>th</sup> September. There were builders still on site to complete some works, but the school was able to open officially on 21<sup>st</sup> September. The pupils seemed happy and were settling well. Staff were noticing significant learning gaps and the baseline assessments were underway. Staff appeared to have an excellent rapport and appeared keen to push the children's learning. LP was pleased.

- 7.8** JC explained that the trust had secured guaranteed funding for four to five years from the local authority, to assist while the pupil numbers were low. This would allow the school to grow gradually, especially as growth depended to a great extent on the sale of recently built housing nearby. JC also confirmed that one of her governance roles was as a safeguarding lead, and as part of this she carried out a regular safeguarding audit of both WPA and DPA. She had done this recently and there were no issues to report.

*Didcot Primary Academy*

- 7.9** AA shared her dashboard data on screen.

*Pupil Numbers*

- 7.10** There were almost 400 pupils at the school now, having started with just 138. AA would update the data with the ethnic group breakdown and circulate after the meeting (**ACTION – AA**). There was one space in Year 3, but a waiting list was in place for all other year groups. Reception was at 62 pupils, which was two more than normal, meaning 31 pupils in each of the two classes.

**7.11 Q: Did the school have several services children and how long did these children typically stay?**

**A:** AA confirmed it did have several, but that the numbers were getting smaller in each year group over time. It was hard to say whether these children tended to stay at the school over the longer term, as no clear patterns were apparent. The family support worker was aware of these families and would contact them if a deployment was planned, to offer increased support for the children.

*(LP left the meeting at 11.50)*

*Attendance*

- 7.12** Attendance was at 96.2% still, but the figure did not include anyone isolating or waiting for a Covid-19 test result. So far, all Covid-19 tests had come back negative.

**7.13 Q: Please explain the persistent absence data.**

**A:** AA said that 'persistent' at this early point in the term might only mean one or two days' absence. It was important to be cautious when interpreting the absence data at this time given the isolation requirements and delays for families in receiving Covid-19 test results. Three nursery children had not yet started due to their families' nervousness about Covid-19, but these children would be starting on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

*Behaviour & Safeguarding*

- 7.14** Lots of safeguarding activity had been taking place since the school closure. No pupils were under a child protection plan however two families were under supervision and these were complex cases.

There were some children on family plans, some of which were school led and some of which were led by the early help assessment group. The school's family support worker took the lead on these cases now.

*Staffing & CPD*

**7.15** The school was fully staffed but there was caretaker vacancy and the interview would be taking place the next day. The CPD data was not available yet.

**7.16 Q:** Had the staff completed their safeguarding training?

**A:** AA confirmed that all safeguarding and prevent duty training requirements had been met. Also, there were five DSLs at the school, whom AA met with every week to run through all of the pupils on a plan. A RAG rating was done for each case to assess any actions needed.

**8. Approve pupil progress and attainment targets for current academic year**

Wantage Primary Academy

**8.1** LP shared the targets data on her screen for 2021 and ran through the key information per year group for the age-related (ARE) and greater depth (GD) categories. Overall, high standards had been set. LP flagged that given the small pupil numbers, each child counted as a larger than normal percentage of the total figure as compared to DPA or TPA. The school was striving for excellence and was pushing hard.

**8.2 Q:** How did pupil progress compare with the national figures and what were your greater depth (GD) targets?

**A:** LP confirmed that all pupils' progress was at least at the national standard. GD targets had only been set for the foundation stage at the moment. These targets would be set for the older children once a full baseline assessment had been possible. AA agreed that it was hard right at the point of opening to understand fully about GD potential. It was sensible to do a proper baseline assessment before setting standards especially for GD. AA also added that some of DPA's Year 1 joiners had received no prior schooling, which would impact attainment outcomes even if individual progress was good. LP confirmed that one of her Year 1 pupils had not received any schooling before joining.

**8.3** JC confirmed that the targets had been approved by the trust's Director of Education, Terri de Quincey. The committee unanimously approved these targets.

Didcot Primary Academy

**8.4** AA shared the targets data on her screen for 2021 and ran through the key information per year group for the age-related (ARE) and greater depth (GD) categories.

**8.5** The early years figure was 76%, which was above the national standard. AA discussed key points from the data, to include KS1 phonics and the planned autumn term phonics screening, Year 1 reading, writing and maths, and the GD numbers at Year 6.

**8.6 Q:** Would teachers be sending phonics activities home with children to help close learning gaps?

**A:** AA would check this and confirm (**ACTION – AA**).

**8.7 Q:** In relation to the phonics learning gaps, are the pupils in question just short of expected attainment or a long way off?

**A:** AA said that there was a mix of each.

**8.8** AA summarised that overall, the targets were ambitious, and that these would be kept under review throughout the year to ensure that they remained realistic.

