

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Strategic Governing Body of  
 Angel Oak Academy  
 Held on Monday 27 February 2017 at 5.00 pm**

Name	Position	Attendance
Mr Nick Ambrose	Community Governor, Vice Chair	Present
Mr Mark Deacon	Community Governor, Chair	Present
Ms Amanda Dickson	Business Manager	Present
Ms Gemma Foster	Co-Opted Governor	Present
Ms Stacey Frier	Community Governor	Present
Mr Paul Glover	Deputy CEO, STEP Academy Trust	Present
Ms Verity Griffin	Staff Governor	Present
Ms Catherine Hewitt	Head of School	Present
Mr Tim Mills	Head Teacher	Present
Ms Jessica Pero	Parent Governor	Absent
Mr Terry Sotiri	Community Governor	Absent
Mr Ian Cooper	Governance Clerk	Present

**STEP First – We are all one team**

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting at 5:00pm, welcoming everyone present. Gemma Foster, a co-opted governor, was particularly welcomed as a new member of the strategic governing body.</p> <p>The meeting <b>received and agreed</b> to accept apologies from Jessica Pero and Terri Sotiri.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Quorum</b></p> <p>Members <b>noted</b> that the meeting was quorate.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and/or Conflict of Interests</b></p> <p>Having been specifically asked by the chair, members <b>noted</b> that no declarations of pecuniary or personal interest relating to the items on the published meeting agenda were made.</p> <p>The meeting <b>agreed</b> to undertake the business regarding item 10 Finance directly so that any inconvenience to the attending business manager might be minimized.</p>

10.	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Amanda Dickson was invited to give a verbal report of the financial business discussed at of the recently held a meeting of the resources committee because the chair of the committee had been unable to attend because of illness.          (The remainder of the minute for this item is to be found in the Part B confidential minutes of the meeting)</p>
4.	<p><b>Strategic Governing Body Membership</b></p> <p>Governors <b>noted</b> the appointment of Gemma Foster. She had undergone a DBS check (disclosure and barring service check) and that she was still to sign the Undertaking to the STEP Academy Trust. Mrs Carol Fagan would be asked to ensure that the process and signature was undertaken.</p> <p>Members <b>confirmed</b> the appointment of Gemma Foster to the Strategic Governing Body’s Resources Committee as its vice chairperson.</p> <p>Identifying that there was a vacancy for co-opted a governor, the chair <b>requested</b> members to pass any information with regard to possible candidates through to Mrs Carol Fagan at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Members <b>agreed</b> the membership of the Children, Families and Community committee for the forthcoming summer term, <b>appointing</b> Stacey Frier, Jessica Pero and Catherine Hewitt.</p>
<b>STEP Way – We agree to do things like this</b>	
5.	<p><b>Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation</b></p> <p>Governors <b>noted</b> that the Strategic Governing Body and committee Terms of Reference included within the STEP Scheme of Delegation 2016/17, following its approval by the Board of Trustees on 15 December 2016. Members had no questions with regard to the terms of reference of the committee.</p>
6.	<p><b>Governance Handbook /Competency framework</b></p> <p>Introducing the item Mark Deacon recommended the updated DfE governance Handbook to members. He commented that he had found it informative and it appeared to be a good publication.</p> <p>Members <b>noted</b> the publication of the updated handbook.</p>
7.	<p><b>School Census Guidance</b></p> <p>The meeting was told of the importance of the Census which occurred on 7 January 2017. Funding allocations and pupil numbers were based upon the Census data. Members were reminded that not only was it an extremely important exercise but also the data it contained proved most useful to the school as well.</p>

	<p>Members <b>noted</b> the new government guidance on the school Census.</p>
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Members were informed that the required recommendations arising from the 2015 /16 audit have now not only been considered but also appropriate actions have been put in place. Mark Deacon reported that he had personally checked the central register.</p> <p>The verbal report concerning safeguarding issues was <b>noted</b>.</p>
<p><b>STEP Up – We all succeed together</b></p>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Head Teacher’s report</b></p> <p>Tim Mills, leading the item, told members he would be happy to answer any questions on the report which had been previously circulated.</p> <p>With the aid of tabled copies of architects’ drawings, members were briefed on the current version and state of the planning process for the new build.</p> <p>Planning permission still has to be maintained and it is anticipated that this will go to the planning committee in March. Because of the need to undertake a section 77 assessment concerning the technical reallocation of sports grounds to another use, the planning process may take some time. Developers have been appointed and the new architects had been engaged. The meeting was told that the changes from the previous plans gave more play space for pupils as indicated on the drawings. The planners were keen to keep the Edwardian school frontage as part of the new build which would become the facade of the early years centre. The architects felt that this approach would help progress the necessary processes through planning committee.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Are there any safeguarding issues with regard to the flats being incorporated with the school buildings?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> No, because there is no access between the school buildings and the flats.</p> <p>Members were also informed that the proposed works would not be able to start before the summer of 2018 and the school suggested that in order to maintain momentum and show the local community that progress is being made that the windows on the south side of the proposed building should be replaced in the forthcoming summer as well as attempting to have the overgrown land on Chandler Way cleared. Governors discussed the implications of the timing of the proposed developments, especially with the anticipated inspection by OFSTED in about a year’s time. It was also pointed out that once the OFSTED report had been published it might be helpful to incorporate some of its findings to help promote the academic side of the school’s offer in the advertising which had been secured outside the Tesco store on the Old Kent Road.</p> <p>Tim Mills highlighted other aspects of the report telling the meeting that Catherine Hewitt was now the substantive Head of School; the previously agreed purchase of iPads had arrived and were up and running and the progress being made towards the pupil outcomes targets was positive with</p>

