

# Swift Academies

*Success will inspire future triumphs*

The Rydal Academy  
Local Governing Body  
Monday 5 October 2020

virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

## MINUTES

Present (Governors)	John Armitage (Head Teacher), Mark Gray (Chair), Michael Jeffries, Mark Emerson, Kelly-Ann Lyle, Bhup Singh, Sarah Clough, Troy Turner, Katie Turnbull, Charlotte Mawson, Ewa Kaszuba, Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer)
in attendance	Natalie Jeffries (Early Years Phase Lead) Jo Thurland (Designated Safeguarding Lead) Angela Galey (Assistant Headteacher) Sarah Jones (Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies) Glen Hart (Chief Finance Officer, Swift Academies) Julie Cornelius (Director, Swift Academies) Derek Bell (Director, Swift Academies) Tracey Curtis (Governance Partner, Avec Partnership)

Item	Description of discussion	Action by
1	<p><b>Election of Chair</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to elect a Chair to serve until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2021</li> <li>the elected Chair will be ratified by the Board of Directors of Swift Academies</li> </ul>	

**Swift Academies**  
Registered office address:  
Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

Governors RESOLVED that Mark Gray was elected Chair of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy, to the first meeting of the Local Governing Body in Autumn Term 2020/1. The appointment would be ratified by the Board of Directors of Swift Academies in due course.

Mark Gray in the Chair.

## 2 Election of Vice Chair

- to elect a Vice Chair to serve until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2021
- the elected Chair will be ratified by the Board of Directors of Swift Academies

Governors RESOLVED that Michael Jeffries was elected Vice Chair of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy, to the first meeting of the Local Governing Body in Autumn Term 2021. The appointment would be ratified by the Board of Directors of Swift Academies in due course.

## 3 Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present

A round of introductions took place for the benefit of all present, including the newly appointed Parent Governor, Troy Turner.

The Chair encouraged Governors to seek clarification where discussions or information were not understood.

Governors were informed that Derek Bell (Chair of the Board of Directors) and Julie Cornelius (Director) had joined this meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer highlighted simple housekeeping arrangements to ensure the smooth flow of the meeting, including ensuring microphones remained on mute when not speaking, the use of the chat facility to ask questions and the raising of a hand to gain attention.

## 4 Apologies for absence and their acceptance

It was reported that Andy Hutton was not available to attend this meeting of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy due to work commitments. However, ICT Manager Reports and ICT Development Report had been shared with Governors as part of the agenda for this meeting.

Governors RESOLVED that the absence of Andy Hutton was noted.

**5 Notification of items of urgent other business**

- items that the local governing body of The Rydal Academy regard are of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the end of the agenda

One item of urgent other business was notified for consideration at the end of the agenda: Remote Learning Offer (to be presented by Natalie Jeffries from 2:20pm).

**6 Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests**

- a) complete / review the Register of Interest for the 2020-2021 academic year

Governors and those present were reminded that they should complete the Register of Interest annually to declare any relevant business or pecuniary interest and close family relationship between members and / or other trustees and / or employees. The Register should be updated during the academic year should circumstances change.

The Governance Partner had e-mailed Members, Directors and Trustees with a link to complete the Register of Interest electronically. The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that all Governors of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy had completed the Register of Interest for the current academic year.

- b) to declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting  
Governors and those present were reminded that they should declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting. No declarations of interest were received.
- c) Code of Conduct  
Governors were reminded of the Code of Conduct for Swift Academies. It was confirmed that a Code of Conduct was retained for all Governors of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy.

**7 Record of Approvals**

The Record of Approvals (June 2020) had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Record of Approvals documented Governors responses to e-mail communication in the absence of a physical meeting of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Chair commented positively in respect of the content of responses received from Governors and documented in the Record of Approvals.

