



**Minutes of Board of Directors  
GEMS LEARNING TRUST**

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017  
At 2pm  
GEMS Twickenham Primary Academy**

<b>Attended</b>	
Joe Garrod (vice-Chair)	H&S
Andy Collings	Finance, Audit and Risk lead
Jodie Croft	CEO & Operations lead
Teresa De Quincey	Education, SEND, Safeguarding and Child Protection lead
Rony Valeny	Director
Hannah Wilson	Standards

<b>Apologies</b>	
Dr Harry Ziman (Chair)	Chair of Trust Board
Andy Collings	Finance, Audit and Risk lead
Danielle West	GEMS Liaison

**1 Apologies for absence and consent to absence**

HZ, AC, DW sent apologies which were accepted by the chair.

**2 Declaration of pecuniary interest and updates to business register**

a. None were declared.

**3 Review of Trust Board membership and DBS status**

a. LW has resigned as a board member of the GLT effective 31/10/2017.

**The Board asked if a replacement for LW was required.**

JC confirmed that the skills audit shows a strong board but that someone with legal knowledge would be an addition. No further action at this stage.

b. All board members have current DBS checks which are recorded on the GLT SCR. Each academy has a copy of the GLT SCR.

#### **4 Appointment of Chair/Vice Chair**

- a. HZ was voted in unanimously as chair
- b. JG was voted in unanimously as vice chair

#### **5 Appointment of Accounting Officer & Responsible Officer**

- a. JC will continue as accounting officer
- b. It was agreed by the Operations Committee that JC will tender for a new responsible officer (RO) this academic year to replace UHY Hacker Young as current RO.

ACTION: JC tender for a new RO this academic year

#### **6 Minutes of the last full board meeting and matters arising**

- a. The minutes of the full board meeting 20/06/2017 were reviewed and approved.
- b. There were no matters arising.

#### **7 Review of Directors training and development**

- a. JC urged all governors to visit the National Governance Association site and undertake the online training courses relevant to their role. The board agreed to refresh all online courses once every three years.
- b. All new governors must complete the training schedule on page 27 of the Governance arrangements handbook.
- c. All governors to send training certificates to JC

ACTION: All governors must refresh all online training courses once every three years

#### **8 Adoption of Trust Board code of conduct**

- a. The board reviewed and unanimously agreed to adopt the GLT code of conduct.

#### **9 CEO report; Finance, Audit, H&S, Compliance, Risk, HR matters, Trust growth & development plan**

- a. JC reported a balanced set of accounts for 16/17. Auditors UHY have conducted thorough testing and confirm that the GLT is a going concern for the next 12 months.

- b. In the financial statements it reports a net surplus of £201k for 16/17. The split is GEMS Learning Trust £102k, GEMS Twickenham Primary Academy £16k and GEMS Didcot Primary Academy £82k.
- c. The audit committee recommend the board approve the 16/17 Annual Accounts and Trustees Report.

**The board approved the 16/17 Annual accounts and Trustees Report subject to the figures in 9b being updated in the final version.**

- d. The Operations Committee continue to monitor the monthly management accounts per entity – GLT, Didcot Primary Academy (DPA) and Twickenham Primary Academy (TPA) and can confirm all are in line with planned budget spend for the academic year 17/18 to date.
- e. The Operations committee closely monitor H&S requirements at each school and can confirm that both schools have annual maintenance plans in operation, personnel responsible for H&S on each site, accurately maintained and up to date H&S records. Both sites will undertake an H&S audit this academic year and ensure actions arising are dealt with accordingly.
- f. The Operations Committee ensure the Trust is compliant on all matters relating to the ESFA, Companies House, Academies Financial Handbook, Employment law. The focus is now on preparing General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance across the Trust in readiness for May 2018.
  - i. JC noted that many academy policies will need updating to reflect GDPR changes. The fine for data breaches is now £2,000,000, up from £500,000. All staff and governors must take steps to ensure that they are aware of the changes. JC is to undertake a data audit, review privacy policies, academy policies, data collection and storage processes, IT data security practice, third party data handling and training for all staff and governors.
- g. The Operations Committee continue to monitor the risks facing the Trust and academies. The top risk remains the financial precariousness of TPA with low pupil numbers. The next risk is the potential further delay to KPA opening. The Trust faces certain deficit in 18/19 without further injection of project development funding from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The auditors have recommended the risk register encompasses a number of additional items, which will be address by the Principals and monitored by the Operations Committee.

