

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Strategic Governing Body of
Heathfield and La Fontaine Academies
Wednesday 6th December 2017
6.30pm at Heathfield Academy**

Name	Position	Attendance
Allison Allen (AA)	STEP Co-opted Governor (Interim Vice-Chair)	Present
Eva Allotey (EA)	Parent Governor, LFA	Present (from 7.05pm)
Mark Anderson (MA)	Co-opted Governor	Present
Rachael Atkinson (RA)	Head Teacher – HA	Present
Annabel Bates (AB)	Co-opted Governor	Present
Sebastien Chapleau (SC)	Head Teacher – LFA	Present
Sarah Mackay (SM)	Staff Governor – HA	Present (for items 1-24)
Laura McInness	Parent Governor – HA	Apologies
Karl (Freddie) Meier (FM)	STEP Co-opted Governor	Apologies
Lana-Lea O’Keefe (LO)	Head Teacher – HA	Present
Michael Speziale (MS)	Staff Governor - LFA	Apologies
Chris Stevens (CS)	STEP Co-opted Governor (Interim-Chair)	Present
Jennifer Taylor (JT)	STEP Co-opted Governor	Apologies
Jennese Alozie (JA)	STEP Head of Standards	Present (for items 1 to 10)
Mark Ducker OBE (MD)	STEP CEO	Present
Kelly Edwards (KE)	School Business Manager – HA	Present (for items 1-12)
Ashana Graham (AG)	Associate Governor (Appointment pending Trustee ratification)	Present (from 6.45pm)
Diane Williams	School Business Manager – LFA	Apologies
Carol Fagan (CF)	Senior Governance Clerk	Present

Item	Minutes	Action
STEP First – We are all one team		
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting extending a particular welcome to Annabel Bates, recently appointed Co-opted Governor.</p> <p>Governors received and approved apologies for absence from:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl (Freddie) Meier – Work Commitment 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenny Taylor – Bereavement • Laura McInness – Working in Preston • Michael Speziale – Attending son’s school open day <p>Eva Allotey and Ashana Graham had sent apologies for their delayed arrival.</p> <p>KE outlined the evacuation route to follow should a fire alarm sound during the meeting.</p>	
2	<p>Quorum</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.</p>	
3	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and/or Conflict of Interests</p> <p>The Clerk reminded any governors who had yet to complete and return a 2017 pecuniary interest form to do so as soon as possible, to enable the Governance Team to complete the SGB’s Register of Interests 2017/18. AA had advised the clerk of a correction required to her entry on the register.</p> <p>The Clerk asked governors to declare any pecuniary or personal interests they might have in any agenda item for this meeting. No governors declared any interests.</p>	
4	<p>STEP Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>Governors noted that the Board of Trustees was reviewing the STEP Scheme of Delegation. The Clerk would circulate the final version following Trustees’ approval.</p>	
5	<p>STEP Governance/SGB Membership</p> <p>Membership Changes: Governors noted the following SGB membership changes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The resignation of Beth Faherty, La Fontaine Staff Governor. On behalf of governors, CS recorded thanks to Beth for her contribution to the work of the governing body • The appointment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annabel Bates, Co-opted Governor, with effect from 18th September 2017 ➤ Michael Speziale, La Fontaine Staff Governor, with effect from 12th November 2017 ➤ Laura McInness, Heathfield Parent Governor, with effect from 13th November 2017 ➤ Ashana Graham, Associate Governor (pending ratification by the Board of Trustees on 18th December 2017) <p>The Chair reminded all newly appointed governors to liaise with the School Business Manager to arrange the required DBS checks. The Clerk would arrange for them to sign the Undertaking to the STEP Academy Trust at the next meeting.</p> <p>Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair: Following Isabelle Dennigan’s appointment as Chair of Trustees from 1st September, the Board of Trustees had appointed CS and AA as Interim Chair and Vice-Chair of the Heathfield & La Fontaine SGG for the autumn term. MD advised governors that, following conversations with CS and AA, he would be recommending that Trustees approve their appointment to these roles for the remainder of the academic year. Governors were in full support of this proposal and thanked CS and AA for their continued commitment to the SGB.</p>	<p>AB, MS, LI & Clerk</p>