---

**Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

	<p>Governors RESOLVED that the Record of Approvals was confirmed as an accurate record and should be signed by the Chair. The Governance Partner would liaise with the Chair to arrange a signed copy of the approved Record of Approvals to be retained on file.</p>	<p>Governance Partner / Chair</p>
	<p>Governors queried whether the top 50 books to read had been published to support parents with home reading activities: it was reported that information had been shared with parents via Marvellous Me and that information would also be uploaded to the school website.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to Board of Directors of Term Dates 2022-2023</b>            Information had been shared with Governors in respect of School Term Dates 2022-2023. A copy of the document would be retained on file.</p> <p>Governors were informed that the term dates 2022-2023 had been recommended by the Local Authority. Training days would be identified across Swift Academies.</p> <p>Governors considered the circulated term dates 2022-2023 and RESOLVED that the proposed model term dates were adopted by The Rydal Academy. The pro forma (Appendix 2) would be returned to the Local Authority, to confirm the decision, not later than Friday 16 October 2020. The information would be shared with staff and parents as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Head Teacher</p>
<p>9</p>	<p><b>Chair's Report</b>            a) action taken            b) correspondence</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that he was in regular contact with the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team. A number of meetings had taken place in respect of Covid-19.</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p><b>Head Teacher's report including Chief Finance Officer and Trust Business Manager Report</b>            a) SEF/Action Plan            b) Education Development Partner Report            c) Risk Register</p> <p>The Head Teacher's Report, SEF / Action Plan, Education Development Partner Report and Risk Register had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.</p> <p>The Head Teacher, Chief Finance Officer and Trust Business Manager presented to Governors the content of the circulated Head Teacher's</p>	

Report, drawing Governors' attention to the summary of change within each section as follows:

**Pupil numbers / attendance and exclusions**

The Head Teacher reported that due to the partial closure of the school on 20 March 2020, and for the duration of the reporting period, this section of the report remained unchanged.

Annual attendance remains low but is closing the gap towards national averages. At the point of closure, due to Covid-19, attendance was up 0.2% on the same time in the previous year. The week beginning 2 March 2020 (two weeks prior to lockdown), whole school attendance was 95.6% and then decreased to 93.1% the following week and the week prior to lockdown, attendance was 93.8% as parents started to keep their children at home, therefore having a significant impact on whole school attendance.

Gypsy, Roma Traveller pupils continue to have a significant negative impact on overall attendance (0.66%) as well as illness (2.03%) although this is below the national average which stands at 2.4%. The percentage of Persistent Absentees has increased by 3% on the same time last year.

At the point of closure, of the 98 children on the Persistent Absentee list from summer 2019, 48 children are no longer on roll. Of those still on roll 48% have improved their attendance, 26% are no longer Persistent Absentees and 22% have improved to above the national average. Nursery and Reception who are not statutory school age will continue to be targeted in order to develop good habits.

Previous target groups were: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils whose attendance has decreased by 5.17% and EHC pupils which had decreased by 0.14%

**Pupil exclusion levels**

It was reported that permanent exclusions remain low (1 pupil). Fixed Term exclusions and Internal Exclusions at time of Covid-19 closure were high against previous years due to a small minority of pupils with repeated disruptive behaviour, threatening behaviour or physical assault of other pupils or adults.

Governors queried whether children had settled back into school and whether there had been a detrimental impact on pupils' achievement. The Head Teacher reported that attendance was currently 92.1% and is believed to reflect the national picture. Pupils appeared to have a readiness to learn with settled behaviour since September 2020. Although some pupils were presenting with difficulties, for instance social, emotional needs this was no more than would have normally been experienced in school. There had been 5 fixed term exclusions to date, attributed to 4 children with complex behavior needs and almost all relating to assaults on staff.

---

**Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

### Attainment and Progress

The Deputy Head Teacher discussed with Governors attainment and progress. Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head Teacher's Report, which contained data which remained unchanged from the previous report. Governors were informed that the national phonics screen assessment, national Key Stage 1 assessments and national Key Stage 2 assessments were cancelled due to Covid-19.