**8.9 Q:** Would this be the last year for KS1 tests?

**A:** AA said that she did not know yet. DPA's KS1 assessment was in place in the usual way for the time being and the assumption was that SATS would be taking place.

**8.10** The committee unanimously approved the DPA targets for this academic year.

**9. Ensure SEF/SDP reflect agreed actions and approve**

*Wantage Primary Academy*

**9.1** LP shared the SDP on her screen. She ran through the school improvement priority areas which had been set following Ofsted requirements, and noted key points.

*Quality of Education*

**9.2** LP confirmed that she had applied for catch-up funding for her Year 1 and 2 students. She was due a response in three days' time. JC confirmed that the government was offering the equivalent of £80 per pupil to help close learning gaps this term. LP said that one-to-one tutoring had been planned for those pupils needing it, regardless of whether this funding was received.

*Behaviour and Attitudes*

**9.3** LP noted that the current isolation rules might have an impact in this area.

**9.4 Q:** Will you be using the Paul Dix materials being used at DPA?

**A:** LP said that her school's motto was 'Belong, Believe, Achieve' and was similar to the DPA approach. This approach was being shown throughout the school for example via displays on the walls and in the way staff and children spoke to one another. LP had noticed it being modelled nicely by the children already.

*Personal Development*

**9.5** LP said that British values were important and that a tool called Jigsaw, also used by DPA, was being used to help with that. There were also opportunities for pupil leadership, and for collaborating with DPA and local schools. This would all become easier when pupil numbers rose.

**9.6 Q:** Was the school being mindful of the children's social development, given how few children were there at present?

**A:** LP said that she was aware of this. Strategies to help the children mix with others included a half term club on offer to children from local schools, a plan to offer after school clubs as soon as possible, and discussions with other head teachers in the area about local activities on offer. LP was also looking into virtual opportunities.

*Leadership and Management*

**9.7** A tool called 'Evidence Me' was in use for the EYFS and was also being used by DPA, to help share pictures and details of the children's day with parents and to encourage engagement between the school and parents. LP commented that the CPD programme was well established. There would also be rigorous gap analysis and based on the outcomes the school would purchase whatever was needed, within the budget, to help improve attainment.

**9.8** **Q:** Was LP confident with the school's risk assessments and its approach regarding Covid-19?  
**A:** LP replied that she was. The risk assessment had been set to all parents, who had been asked to acknowledge it. Things were going smoothly, and the youngest pupils had not experienced school any other way.

#### *Early Years*

**9.9** LP confirmed that there was a full timetable on offer with opportunities for rigorous learning and challenge. A mastery approach was being taken for Reception upwards. There was an excellent early years' leader at the school who was training up the nursery lead.

**9.10** **Q:** What approach will you take in the event of further lock downs?  
**A:** LP said that the school planned to use Google Classroom. Staff had all been trained on this and they would continue with a blended learning approach. If a whole bubble, or the whole school needed to isolate, lessons could be delivered by video software.

**9.11** **Q:** What was the school doing about families without printers, wi-fi, or devices?  
**A:** LP confirmed that there had been an audit of the parent community on this topic, and support was available to parents and children if needed, to include the offer of Google Chrome Books and of printing out class materials.

**9.12** **Q:** How would a family that was isolating be able to collect printed materials?  
**A:** LP said that she would happily organise for materials to be delivered to the family's home if that was needed.

**9.13** The committee unanimously approved the SDP for WPA.

#### *Didcot Primary Academy*

**9.14** AA shared her 'at a glance' version of the school's SDP and clarified that the categories and language were based on the Ofsted requirements.

#### *Quality of Education*

**9.15** Pupils were undergoing extensive assessment, without being aware of it. Phonics was a particular focus, as well as enhancing older pupils' computer and technology skills to encourage independent online learning when needed. A blended learning leader had been appointed and would help draw up a blended learning policy factoring in the results from a parent questionnaire concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the online learning provision to date. A parent audit had also been carried out to assess families' digital and technology needs.

**9.16** **Q:** What are your plans for the catch-up funding?  
**A:** AA said that the school would first provide extra tutoring from within its members of staff and would purchase external support only if required. The school would also be purchasing devices for

families to use at home for online learning. Further assessment was needed before finalising the spending plan.

*Behaviour and Attitudes*

**9.17** Pupils were mostly happy to be playing with their friends, despite the bubbles in place. The school was hoping to adjust the position of the desks in the younger pupils' classrooms, as they appeared to be struggling more with sitting in rows. A risk assessment would be carried out and changes made once safety had been accounted for. Attendance was being closely monitored via Jenny in the office and the family support worker. There had already been good attendance in June 2020 when the school had reopened to all year groups.

**9.18 Q:** Had there been any change in pupils' attitudes to learning since coming back?

**A:** AA said that the children seemed excited and happy to be back in school. AA was visiting all of the classrooms regularly.