**HW asked if matters could be managed more closely at TPA if the GLT ran admissions process themselves.**

JC confirmed that as the PAN was set at 60 there would be no difference in who ran the admissions process. JC hopeful that a positive Ofsted verdict at TPA would influence pupil numbers this academic year and that the PAN for 2020 will remain under review until admission number for 2018 confirmed at TPA.

- h. There are no HR issues to report. JC will ensure staff contracts and employment policies are updated to reflect the GDPR changes. The appraisal processed and performance reviews have been undertaken for all staff and those eligible have been recommended for salary increase. The Trust now has 40 employees.
- i. JC confirmed that planning permission for KPA has been awarded and the build programme is set to begin in March 2018 with demolition and from July 2018 with the new build. JG and ICT provider Joskos will support JC. JC to secure funding agreement ahead of the publication of the admissions brochure to ensure we are part of the common application process for 2019.
- j. HW was asked to leave the room as the next discussion might present a conflict of interest between the Glyn Learning Foundation and the GLT. JC presented the Trust development plan and invited further comments/suggestions from the board. The board urged JC to form strong relationships with the Director of Education in Oxfordshire and the Member for Children's services; perhaps invite them to DPA.

## **10 Dear Accounting Officer letters**

- a. HW re-joined the discussion. JC presented the 2 recent Dear Accounting Officer letters and confirmed that all matters are in hand for the Accounts Return process. The deadline of the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018 will be met.
- b. JC confirmed that the financial statements, auditor's management letter and accounts will be submitted to the DfE by the 31st December 2017.
- c. JC confirmed that she has completed and submitted the data for the Land and Buildings Collection.
- d. JC confirmed that the Budget forecast return 2017 was submitted on time and that the deadlines for the 2018 BFR outturn and return have been noted (18<sup>th</sup> May 2018 & 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018 respectively.)

## **11 Operations committee verbal report & questions on minutes**

- a. JC invited questions on the last set of Operations Committee minutes (29/09/2017)
- b. No matters arising.

## 12 Chief Education Officer Report: 16/17 results, strengths & lines of enquiry, context dashboards, targets 17/18

a. TDQ reported the following results for TPA.

### Twickenham Pupil Results 2016-17

	School Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Good Level of Development (GLD) %	National GLD	School Phonics Screening	National phonics
%	84%	71%	92%	81%
PP	100%	N/A	33.3%	N/A

### Overall Progress: EYFS (38 children)

	Slow 3+ steps	Sufficient 5 steps	Accelerated 6+ steps
GLD	0%	0%	100%
Maths	0%	0%	100%
Reading	0%	0%	100%
Writing	0%	0%	100%

### Year 1 (52 children)

	Slow 3+ steps	Sufficient 5 steps	Accelerated 6+ steps
Reading, Writing & Maths (RWM)	10%	34%	56%
Reading	10%	18%	72%
Writing	17%	37%	46%
Maths	4%	46%	50%
Science	0%	62%	38%

#### b. Strengths at TPA

- External assessment. Academic achievement in core subjects above national and local averages in EYFS and Phonics
- Internal Assessment. Performance of year 1 cohort in reading, writing and maths was on target for strong results in Year 2.
- Steps of progress. Excellent in Reception class EYFS. Year 1 very good

#### c. Focus areas at TPA

- Minimise any gender imbalance
- Diminish the gap between outcomes in writing and reading compared to mathematics
- Ensure mastery, depth and challenge extend to all areas of the curriculum.