Governors asked for an update on baseline assessments: Governors were reminded of the recovery curriculum discussed during previous meetings and tracking systems in place to identify gaps in pupils' learning. Guidance had been provided to staff and practitioners as it was unclear how pupils would approach and settle into school in September. However, staff had been thrilled with the attitude of pupils, who appeared to be enjoying being back in school and part of a team. The curriculum had been realigned to meet the needs of individual year groups and to plug gaps and therefore teachers were aware the rate of progress for pupils would have to be greater than ever in order to assess the impact of Covid-19 closure. Initial indications were pleasing, a first formal data submission would take place at the end of the Autumn term for Key Stage 1 and 2 and by half term in Reception and Nursery.

Governors asked for an update on phonics catch-up: It was reported that, Year 1 screening and gap analysis was complete, with Year 2 and Year 3 almost complete. Screening across all year groups had confirmed that learning prior to school closure had been retained and is deep rooted. Now staff were focusing on closing gaps from the time out of school. Year 3 are revisiting phonics as part of their English lessons and interventions had been identified for Year 3 pupils who did not pass the Year 1 phonics test. All Year 2 pupils, who missed their year 1 phonics assessment in the summer, would be tested during the second half of Autumn term in line with statutory requirements for the 2020/21 academic year. All Year 1, Year 2 and non-fluent Year 3 pupils would have their phonics progression internally tracked and monitored across the year.

Governors asked for clarification on the current position regarding statutory testing data and teacher assessments. It was reported there was no requirement to submit statutory data for end of Reception teacher assessments, Year 1 phonics testing, Year 2 phonics retesting, Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, Year 4 times tables tests or Year 6 SATs during the 2019/20 academic year. That the school had not updated internal data since the end of Autumn term 2019 data collection as pupils had not been on site, although teachers had assessed work produced during partial closure and through remote learning. The Head Teacher confirmed staff were using the Autumn term 2020 to baseline children and start developing a picture of progression and gaps created by Covid closure before updating internal data at the end of Autumn term. It was also reported that all statutory returns and testing had been

---

#### Swift Academies

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

Company Registration Number 07533271

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

reinstated for the 2020/21 academic year, apart from the implementation of the new Reception Baseline tests being delayed until September 2021. The school would also not be required to submit reportable end of Reception teacher assessments for the current cohort due to participation in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework Early Adopter Scheme.

### **Curriculum planning – staffing and class sizes**

The Head Teacher reported that the curriculum structure and timetabling had been restructured to enable all subjects to be taught weekly, moving away from the previous topic day format.

Long-term plans for all subjects have been updated by the relevant subject leaders, ensuring clear rationale for unit sequencing and a focus on developing children's depth of knowledge in each subject. Subject leaders have also created 'learning journeys' to communicate long term plans clearly with all staff, children and parents. These learning journeys are all available on the 'curriculum information' section of the website and have been shared with children in class.

Subject leaders have also re-written all medium-term plans to ensure that the non-negotiable, intended knowledge within their subject is clearly identified and developed progressively. All medium-term plans also have retrieval activities built into them to ensure that pupils are 'knowing more and remember more'. The importance of embedding retrieval activities has been shared with staff through meeting time and staff have undertaken their own research into retrieval in their subject. The new role of 'Retrieval Lead' has been created to ensure that development continues in this area.

The curriculum section of the website has been updated to reflect changes to the 20/21 curriculum; with clear learning journeys to show long-term plans and additional home learning activities.

The school had researched and published the 'Curriculum Recovery Report' aimed at how they would best support the children's return to school in September. This was shared with Governors and Directors in Summer Term and a parent's version of the report was also shared via email and on the curriculum section of the website.

All subject leaders have researched further guidance on subject recovery from internal and external sources and completed subject recovery action plans based on their end of year gap analysis. Subject Leaders have then shared curriculum recovery action plans with all class teachers and adapted long-term and medium-term planning where necessary.