	<p>STEP Email Accounts: Governors noted the requirement to use their STEP email accounts for all STEP related emails. Anyone experiencing problems accessing their account should advise the clerk as soon as possible.</p> <p>The Trust Governor System: Governors noted the communication from Thomas Scrace, Head of HR & Governance, around the introduction of the Trust Governor online management system. A governor had raised a question around the system's compliance with the GDPR. The clerk had forwarded the question to the system operators and she would share the response with governors when received.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Feedback from the Board of Trustees</p> <p>MD highlighted some recent key developments for the Trust;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isabelle Dennigan and Ross Gardner had taken up the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of Trustees from 1st September 2017 • Wolsey Nursery & Infant School had joined the Trust from 1st September. The Trust was currently going through consultation around bringing Wolsey Nursery & Infant Academy and Wolsey Junior Academy together as one primary school, Tudor Academy. • The EMT and central team had undertaken a lot of work to define the STEP Standard expectations to enable academies to hold themselves to account. Governors would receive more information on this in due course. • Leadership development was a key focus of the Trust and John Halliwell was currently leading on this. • Head Teachers had taken part in a very useful series of peer-to-peer review training sessions, a collaborative approach to quality assurance. RA and LA had found these very helpful, particularly the opportunity to talk to peers and share good practice. • The result of Angel Oak Academy's recent Ofsted inspection provided an opportunity for Angel Oak to apply to become a teaching school. This would provide valuable support to the six East Sussex academies, which were in vulnerable positions prior to joining the Trust. <p>CS expressed an interest in the open invitation for SGB Chairs to attend a Board of Trustees meeting as observers and he would liaise with CF to take up the invitation.</p> <p>Due to the La Fontaine site issues, governors were keen to appoint an Associate Governor from within the parent body, for a one-year tenure, to support EA in filtering some of the day-to-day questions away from the Head Teacher and address some of the parents' anxieties. SC confirmed that he would find this helpful. Governors agreed for CS to approach suitable candidates.</p> <p><i>(Ashana Graham joined the meeting at this point)</i></p>	<p>CS & CF</p> <p>CS</p>
<p>STEP Way – We agree to do things like this</p>		
<p>7</p>	<p>Admissions</p> <p>The Head Teachers had not received any admission applications for Outside of Age Group or deferred reception places. However, one family was considering an application for Outside of Age Group at Heathfield Academy.</p>	

	<p>Governors were conscious of the need to increase pupil numbers, thereby attracting the extra funding to ease some of the pressures on teachers. In response to a governor's question, Head Teachers advised that there were currently 24 vacant places at La Fontaine and 22 at Heathfield. The local authority had announced a decrease in the birth rate since 2013 and some Croydon schools were looking at reducing their published admission number.</p> <p>Governors agreed to look at promoting the schools through the local press once La Fontaine Academy moved to its permanent site.</p>	
8	<p>STEP Policies and Procedures</p> <p>Governors noted those STEP Policies reviewed and approved by Trustees in September 2017.</p>	
9	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Governors noted that the DfE had yet to announce any changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education document.</p> <p>Governors noted the Safeguarding Governor reports circulated with the agenda papers. Heathfield Academy had identified some training needs in respect of the CPOMS system, but otherwise CS was satisfied that both academies were compliant with safeguarding requirements. FM's had also visited Heathfield Academy to understand its safeguarding procedures.</p> <p>The Head Teachers reported that, despite a reminder, they had not yet received any requests from the local authority in terms of its safeguarding audit.</p> <p>The Head Teachers had asked the central Premises Team to look at options for increasing the height of the glass partitions around the stairwells. The Head of Premises and Estates would be visiting to look at this next week and the Head Teachers hoped to have some quotes available for governors' consideration at the next meeting. The Head Teachers assured governors that the matter was not as pressing as it could be, as children were currently using another staircase. A governor questioned whether this matter was the responsibility of the architects. MD explained that the Trust had signed off on the building before the matter had come to its attention. Therefore, the cost of remedial work would have to come from the school budget.</p> <p>CS had been unable to attend a Safeguarding Workshop run by the National Governors' Association at Angel Oak Academy. He would therefore be attending the STEP Governor Safeguarding training in February.</p> <p>During CS's visit, he had seen good systems in place and a good safeguarding culture across both academies. He had suggested the use of an auto-update system to flag up when DBS checks were due for renewal. The Business Manager had provided CS with a Croydon document for safeguarding governor visits and CS would forward this to JA for information. JA explained that the Trust's safeguarding leads were in the process of updating its safeguarding documentation.</p>	CS
STEP Up – We all succeed together		
10	<p>Educational Standards</p>	

(Eva Allotey joined the meeting at this point)

Teaching & Learning Review – Heathfield Academy

JA, STEP Head of Standards, introduced herself to governors. She explained that, as part of her quality assurance role, she had conducted a two-day teaching and learning review at Heathfield Academy in September. In terms of safeguarding, JA concurred that safeguarding within the school was effective and that there was a growing and developing culture of safeguarding.