#### d. SEF at TPA

Internal Judgement on school - all areas at least securely good. Securing Outstanding this academic year.

**In order to secure Outstanding:**

1. Develop middle subject leaders and the vice principal's role by summer 2018
2. Maintain excellent pupil outcomes in EYFS, YR1 phonics and ensure Year 2 outcomes reflect excellent prior attainment or better
3. Embed mastery, depth and challenge in all curriculum areas
4. Improve school attendance from 95% to 97%

**e. TPA Context dashboard.**

Pupil numbers are still too low. JS has advertised and held open days on Saturdays and during the school week. Banner outside the school. Much more visible to the community. There has been a good deal of interest. New beautiful playground equipment will be in place by January. We need an Ofsted!

**RV asked TDQ how children are performing so well?**

TDQ stated a mixture of quality teaching, minimal numbers of SEND, EAL, PP children, high numbers of school-ready children, high parental engagement.

**JG asked if the staff/pupil ratio was an influence on results.**

TDQ said possibly but more likely to be as stated previously.

**JG asked how many children are choosing TPA and how many are placed here by the LA.**

TDQ confirmed most families now choosing TPA as the local shortage of primary school places has eased.

- f. TDQ presented TPA Cohort targets for 2017- 18. The following targets were scrutinised and agreed at the Standards Committee for approval by the full board.

Whole School Attainment Targets 2017 – 2018

Year group/focus	School Target at ARE 2018	LA avege 2017	National avege 2017	School Target at GDS 2018	LA avege 2018	National avege 2018
Early years Foundation Stage GLD	84%	78%	71%			
Year 1 phonics	92%	89%	81%			
Year 2 phonics % of whole cohort passing phonics screening by end of year 2	100%					
Year 1 writing	85%			25%		
Year 1 reading	89%			25%		
Year 1 mathematics	93%			25%		
Year 1 Combined	85%			15%		
Year 2 Writing	84%	73%	68%	53%	21%	16%
Year 2 Reading	92%	83%	76%	60%	36%	25%
Year 2 Mathematics	93%	82%	75%	63%	29%	21%
Year 2 Combined	85%	69%	64%	50%	16%	11%
Whole School Attendance 2017 – 2018	Target- 96%+					

**RV asked whether pupil targets are cascaded accordingly to performance management targets and asked for an explanation as to how pupil targets are formulated.**

TDQ confirmed yes cohort attainment and progress targets are cascaded for all staff as applicable in their role.

She also explained that each child is considered individually when formulating a cohort target and that their starting point, prior attainment, learning needs etc. are taken into account but all children are expected to make exceptional progress.

**RV asked whether children are stretched by their targets.**

TDQ confirmed yes but added there is a balance between stretching children and understanding what can reasonably be expected.

**The Board approved the targets for 17/18 at TPA based on the recommendation given by the Standards committee.**

g. TDQ presented data on attainment and progress at DPA for 16/17.

## Didcot Pupil Results 2016-17

### School Performance Indicators 2017 - Unvalidated Gems Didcot Primary Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	School			Oxfordshire			National		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Good Level of Development	-	-	77	66	70	73	66	69	71
Total Average Point Score	-	-	35.3	34.2	34.5	34.7	34.3	34.5	34.4

Phonics	Year 1								
	School			Oxfordshire			National		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Working at the Expected Standard	-	-	80	76	80	81	77	81	81

	End of Year 2								
	School			Oxfordshire			National		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Working at the Expected Standard	-	-	96	91	92	92	90	91	n/a

Key Stage 1 Attainment	Working at the Expected Standard								
	School			Oxfordshire			National		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Reading	-	-	69	-	74	76	-	74	76
Writing	-	-	54	-	62	66	-	65	68
Mathematics	-	-	62	-	71	75	-	73	75

## h. Strengths at DPA

- EYFS outcomes were above national average
- Phonics screening Yr 1 were at national average

**i. Focus areas 2017-18 at DPA**

- Year 3 - accelerated progress needed in all areas
- Year 2- match or exceed national averages in R,W,M
- Year 1 – ensure that pupils without GLD reach Yr 1 b standard by December

**j. Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) at DPA:** Internal Judgement on school. All areas good. Securing Outstanding this academic year.