The school had been successful in a bid for English Hub support (St Michaels') to develop phonics provision which includes an audit of provision and practice as well as £5000 to spend on phonics resources across the school. This money had been used to purchase fully

---

#### **Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

decodable reading books to match the phonics scheme. Children having access to these books is a key Ofsted requirement and will make a tremendous difference to the quality of texts that the school can provide for in-school phonic readers and home phonic readers

Governors commented positively on the recovery curriculum and the information available on the school website: this was a great piece of work. The Head Teacher commented positively on the work completed by staff and the focus for the year.

### **Financial Management**

The Chief Finance Officer reported that finance update had been prepared at a time of great uncertainty as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Financial issues as a result of operating in a different model and further updates would be brought to Directors' attention as and when the position changed.

Monthly management accounts continue to be shared each month with the Chair of the Trust and the Chair of the Finance committee. The Chief Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer continue to liaise with the Chair of the Trust on any urgent matters.

Confirmed figures have been released by the Education & Skills Funding Agency for the school budget share for 2020-2021, the budget share for The Rydal Academy was reported as £2,476,503, which is an additional £154k when compared to 2019-2020. All other income was anticipated to be in line with the 2019-2020 budget.

Financial stability of all the schools within the Trust is key for the years ahead. Work continues to explore opportunities to improve the financial efficiency of the Trust.

### **Schedule of Contracts**

All contracts/ Service Level Agreements continue to be reviewed as they expire and best value and quality sought for each agreement, the Trust contract register has proved a useful tool enabling the Trust to work proactively and avoid 'rollover' of unwanted contracts.

Following a successful tender process, the Trust has appointed an external company to outsource the cleaning function. The aim is for this contract to commence at some point in the Autumn term once final details and the TUPE process has been agreed. Many efficiencies have been highlighted throughout this process.

Several smaller premises and maintenance related contracts have been renewed throughout Spring & Summer term which include kitchen equipment maintenance and maglock maintenance, some small savings have been identified for several of these which also bring an improved service.

---

#### **Swift Academies**

Registered office address:  
Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors



### **Estates Management**

Mid-year H&S Committee Meetings, H&S Audits and Premises audits were due to take place in May 2020 but postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in partial school closure. These audits will now be conducted throughout September and October 2020. All mandatory checks and maintenance have continued throughout partial closure to ensure premises are safe for all staff and pupils in attendance; government guidance regarding safe management of premises was shared regularly with all site staff who carried out additional checks.

Additional H&S measures were introduced as soon as Covid-19 was confirmed in the UK. Cleaners were issued with anti-viral cleaning products and levels of cleaning increased. The situation has been closely monitored and a thorough deep clean of the whole of school conducted as a priority during partial closures. Daily deep cleaning processes continue in any areas used on a daily basis. Strict social distancing measures were introduced for pupils, staff and visitors with only essential visitors permitted on site. All staff are regularly updated on any changes and reminded of correct procedures to ensure all on site are kept safe.

Prior to the wider re-opening of schools in June 2020 a full Risk Assessment and premises audit was conducted in conjunction with the Leadership Team. This Risk Assessment and strategic plan remains a live document which is regularly reviewed to ensure it complies with current government guidance and recommendations.

The CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) for 2020/2021 closed for applications in December 2019. Two applications were submitted for Rydal Academy which consisted of a roofing replacement and fire safety (fire alarm) project. Application results are normally released in April each year but due to the Covid- 19 pandemic this was postponed to July. Initially, the school were advised that neither of the bids were successful. However, following the governments' subsequent announcement to provide more funding both applications were approved which will result in £464k of funding income. These projects will be extremely beneficial to The Rydal Academy and, once complete, the projects will substantially reduce repair costs. The projects will commence as soon as possible.

CIF applications for the 2021/2022 round are due to be submitted in December 2020. The school are currently considering which further projects to bid for in the next round.

An overall Estates Strategy has been developed which priorities short, medium and long term plans for the upkeep and development of the school premises. This enables the school to prioritise capital spending and assist budget forecasting. This has been created in line with both Head of School priorities and results from the Condition Data Survey. This has also helped the school to work in a more pro-active manner by prioritising works at the beginning of the academic year in line with

---

**Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

allocated budgets. It will also assist the preparation of future capital bids including CIF.