*Personal Development*

**9.19** AA said that the school was trying to offer wider opportunities to pupils despite Covid-19. It was also thinking of ways to make the current Year 6 feel special as this was the first Year 6 group the school had had.

**9.20 Q:** What support are you offering in terms of mental health?

**A:** AA confirmed that the school had put in place a family support worker and a school-wide nurture groups programme. Emma was the member of staff designated as the mental health lead and was undergoing additional mental health training this year. The Year 6 group would be given lots of support in the context of their transition to senior school, because the usual autumn term transition activities were not available in the same way due to Covid-19.

*Leadership and Management*

**9.21** AA said that the school had a long history of supporting staff development effectively and would build on that this year. The school was working hard to engage well with parents who were not able to come to the school site, and the school would continue to have a member of the office team meeting parents at the drop off queue to help answer smaller queries quickly.

*Early Years*

**9.22** AA said that the school was linked with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE), which helped a school provide pupils with high quality texts. This had a big impact on vocabulary and writing. The school's approach to whole class guided reading was also effective for that.

**9.23** The committee unanimously approved the DPA SDP for 2020-21.

**10. Review of pupil & sports premium and impact analysis 19/20; Approve spending plans 20/21**

*Wantage Primary Academy*

**10.1** LP had confirmed earlier in the meeting that no funding or figures were available to discuss at this stage.

Didcot Primary Academy

- 10.2** AA said that the school had until April 2021 to report on the impact of the sports premium funding.
- 10.3** AA shared the school's 2020-21 Pupil Premium plan on her screen and ran through the data. The progress and attendance of these children was key, along with their physical and mental well-being. Staff had received additional training prior to the start of term, for example on phonics. The school had also purchased online programmes to provide support with phonics and reading. The school had been developing an ELSA programme, which was proving highly effective, and now there was a family support worker available in school who was responsible for liaising with several families and who received referrals about individual children.
- 10.4** **Q:** Did the school still use the local authority families' liaison worker?  
**A:** AA explained that this person was currently on site working one day per fortnight only. Therefore, the school had employed a family support worker and had introduced its lunchtime nurture group programme.
- 10.5** **Q:** Had AA seen the impact of the spending described in this area?  
**A:** AA said that it was difficult to say because there had been no formal impact assessment just before lockdown.
- 10.6** **Q:** Did AA anticipate that this spending would have a positive impact on attainment?  
**A:** AA said she thought it would. The nurture part of it especially, and having parents on board, were so important for children's success.
- 10.7** All of the committee members were happy with the schools' reports.

**11. Approve Academy term, holiday and inset dates**

- 11.1** LP had confirmed earlier in the meeting that the WPA term dates for 2021-22 were in line with those issued by the local authority.
- 11.2** AA confirmed that DPA's 2021-22 dates were also compliant.
- 11.3** JC clarified that both schools had arranged for six inset days rather than five, noting that staff worked longer days at GEMS Learning Trust Schools. The extra day might be used to enhance collaboration across the Trust, or to give time back to staff. The committee unanimously approved both sets of term dates.

**12. Website compliance report from Principals**

- 12.1** LP had confirmed earlier in the meeting that WPA's website was compliant with statutory requirements.
- 12.2** AA also confirmed that DPA was compliant.

**13. Diversity curriculum audit tool**

- 13.1** JC said that she had circulated an anti-racism curriculum audit tool to the schools, which was sourced from the website The Key. JC explained briefly what it contained and how it was intended

to be used. JC also confirmed that the curriculum review via the diversity audit tool was part of a broader piece of diversity and inclusion related work taking place across the whole trust.

**13.2** AA said that she would look at this with her SLT soon. The school had already done an analysis of its library books the previous year to ensure they better reflected the diversity of pupils' backgrounds.

**13.3** JC said that the heads of each of the Trust's schools were being asked to do this audit and that the results would be looked at closely.

**14. Policies for review**

**14.1** JC confirmed that a blended learning policy was in progress and that she would bring the finished draft version to the next committee meeting in January for discussion and review.

**15. Approve residential trips**

**15.1** AA confirmed that there were none to approve at this time.

**16. Collaboration between trust schools**

**16.1** AA was acting as a mentor to LP, who was new to headship. There was also a business manager for the Trust who was supporting a new school office manager. There was less collaboration than normal due to Covid-19, but JC would continue to give thought to how to maintain effective communication between the schools.

**17. AOB**

**17.1** Nothing was raised.

**Meeting Closed: 12.30pm**

**Actions from Oxon QES Committee Meeting of 24.09.2020**

<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Minute 2.1</b>	Clerk to note the appointment of LR as Chair
<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Minute 7.10</b>	AA to add the breakdown of pupils by ethnic origin to her dashboard data and re-circulate
<b>Action 3</b>	<b>Minute 8.6</b>	AA would check if phonics activities were being sent home with pupils to provide additional help with this area.