**In order to secure Outstanding:**

1. Developing leadership and management across the school- vice – principal and subject leaders
2. Ensure above national pupil outcomes in EYFS, YR1 phonics and Year2 and show Year 3 accelerated progress and attainment
3. Embed mastery, depth and challenge in all subject areas
4. Achieve above national average for attendance

k. DPA Cohort Targets 2017-18 were presented for board approval as scrutinised at the Standards Committee.

**The Board approved the targets for DPA for 2017/18 based on the recommendations of the standards committee.**

Year group	School Target 2018	LA & Nat av. 2017	School % Greater depth or exceeding	GDP Nat av
EYFS GLD	76%	73% 71%		
Yr1 Phonics	90%	81% 81%		
Yr2 Phonics % of cohort passing phonics by the end of yr 2	97%	92% N/A		
Yr1 Reading	81%		15%	
Yr1 Writing	83%		10%	
Yr1 Maths	83%		20%	
Yr2 Reading	80%	76% 76%	26%	25%
Yr2 Writing	75%	66% 68%	18%	15%
Yr2 Maths	80%	75% 75%	25%	21%
Yr3 Reading	80%		30%	
Yr3 Writing	70%		15%	
Yr3 Maths	75%		30%	

**I. Overall GLT Pupil Results 2016-17**



Having two schools in very different contexts, combining data at this stage does not support improving school performance or trust wide school development. However, for external assessments which are common to both schools it is clear that:

- GLD % in both schools is at or above the national average which suggests EYFS practice is effective and a developing strength of the trust
- Phonics is at or above the national average in both schools.

#### **m. Overall Judgement**

Internal Judgement on schools - both schools are securely Good and working to secure Outstanding in all areas which is reflected in the focus of each SEF and School Development Plan (SDP).

The Principals are both strong and effective and there is a developing professional relationship between the two schools to the benefit of staff and pupils.

**The Board concurred with TDQs appraisal and wished to pass on their thanks and congratulations for the 16/17 outcomes.**

### **13 Safeguarding, SCR & SEND report**

- a. TDQ confirmed that the GLT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies have been updated: TPA Safeguarding Policy has been updated in line with Richmond Council safeguarding policy. DPA's Safeguarding Policy has been updated in line with Oxfordshire Council's policy. Both policies have been agreed at the Standards Committee.

The Standards Committee recommends that the GLT board approve the new policies.

**The Board approved the Child Protection and Safeguarding policies for both TPA and DPA based on the recommendation from the Standards Committee.**

- b. TDQ confirmed that the GLT safeguarding audit has been updated to ensure the following areas are checked and audited regularly:
  - Are procedures in place to respond if a child goes missing from school?
  - Is discrimination tackled in school?
  - Are e-safety measures in place?
  - Is the Prevent duty clearly implemented?

DPA and TPA are both fully compliant with the latest advice and good practice for child protection and safeguarding.

JC added that she has audited both TPA and DPA Single Central Records and ensured office managers have adapted templates and updated data according to the latest recommendations for best safeguarding practise.

- c. TDQ reviewed Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Compliance across DPA and TPA. TPA now has a fully trained and experienced SENCO working full time at the school as EYFS lead. There are few SEND children but the SENCo is able to advise and support staff with strategies which benefit any child who is needing an intervention in any area of development.

DPA has a part time SENCo. The plan is to employ an individual full time at the school to lead on SEND as needed for 2018-19.