During summer term an issue was raised regarding RW classroom where it appears damp in or under the floor has caused rising. RPA were contacted and investigations are ongoing.

Site staff training was postponed due to closure of schools, this will recommence as soon as training courses become available again in Autumn Term.

A risk policy and register remain to be a standing agenda item on each LGB and Board of Director meeting. Any significant premises issues will be raised for consideration.

### **Financial Governance**

Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head Teacher's Report for an overview of the management accounts as at 31 July 2020. A surplus of £9k is predicted against a budget surplus of £27k. The prediction is based on several factors which could change due to a claim submitted for exceptional costs in respect of Covid-19.

The Spring and Summer audits were delayed, both due to Covid-19, these have now taken place.

### **2020-2021 teacher pay award**

The School Teachers' Pay Review Body published in July 2020, recommendations for teachers' pay from 1 September 2020.

In response, the Secretary of State for Education has accepted the recommendations in full and has proposed the following:

- 5.5% increase to the minimum of the main pay range
- 2.75% increase to the minimum and maximum values of all other pay ranges and allowances for teachers
- the re-introduction of advisory pay points for the main and upper pay ranges

### **National Joint Council Pay Award**

The Board of Directors have approved a 2.75% increase for support staff back dated to 1 April 2020.

### **Safeguarding and wellbeing**

The Head Teacher reported that although requests for Education Health and Care Plans were submitted during the Summer Term 2020, extensions to timescales have created a delay.

During lockdown, The Rydal Academy received 14 Operation Encompass reports involving domestic abuse incidents of medium or high risk. A number of families are accessing early help support, in particular during

school closure where parents were struggling to manage their children's behaviour at home.

A new system operating with Children's Services – Children's Initial Advice Service (CIAT) has been operating since March 2020, offering advice, support and signposting. This removes the need for referrals and allows professionals to talk through the individual cases.

### **Health and Safety**

Mid-year Health and Safety Committee meetings, Health and Safety Audits and Premises audits due to take place in May 2020, were postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic which resulted in school closures. Audits would be rearranged and take place as soon as possible. Results would be provided to Governors in due course.

However, feedback and contact has continued with the Health and Safety Partner (Avec Partnership), to ensure that current regulations are adhered to. Mandatory checks and maintenance have continued throughout partial closure to ensure premises continue to be a safe environment for staff and pupils.

Additional Health and Safety measures were introduced as a result of Covid-19. Cleaners were issued with anti-viral cleaning spray and levels of cleaning increased. The situation continues to be closely monitored and thorough deep clean of the whole conducted as a priority. Daily deep cleaning continues in areas of the school used regularly.

As part of the strategic planning to welcome pupils back to school in June 2020, a full Health and Safety audit was conducted, in line with government guidance. Risk assessments and new processes are being developed to ensure the safety of staff and pupils is a priority. All Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Policies continue to be reviewed regularly and updated to reflect changes in legislation or best practice.

### **Staffing**

Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head Teacher's Report and information in respect of staffing.

### **Pupil Views**

Governors were reminded that pupil views had been collected during Sprint Term 2020, prior to the partial closure of schools.

### **Parent Views**

Parent questionnaires are circulated annually through Ofsted Parent View. There were insufficient responses in order to gather reliable data.

### **SEF / Action Plan**

Governors were informed that the narrative contained in the SEF / Action Plan had been updated from September 2020. Changes to the

document were highlighted yellow. The Head Teacher discussed with Governors the content of the circulated SEF / Action Plan.

### **Education Development Partner Report**

The Head Teacher provided Governors with an overview of the Autumn Term meeting with the School Improvement Partner, Gabrielle Reddington. The focus of the meeting was reported as Subject Leader development through deep dive interviews with targeted staff and subject areas including PSHRE, PE, RE and MFL.