the school expecting to hit those targets and the Fisher Family Trust (FFT) data would be sent out to governors. Members were told that the information in the headteacher's report summarised the more detailed discussions which had been held at the previous standards committee meeting which also highlighted support strategies which are now fully in place to help children who had been identified in the phonic awareness screening. The phonic awareness screening had been given to all key stage two children. The meeting was told that it was the intention to introduce a whole school reading assessment which the school received to be more powerful and helpful than the current testing system.

**Question:** Which testing system is that?

**Answer:** The school started with the Bryant system and we are now using "Sounds Write". We feel the strategy is starting to get reading fluency across the whole of the Academy. This also ought to address the needs of those children which OFSTED may be very interested in monitoring in their key stage two reading.

**Question:** Would it be possible to have a briefing given to governors early next year to ensure members are prepared for inspection.

**Answer:** We will certainly prepare a briefing and invite governors to a meeting to help prepare for inspection. It appears that OFSTED are now looking to see how we do things and how well they are succeeding within the school and therefore we believe we should be in a strong position to argue that the school is a very, very good school. It may also be possible to organise a meeting for governors to meet with Jennese Alozie as well.

Cathie Hewitt continued by reporting to governors about pupils' conduct and behaviour. She stated that the behaviour policy had been reviewed and updated. Consequently there appeared to be a relatively higher detention rate than previously seen. This had been expected in the initial stages the implementation of the revised policy because instead of having three warnings before detention was given the policy implementation had changed so that now only one warning is given. She told governors that it was expected over time that the situation would reduce and empirically she understood that the behaviour for learning had significantly improved and playground behaviour was much better as well. She reported that in one year group the number of detentions issued had reduced yet in a different year group they were higher. Colleagues are looking to ensure the same level of implementation was being achieved across the whole of the school. She reported that it was becoming apparent that as staff raised expectations of pupils the children raised theirs as well. She also cautioned members to remember that many of the children come from complex backgrounds and that a pattern could be seen that there were more detentions issued at the start of the week than towards the end of the week.

Governors were pleased to hear of the development commenting that they were glad to see the removal of the "three strikes and you're out" approach because it was quite possible, for example, that if there were three pupils presenting challenging behaviour in class there was the potential for nine separate disruptions before an explicit sanction was imposed. Governors felt that this change placed a focus more on expectations and how those expectations are managed both by staff and pupils within the classroom.

In closing governors were reassured that safeguarding processes and procedures and training were

	<p>fully up-to-date within the school.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to hear that currently Angel Oak was hosting a delegation of teachers from Spain.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> How did the visit come to happen? Was it instigated by the local authority?  <b>Answer:</b> It was set up through contacts with one of our own teachers.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Do you have any information about the parent survey / questionnaire?  <b>Answer:</b> We always undertake a survey/questionnaire and we often do this during parents evening. We'll put the results gained in the next Headteacher's report.</p> <p>Thanking Tim Mills and Cathie Hewitt, members <b>noted</b> the Headteacher's report.</p>
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Standards</b></p> <p>Nick Ambrose introduced the report from the Standards Committee by acknowledging that Tim Mills had already covered much of the information in the Headteacher's report. He continued by informing the Governing Body that the standards committee had looked in detail at the school's performance data. The committee had discussed at length the reading and quality of teaching. The committee had come to the view that the data did not support an argument for a grading of outstanding and that governors need to appreciate that the testing regime did not fully align with the Mastery approach undertaken at Angel Oak. Members need to be aware that the mastery approach is intended to be further extended across much more of the curriculum in the school.</p> <p>Governors <b>noted</b> the report from the Standards Committee.</p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Academy Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Introducing the item Mark Deacon observed that updates to the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP) as well as the school's progress towards objectives and milestones contained in it had been covered in the Headteacher's report. Members felt that updates might also in the future be put into the Headteacher's report. Members <b>noted</b> that the AIP had been updated and that significant input had been undertaken by Cathie Hewitt.</p> <p>It was reported and <b>noted</b> that Standards Committee had received feedback on pupil visits. Members were interested to hear about external visits to the Royal Festival Hall and the Royal Ballet as well as the visits of theatre groups and specialist musicians who had come into the school to enrich the pupils' activities.</p> <p>With regard to the governor visits schedule, members noted it was yet to be agreed.</p> <p>Members noted that the proposal for the governors day in school would be firmed up and governors were reassured that the school wished to support "whatever works for you" in arranging the day so that governors could be to be involved in a varied and productive programme.</p>