As part of the review, JA had spent time with the Head Teachers, looking at the quality of teaching and learning within the classrooms. This had provided her with a clear picture of the school's journey and its self-evaluation. She had seen that staff were clear about school priorities and knew their pupils very well. The pupils she had spoken to said they liked being at school. Parents were clearly very pleased that the school was now on its permanent site, felt confident that they could speak to staff when they needed to and welcomed the workshops provided.

During her review, JA and Head Teachers had agreed the need for teachers to make the most of all information about pupils' starting points, and of how they used that information to move them in the right direction. The Head Teachers had been open and honest about the previous diet of teaching and learning in Year 1 and about what the school needed to do to address any gaps. Whilst Head Teachers felt that teaching and learning was not yet where they would like it to be, they were clear about what they needed to do to get there. Teachers were willing, wanted the best for the children and wanted to take on board the support offered to them.

Following the review, JA and Head Teachers had agreed some key areas for development:-

- Developing Year 2 teachers and moving them on in their practice
- Looking at ways to support the SENDCO, who was new to her role

JA reported that the best-fit judgment for the school was 'good' but leaders needed to make sure this was secure. Head Teachers had a plan in place for this, with SM leading on English and supporting the Year 1 teachers and the Head Teachers supporting the Year 2 teachers. The Head Teachers set very high expectations for the school and were currently building on them.

The Head Teachers thanked JA for her review, stating that they had found the process extremely helpful and that they welcomed her input and challenge. They went on to outline to governors some of the things the school had been doing since the review:-

- Putting support in place for the Year 2 teachers
- Working with Tom Gary, the Trust's mathematics lead, who had delivered some CPD for staff and supported them in their planning. Staff feedback from this was very positive.
- Coaching teachers in the classrooms
- Giving all teachers an opportunity to observe outstanding practice at Angel Oak Academy
- Preparing documentation to help the school articulate its curriculum
- Ensuring that all staff were trained on CPOMs
- Arranging for the SENDCO to work closing with her peer at La Fontaine Academy

All of these strategies were set to make a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and closing gaps.

JA would be meeting with teachers, SENDCo and LSAs to prepare them for Heathfield's Ofsted inspection. She would also schedule in a meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

(JA left the meeting at this point)

Head Teacher Reports: Governors were in receipt of the Head Teacher/ Data reports circulated with the agenda papers and raised the following questions arising from these;-

Heathfield Academy

Q: How much information would Governors receive about the outcomes and attendance rates for different groups of children? For example, would they receive data on the KS1 performance of disadvantaged children relative to other children? (A key focus for OFSTED).

A: Due to the short timescale between the data deadline and the SGB meeting, Head Teachers had been unable to report new data in the reports sent out with the agenda. Head Teachers would provide governors with updated reports. The Head Teacher report format had changed and the level of detail previously included would now be the subject of Head Teacher meetings with Standards Lead Governors.

Q: Under the previous governance structure, the SGB Standards Committee minutes had provided governors with a high level of detail. As responsibility for standards lay with the SGB, how would governors receive the necessary assurance going forward?

A: In addition to the PIRA and PUMA tests, the schools reported to the central teaching and learning team on their half-termly teacher assessments and professional judgments. Head Teachers would share the assessment headlines with governors in their termly reports. AA added that she had spent a full day in school looking at the data and had had a robust conversation with the Head Teachers about it. She would be sharing her full report with governors in due course. The Chair was confident that AA would flag up any areas of concern to governors.

MD acknowledged that the SGB meeting timetable had not allowed Head Teachers to present full data reports and the EMT would be looking at the timings of future meetings to ensure they fitted more effectively with data deadlines. Going forward, governors would look at end of autumn term data at their spring meetings.