### **Risk Register**

The Chief Finance Officer commented that the Risk Register for contained minimal updates. Risks contained on the circulated Risk Register remain much as they were previously. Governors were informed that no staff or pupils had tested positive for Covid-19, although it was understood that members of the community had tested positive. Guidance was regularly updated to inform staff and pupils of the actions required if they are displaying Coronavirus symptoms.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Head Teacher's report and information presented was noted.

## **11 Chief Executive Officer's Report**

- a) Scheme of Delegation
- b) Trust Development Plan

The Chief Executive Officer's Report, Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

### **MAT Development Sessions**

The Spring Term MAT Development Session took place on Thursday 6 February 2020 based on a skills audit of governance across the Trust. Clinics were facilitated to cover finance and funding management, Health & Safety, Ofsted framework, Safeguarding HR Policy and Members, Directors and Governors reporting mechanisms.

The Summer Term MAT Development Session took place on Thursday 2 July 2020 and provided a focus on logistics and recovery / enhanced curriculum.

The Autumn Term 2020 MAT Development Session is planned to take place from 5pm on Wednesday 21 October 2020 and will be led by Gabrielle Reddington with a focus on what Governors and Directors can expect during an Ofsted visit.

### **Chairs / Vice Chairs of Local Governing Bodies**

The Autumn Term 2020 meeting with Chairs and Vice Chairs of the respective Local Governing Bodies with the Chief Executive Officer,

---

#### **Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

Chief Finance Officer, Trust ICT Manager and Trust Business Manager will take place from 1:30pm on Friday 9 October 2020. The Chair (Mark Gray) and Vice Chair (Michael Jeffries) confirmed they were available to participate in the meeting. The Chief Executive Officer would ensure that Microsoft Teams invitations were shared with the Chair and Vice Chair.

**Scheme of Delegation**

It was reported there were no changes to the circulated Scheme of Delegation.

**Trust Development Plan**

Governors were informed that the Trust Development Plan had been reviewed and updated by the Executive Leadership Team and would be considered by the Board of Directors for approval when they next meet in Autumn Term 2020 (Friday 13 November 2020). Changes to the Trust Development Plan were highlighted yellow in the circulated document.

**12 Trust ICT Manager Report / ICT Development Plan**

The Trust ICT Manager Report and ICT Development Plan had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the Trust ICT Manager Report and ICT Development Plan were noted.

**13 Single Central Record: signature by the Head Teacher and Chair**

The Trust Business Manager is to arrange a date for SCR to be reviewed and signed by the Head Teacher and Chair of the Local Governing Body.

Trust Business Manager

**14 Local Authority Pupil Numbers Projections**

Projections for Primary School population had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Governors were informed that pupil number projections are shared by the Local Authority each year. Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated document and the reduced birth rate which would impact on admission numbers to primary schools.

The Chair sought clarification whether the reported reduced birth rate was the national or local picture. The Head Teacher stated that in recent years a number of families had moved into the area, but that the national birth rate had reduced.

Governors sought clarification whether the building of new houses in Darlington over the next 5 years would impact positively on the pupil number projections. It was explained that the projections are released annually and would take account of housing developments. Data

showed over the last 10-15 years that the number of families moving into the area does not have significant impact on projections

Governors RESOLVED that the information in respect of Local Authority pupil numbers projections was noted.

**15 Proposed lowering of school age range: extension to 2 year old provision**

Information has been shared with Governors prior to the meeting in respect of a proposed lowering of the school age range. A copy of the document would be retained on file.