	Members <b>noted</b> the developments relating to the Academy Improvement Plan.
<b>13. Website Compliance</b>	<p>Stacey Frier informed members that a report had been distributed recording the significant actions which had now been undertaken with regard to the school website. She reported that everything was great and very positive. There were a number of items which still needed addressing. For example the school's exclusion policy was not available on the website also the equality objectives allied with key stage one reading schemes were not available and there did not appear to be any financial information at all available on the website. She reported that Amanda Dickson was already looking into this. Members were informed that this would be updated every half term.</p> <p>Thanking Stacey, Mark Deacon commented that the report was both very helpful and readily understandable especially with the use of a traffic light monitoring system.</p> <p>Members <b>noted</b> the web compliance report.</p>
<b>14. Ofsted Preparations</b>	<p>Governors were asked if they had any questions about preparing for OFSTED.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Thinking about the OFSTED "Parent View", do many of our own parents go on and record their views? OFSTED will take a keen interest and parents' views into account during an inspection.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> Many of our parents may not do so, even though at parents' evenings we encourage as many to do so was possible.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Are we able to answer the governors' checklist questions?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> the Academy improvement plan the next year will be very helpful in updating all the answers to the governors' checklist questions.</p>
<b>STEP Ahead – We invest in our future</b>	
<b>15. Feedback from the STEP Board of Trustees</b>	<p>Paul Glover told members that schools that had recently joined the trust had successfully had their names changed on January 1. He reported that already significant progress had been made yet there was still a long road ahead for them.</p> <p>He continued by pointing out that STEP had been able to convene its first annual conference which had generated much positive feedback. The theme of the conference had been "Our Team". And many governors from various different schools and academies had attended.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> What was covered?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> The focus was being about part of one team. Schools were at different stages of their development on their journeys and this could be seen from the interaction during the conference. 500 people attended the conference which was held in Brighton.</p>

	<p>The meeting <b>noted</b> the feedback given.</p>
<p><b>16. Governing Body Training</b></p>	<p>Mark Deacon asked governors for feedback about any training that they had received. It was reported that the safeguarding training was good and after having attended the fraud training it was felt that much more was now known. The general consensus was that there was a very good training program in place. Training needs which might be addressed in the near future could be on data, finance and SEND. It was reported that Tim Mills would be running training for governors about data in the next half term.</p> <p>Nick Ambrose reported to governors on the recent visit he made to the Academy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He had been impressed by how members of staff focused on their role and ignored him completely when he was in the classroom;</li> <li>• He felt that the pupils use of iPads for their learning was significant and supported the recent decision to purchase a significant number of iPads to support pupils;</li> <li>• He commented upon the depths of understanding and the range of vocabulary used by pupils in lessons;</li> <li>• He was particularly grateful to Alex Farley for going through data with him and how much analysis is done by the school on the data;</li> <li>• He concluded by saying how impressive staff were especially when team teaching because of the way they seamlessly complemented each other's approach when working together in the same space with a large number of pupils.</li> </ul> <p>Members <b>noted</b> the information given and the report of the recent school visit.</p>
<p><b>17. Correspondence to the Chair</b></p>	<p>(The minute for this item is to be found in the Part B confidential minutes of the meeting).</p>
<p><b>18. Minutes</b></p>	<p>The minutes of the strategic governing body held on 21 November 2016 were <b>agreed</b> to be a true record and signed by the chair.</p>
<p><b>19. Matters Arising from the Minutes</b></p>	<p>Stacey Frier asked to clarify the meaning of minute 13 of the meeting held on 21 November 2016 stating it should be interpreted to mean that at the time of the meeting the school's website had not fully complied with the statutory requirements. Also the audit of the website had not been carried out at that time.</p> <p>Members <b>noted</b> the clarification.</p>

<b>20.</b>	<b>Any Other Urgent Business</b>  Members <b>noted</b> that was no other urgent business to consider.
<b>21.</b>	<b>Meeting Impact</b>  Members <b>agreed</b> that the meeting discussions had shown: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• useful contributions to a positive outcome of any forthcoming OFSTED inspection and</li> <li>• members were supportive of the high levels of teaching and learning observed in the school.</li> </ul>
<b>22.</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>  Governors <b>noted</b> the date of the next meeting as Monday 12 June 2017.
<b>23.</b>	<b>Publication of Minutes</b>  Members agreed that the minutes referring items 10, 17 and 24 were to be recorded in the confidential Part B section of minutes.
<b>24.</b>	<b>Confidential Matters</b>  (The minute for this item is to be found in the Part B confidential minutes of the meeting).  The meeting closed at 6:36 pm.

#### Summary of Action Points

Agenda Item	Action	Owner	Status
4	Carol Fagan to arrange signature of Undertaking of STEP its academy Trust by Gemma Foster.	Carol Fagan	

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's Signature	
Chair's Name	
Date	