La Fontaine Academy

Q: The Head Teacher's Report highlighted some issues around consistency in terms of delivering the curriculum. However, pupil achievement was outstanding. Was the impact of these inconsistencies minimal, or would achievement improve further once they were addressed?

A: La Fontaine's teaching and achievement data, over time, was strong, but focusing on consistency would help the academy on its journey towards outstanding. The STEP Standard, developed by the Central Teaching & Learning Team, set out clear expectations of what governors could expect to see in the classrooms.

Timetable for Academies to Reach 'Outstanding': With JA's support, the academies would continue to assess themselves. La Fontaine Academy was confident that results would be

JA

	<p>above national average again next year. JA had validated Heathfield Academy's 'good' judgement and acknowledged that the school was working to secure this and develop further.</p> <p>2018 Pupil Performance Targets: Governors raised the following questions around the 2018 pupil performance targets included in the Head Teacher Reports:-</p> <p>Q: Did the pupil performance targets correlate directly to teachers' targets for pay progression? A: Whilst this depended to a degree on where individual teachers were in their careers, all teachers had a target linked to pupil progress.</p> <p>Q: As schools aimed to reduce stress on staff and pupils, were the targets too demanding? A: La Fontaine and Heathfield Academies set themselves high expectations and made sure they had strategies in place to address staff workload and morale. Teachers were part of professional conversations during the target setting process and continuously throughout the year. MD added that the Trust's expectation was for all children at STEP Academies to receive a very good education. It therefore aimed to set ambitious, but achievable, targets. Governors could be confident that JA held detailed conversations with Head Teachers throughout the target setting process. AB added that it gave teachers a professional pride to be part of target setting conversations.</p> <p>Governors agreed the 2018 pupil performance targets.</p> <p>Impact of 2016/17 Pupil Premium and Sports Funding Grants: AA had looked at the impact of Pupil Premium and Sports Grant funding during her combined SEND and Assessment & Outcomes visit. Governors had received her written report, which noted the key areas of strength and possible future developments. The Chair thanked AA for her comprehensive report.</p> <p>Ofsted Framework: Governors acknowledged receipt of some useful Ofsted guidance documents circulated by the Clerk.</p> <p>STEP Code of Conduct: Head Teachers confirmed that all staff had completed the STEP Code of Conduct declaration.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Academy Improvement Plans</p> <p>Governors had received the latest Academy Improvement Plans with the agenda papers for this meeting. They raised the following questions:-</p> <p>Q: Should the academies be setting specific targets for 'closing the gap' for the outcomes of disadvantaged children relative to others? A: The academies set some specific end of year targets for disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Q: Was there currently an attainment gap in Key Stage 1? A: There was a marginal gap at La Fontaine Academy but the school aimed to close it.</p> <p>Q: Had La Fontaine Academy set out how it planned to close this gap? A: This was set out in the Pupil Premium Action Plan.</p>	

	<p>Governors approved the 2017/18 Academy Improvement Plans.</p> <p>Governors had shared their recent monitoring visit reports and would schedule spring term visits linked to the AIP priorities. Head Teachers would arrange 'Doodle' polls to agree dates. The 2017/18 Annual Governors Day would take place at La Fontaine Academy on Friday 13th July 2018.</p>	HTs
12	<p>Financial Management</p> <p>STEP Financial Handbook 2017: Governors noted the STEP Financial Handbook 2017.</p> <p>Management Reports: Governors noted Heathfield Academy's Management Report. Due to a miscommunication within the Governance Team, La Fontaine Academy's report had not been sent out with the agenda. The Business Manager would forward this to governors after the meeting. Business Managers would share their termly reports with governors at the January meeting.</p> <p><i>(KE left the meeting at this point)</i></p>	DW
13	<p>Premises</p> <p>La Fontaine Academy's permanent site was due for handover in January. In order to minimize disruption to children's learning, the academy would move during the February half term. SC had met with neighbouring primary schools who had raised a number of concerns around traffic management. He would be meeting with them again to look at travel plans. He would also consider a governor's suggestion to make contact with local residents groups.</p> <p>SC reported that La Fontaine Academy's 2017/18 budget was set around the assumption that the academy would be on its permanent site from September 2017. He was therefore working with the Trust's Chief Finance and Operations Officer to look at the financial impact of remaining on the current site until February.</p>	
14	<p>Residential School Journeys</p> <p>SC would wait until the academy had settled into its new site before planning any residential school journeys.</p>	
15	<p>Website Compliance</p> <p>CS had reviewed both academy websites and confirmed that they met statutory requirements. He commented that some information on the governor profiles needed to be updated and asked the newly appointed governors to provide the clerk or Head Teachers with a brief pen portrait.</p> <p>CS also suggested that the schools displayed governor photographs more prominently around the buildings.</p>	New Govs
STEP Ahead – We invest in our future		
16	Governing Body Training	