**Rationale**

The Deputy Head Teacher discussed with Governors the proposal to lower the school age range. Governors' attention was drawn to the rationale in the circulated information, which reported that *the two year old free early education and childcare strategy is based on clear evidence which shows that involvement in high quality early education can lead to better educational and social outcomes for all children, with particular benefits for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. A third of children are still not achieving a good level of development at age five. In 2019 the achievement gap between the lowest attaining 20% of children and the average was 32.4% and has been widening since 2016. By providing this offer schools and settings will support the improvement of social and educational outcomes and create a positive impact on children and parents. It is estimated there are 640 eligible two year olds living in Darlington, currently there are 95 providers offering this provision. In summer 2019, the take up rate of funded places was 92% with 66% of children in a private day nursery, playgroup or with a childminder, and 34% of children in schools.*

**Proposal**

The Deputy Head Teacher reported that The Rydal Academy nursery currently offers 78 places (156 sessions) for three and four year olds across morning and afternoon sessions. In order to include two year olds, this would reduce the total number of children in nursery from 78 to 75 as there are additional space requirements for two year olds). It is proposed to offer a maximum of 12, two year old places and 63, three and four year old places.

It was reported that there are currently no additional funding requirements with the current staffing structure able to accommodate the change. However, the lowered age range would attract an additional £2,964 of income per year.

Eligibility is identified via the national insurance number for parents / carers. No additional checks are required to be undertaken by The Rydal Academy. The Local Authority holds a list of children eligible and contacts parents within a term of their second birthday.

### Application Process

Academy Trust can apply to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to change their lower age limit, and subject to the Secretary of State's decision, make changes to their Articles of Association and Funding Agreement.

Governors asked whether having the children in school at an earlier age would address some issues currently faced when pupils start in Reception, for instance speech and language. The Deputy Head Teacher confirmed that pupils who have attended Rydal's nursery outperform those who do not and stability pupils outperform mobility pupils in both attainment and progress.

Governors queried whether some of the two-year-old places would be privately paid places rather than funded places. The Deputy Head Teacher commented that consideration would be given in due course to privately funded places.

Governors RESOLVED that the information in respect of the proposed lowering of the school age range was noted and approved.

### 16 Policies for approval / review / information

- a) For information – Swift approved policies: Capability policy; Charging and remissions policy; Anti-fraud, corruption and bribery policy; Leave of absence policy; Family friendly policy; Stress management policy; Whistle-blowing policy; IT acceptable user policy for staff, pupils and visitors; Anti-harassment and bullying policy; In year admissions policy; Employee's working remotely and bring your own device to work (BYOD) policy; Bereavement policy; Central services and appeals policy
- b) For information – School reviewed policies: Personal, social, health and relationships education policy (PSHRE); Security policy; Early Years policy; Policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions; Educational visits policy; Fire emergency plan; Teaching and Learning Policy; Assessment policy; Marking policy
- c) For approval – Behaviour and self-regulation policy (attached); Reporting to parents annual cycle (attached); Child Protection Policy (attached)

The Behaviour and self-regulation policy, Reporting to parents annual cycle and Child Protection Policy had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

### Behaviour and self-regulation policy

Angela Galey presented to Governors the content of the Behaviour and self-regulation policy, highlighting the contents of the policy which had changed since the previous version. Governors' attention was drawn to the main concepts of the policy, and the vision, values and aims.

---

#### Swift Academies

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

Company Registration Number 07533271

denotes support and challenge provided by governors

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Behaviour and self-regulation policy and information presented were noted. The Behaviour and self-regulation policy was approved and adopted with immediate effect.

### **Child Protection Policy**

Jo Thurland presented to Governors the content of the Child Protection Policy, highlighting where the circulated policy differed to the previous version. For instance, the definition of Safeguarding now also refers to mental and physical health. Governors were assured the ethos of the policy had not changed, but that the wording had been adapted to be simpler to understand.

Governors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Child Protection Policy and information presented were noted. The Child Protection Policy was approved and adopted with immediate effect.

### **Reporting to parents annual cycle**

The Deputy Head Teacher informed Governors of the new arrangements for annual reporting and adaptations being made to the new cycle due to restrictions around the current Covid risk assessment.

Governors RESOLVED that the information presented was noted.

### **Remote Learning Offer**

Natalie Jeffries presented Governors with information in respect of the Remote Learning Offer. Arrangements for Early Years remote learning were used to demonstrate to Governors how remote learning would operate. A template document will be shared with parents in due course.