The schools have robust systems for identifying and supporting SEND pupils and linking with other agencies.

- d. TDQ reported on Health and Safety Checks across DPA and TPA.

An annual check and report will be conducted by an external provider or employee of each school. At the Standards Committee it was suggested that monthly H&S walks around the school and outside areas should be conducted and logged by the Office Manager and caretaker. All staff must be encouraged to report anything to the office and for it to be logged, action taken and recorded.

**JG asked JC to report the timber storage concerns of TPA's neighbour to building control.**

#### **ACTIONS:**

TPA and DPA to ensure health and safety audit is carried out ASAP by an external contractor or employee. Findings must be acted upon accordingly

TPA and DPA must implement monthly H&S walks if not already in place

TPA and DPA must ensure all staff are alert to H&S issues and report concerns as soon as they arise.

JC to report the timber storage concerns of TPA's neighbour to building control and environmental health at Richmond Council

#### **14 Standards committee verbal report and questions on minutes**

- a. No matters arising.

#### **15 Report on Local Academy Board structure and minutes: any questions**

- a. JC noted the new Local Academy Board (LAB) structure was in place and working well. There are no vacancies and each board has a mix of staff, community and parent governors. There are at least 2 parent governors on each LAB.

**RV said that the newly constituted TPA LAB was off to a good start but struggled with the amount of educational abbreviations in the literature presented.**

**JC stated that the DPA LAB has a large number of governors with educational experience and are in a good position to have further responsibility delegated to them further in the future.**

**HW informed the board that the latest guidance recommends each committee assigns responsibility for SEND/Inclusion to one of their members.**

ACTION: HW to send latest guidance on inclusion and governance to the full board

- b. JC has issued training programme to all LAB members and is conducting a skills audit. LAB members have been added to the business interests register and their details have been updated on Get Information about Schools (formerly Edubase).

#### 16 Approve terms of reference for Trust Board, Operations, Standards and LAB sub-committees

JC presented the TOR for each group and the policy approval schedule to the Board.

**The Board approved the terms of reference for the Full Trust Board, the Operations Committee, the Standards Committee and the Local Academy Boards and the Policy approval schedule.**

ACTION: JC to issue policy approval schedule to Principals.

#### 17 Approve admissions policies 2019/20

**JG asked JC to ensure consistency of presentation across all 4 sets of admissions policies in relation to Home to School measurements and random allocation processes.**

**RV asked for clarity regarding the number of places on the DPA nursery admissions policy.**

JC confirmed that there are 52 part time places according to our authorised PAN as set by the LA. We now offer a mixture of 15 hour (part time) and 30 hour (full time) places.

The board discussed whether to change DPA's admissions policy to prioritise those in the nursery. After the discussion the board agreed that to change the

policy would mean excluding those who hadn't attended nursery and that at this stage this wasn't preferable.

- a. The board approved the 2019/20 admissions policies for TPA and KPA.
- b. JC will now ensure the policies are on each academy website and sent to respective local authorities.

**ACTION:** JC to ensure consistency of presentation across all 4 sets of admissions policies, upload to each website and send to relevant local authorities.

18 AOB

- a. None

## **Table of actions 22/11/17**

- I. JC tender for a new RO this academic year.
- II. All governors must refresh all online training courses once every three years.
- III. TPA and DPA to ensure health and safety audit is carried out ASAP by an external contractor or employee. Findings must be acted upon accordingly.
- IV. TPA and DPA must implement monthly H&S walks if not already in place.
- V. TPA and DPA must ensure all staff are alert to H&S issues and report concerns as soon as they arise.
- VI. JC to report the timber storage concerns of TPA's neighbour to building control.
- VII. HW to send latest guidance on inclusion and governance to the full board.
- VIII. JC to issue policy approval schedule to Principals.
- IX. JC to ensure consistency of presentation across all 4 sets of admissions policies, upload to each website and send to relevant LAs.