	<p>AB had attended the recent STEP Governor Finance Training, which she had found very helpful.</p> <p>Governors noted the STEP Governor Training dates for the spring term;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Trust Governor System – Thursday 11th January 2018, 6pm at Heathfield Academy • Safeguarding – Tuesday 20th February 2018, 6pm at Heathfield Academy <p>Following AA’s suggestion, the STEP Governance Team would incorporate online safety into the forthcoming Safeguarding session. JA had advised that Head Teachers would go through the new Analysing School Performance (ASP) reports with their SGB Standards Leads during their Spring 2 visit/meeting. As the reports were quite straightforward she did not consider that additional governor training was required.</p> <p>The Chair asked governors to let the clerk know of any other specific training requirements.</p>	
17	<p>Communication</p> <p>The Chair had shared a report from La Fontaine Academy’s PTA summarising how it had spent funds raised so far this year. La Fontaine’s PTA committee members had kindly supported Heathfield Academy in setting up its own PTA, which had already raised £800 for the school.</p> <p>La Fontaine’s PTA was keen to support music teaching and French provision and to understand how it could help with this. Governors acknowledged a wish to develop music and language provision further, within the constraints of the school budget. The SGB would look at this when agreeing priorities and setting the budget for next year.</p> <p>CS would write to the PTA members to thank them for all that they were doing to support the schools.</p> <p>CS volunteered to work with the Head Teachers to collate the governors’ autumn term letter.</p>	<p>SGB</p> <p>CS</p> <p>CS</p>
18	<p>Correspondence to the Chair</p> <p>Other than the letter from the PTA, the Chair had no correspondence to report.</p>	
19	<p>Minutes</p> <p>The SGB approved the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2017 for signature by the Chair. The clerk would forward signed copies to each Head Teacher for their files and pass the original to the Company Secretary for the Trust’s records.</p>	Clerk
20	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>Governors confirmed that actions from the previous meeting were complete.</p>	
21	<p>Any Other Urgent Business:</p>	

	There was no other urgent business for discussion.	
22	Meeting Impact Governors considered that their discussions and challenges on a number of topics would have a positive impact on outcomes for children.	
23	Meeting Dates The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 24 th January 2018, 6.30pm at La Fontaine Academy. The Chair asked governors to advise the clerk in good time if they were unable to make meetings for any reason. This would ensure that meetings were quorate.	
24	Publication of Minutes Governors identified items of a confidential nature to be recorded in Part B of the minutes. Following approval at the next meeting, the Part A minutes would be made public and published on the academy websites. The Part B minutes would remain confidential to the SGB.	
25	Confidential Matters Governors' discussions around staffing matters would be recorded in Part B of the minutes.	
	Closing Remarks There being no further business for discussion, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.35pm.	

Action List

Agenda Item	Action	Lead
5	New governors to liaise with Business Managers to undertake DBS checks and sign Undertaking to the STEP Academy Trust	AB, MS, LI & Clerk
5	Provide governors with answer to question around the Trust Governor system's compliance with GDPR	Clerk
6	Liaise regarding Trustees open invitation for SGB Chairs to attend Board meetings as observers	Chair and Clerk
6	Approach potential Associate Governor candidates from within the parent body	Chair
9	Forward Croydon's safeguarding governor documentation to JA for information	Chair
10	Schedule a 'pre-Ofsted' meeting with Chair and Vice-Chair	JA
11	Send out 'Doodle' Poll to schedule governor monitoring visits	HTs
12	Send Heathfield Management Reports to governors	DW
15	Send brief biographies to clerk or Head Teachers for academy websites	New govs

17	Consider the development of music and language provision when agreeing priorities and academy budgets for 2018/19	SGB
17	Write to thank PTA for their support	CS
17	Work with Head Teachers to collate governors autumn term newsletter	CS
19	Forward copies of signed SGB minutes to both Head Teachers for academy files	Clerk

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's signature	
Chair's Name	
Date	