Questionnaires had been shared with parents to gather information about their individual experiences of lockdown and identify activities that had worked well, and those that had not.

The lead Governor (Curriculum) (Mark Gray) commented positively on the content of the Remote Learning Policy and arrangements put in place by The Rydal Academy. This would be followed up as part of monitoring arrangements by the lead Governor.

Governors queried whether The Rydal Academy qualified for laptops to support pupils who did not have access to resources to support remote learning. The Head Teacher reported that The Rydal Academy did not yet qualify for laptops: only when 15 Key Stage 2 children are self-isolating or a cohort had been sent home would laptops become available. The Head Teacher confirmed that applications had been prepared, in order that they could be submitted as soon as the trigger had been reached.

Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted.



**17 Special interest governor update**

- a) Premises / Health & Safety: Mark Emerson
- b) Safeguarding & Welfare, looked after children (LAC), e-safety: Sarah Clough
- c) Special Educational Needs (SEN), including SEMH: Kelly-Ann Lyle
- d) Finance: Michael Jeffries
- e) Values, Community & Equality: Bhup Singh
- f) E-safety: Sarah Clough
- g) Careers & Transition: Vacant
- h) Standards (Teaching, Learning, Curriculum & Progress), Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT): Mark Gray

This item was not considered. Governors RESOLVED that special interest governor update would be considered at the next meeting of the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy.

Governance Partner to note for agenda

**18 Standing Items**

**Feedback from MAT Development Session held on Thursday 2 July 2020, via Microsoft Teams**

Refer to agenda item 11 – Chief Executive Officer’s Report for information.

**19 Concluding items**

**Any urgent other business raised under item 5**

- Remote Learning Offer: refer to agenda item 16 for information.

**20 Approval of documents for inspection**

Governors RESOLVED that the agenda, approved minutes and supporting documents be made available for public inspection with the exception of information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers.

**21 Date and time of future meetings**

**Local Governing Body**

(all from 1pm)

- Monday 1 March 2021, Monday 14 June 2021

**MAT Development Sessions**

(all from 5pm)

- Wednesday 21 October 2020, Thursday 11 February 2021, Thursday 8 July 2021

**Chairs / Vice Chairs of LGB and Executive Leadership Team**

(all from 1:30pm)

- Friday 9 October 2020, Friday 12 March 2021, Friday 25 June 2021

These minutes were approved by the Local Governing Body of The Rydal Academy as follows:

on: Mar 2, 2021 date

signed by: (Chair) *Mark Gray*  
Mark Gray (Mar 2, 2021 10:54:00 AM)

printed name: Mark Gray

Approved

**Swift Academies**

Registered office address:

Croft Road, Hurworth on Tees, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2JG

**Company Registration Number 07533271**

denotes support and challenge provided by governors


# Minutes The Rydal Academy LGB 5 October 2020

Final Audit Report

2021-03-02

Created:	2021-03-01
By:	Sophie Bainbridge (sophie.bainbridge@avec-partnership.com)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAAd8ZuXEFocnBYcvHyrnH-UvCnCrXX_2zA

## "Minutes The Rydal Academy LGB 5 October 2020" History

 Document created by Sophie Bainbridge (sophie.bainbridge@avec-partnership.com)


2021-03-01 - 22:42:12 GMT - IP address: 80.2.187.53

 Document emailed to Mark Gray (mgray@rydal.swiftacademies.org.uk) for signature

2021-03-01 - 22:43:26 GMT

 Email viewed by Mark Gray (mgray@rydal.swiftacademies.org.uk)

2021-03-02 - 05:53:11 GMT - IP address: 2.125.211.186

 Document e-signed by Mark Gray (mgray@rydal.swiftacademies.org.uk)

Signature Date: 2021-03-02 - 05:54:04 GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 2.125.211.186

 Agreement completed.

2021-03-02 - 05:54:04 GMT