

Minutes Hardingstone, Stimpson & Castle Academies
7th March 2024 17.30hrs
Meeting held at Stimpson Academy
The fourth meeting of the academic year 2023-2024

These minutes reflect the order of the agenda and not necessarily the order of discussion.

NAME	ROLE/AREA OF INTEREST	TYPE OF GOVERNOR	TERM FROM & TO	PRESENT	NO.OF MEETINGS ATTENDED
Zoe McIntyre	Executive Headteacher	Executive Headteacher		YES	4/4
Dave Hood	Chair	Co-opted	22/04/21 - 21/04/25	YES	3/4
Joseph Eyiaro		Co-opted	09/03/23 - 08/03/27	YES	3/4
Mostafa Miah		Co-opted	13/03/23 - 12/03/27	NO	2/4
Sandra Akhigbe		Co-opted	11/01/23 - 210/01/27	NO	2/4
Mayowa Orioye	Vice Chair	Co-opted	19/01/23 - 18/01/27	APOLOGIES	2/4
Gillian Innocent-Labija		Parent	16/03/23 - 15/03/27	YES	4/4
Ornela Mato		Parent	21/09/23 - 20/09/27	YES	2/4
Adrian Lett		Staff - Stimpson	23/01/20 - 22/01/24	YES	4/4
Bethany Harmes		Staff - Hardingstone	28/02/23 - 27/02/27	YES	4/4
Hanna Godden		Staff - Castle	13/11/2023 - 12/11/1024	APOLOGIES	1/4
VACANCIES 3 Co-opted					

OTHERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

NAME	ROLE
Joshua Coleman	Chief Executive Officer - EMAT
John Lawson	Head of Education – EMAT
Alex Rigler	Head of Governance and Compliance - EMAT
Luci Clapton	Head of School - Stimpson
Dan Lugg	Head of School - Castle
Alex Holdsworth	Acting Head of School – Castle (Virtual for first 15 minutes)
Gill Glenn	Head of School – Hardingstone

Agenda item	Discussion	Action / Information
1. Welcome and Introductions	Introductions made. The Chair reminded the board that all items discussed at the meeting remain confidential until such time as the minutes are approved and signed off. The Chair congratulated Mr. Adrian Lett on being re-elected as Staff Governor for the Stimpson Academy.	
2. Apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from Hannah Godden	
3. Quoracy.	The meeting was quorate.	
4. Declarations of interest.	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda that had not already been declared on the annual register of interests or governors highlighted verbally.	
5. Minutes of the Board meeting – 18 January 2024	The Board received and agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 18 th January 2024.	
6. Action Log from the LAB meeting held on the 18 th January 2024.	<p>i. Update on latest data for Pupil Late Arrivals – Reduction in lates has continued; changes made to signing in arrangements so that all three schools have the same late arrangements. Consideration was being given to extending time for parents to sign in due to significant roadworks in area near Castle Academy. Updates on lates produced at the end of every week for Executive Headteacher and made available to Heads of School who contact parents directly. Lates are constantly monitored and appropriate actions taken.</p> <p>ii. Add Statutory definition of ‘Lateness’ in relation to prosecution to Attendance Policy. Completed</p> <p>iii. Information on Virtual Classrooms to be sent to all parents – completed.</p> <p>iv. Review of number of Coffee morning/Parent events – completed, reduced to one per term</p> <p>v. Governor Visit updates to be added to agenda – completed</p> <p>vi. Governor Visit forms to be amended to be more bespoke – completed</p> <p>vii. Paul Osborne to share information regarding launch of Phase 2 on GovernorHub at most convenient LAB meeting - Ongoing</p>	PO

<p>7. A. Headteacher's report.</p> <p>B. Performance report.</p>	<p><u>School context and behaviour.</u></p> <p><u>CASTLE.</u> AH highlighted the following.</p> <p>Alex Holdsworth would leave the Trust after 2024 Easter holidays as he had been appointed as a Headteacher for a school in Bedford. Arrangements had been put in place for the 2024 Summer Term to cover this development – Mr. Lugg would spend three days a week at Castle school (the other two days he worked at NIA); Ms. Clapton will spend 2 days a week at Castle (the other 3 days would be at Stimpson Academy). EMAT hoped to appoint a new post for September 2024; the intention was that the person appointed would be professionally developed and trained by the Trust to be a Head of School.</p> <p>A Year 6 Teacher on long term absence was no longer employed by the school/Trust. Ms. Hannah Godden had agreed to teach the Year 6 class to ensure those children received the best possible education in their final year at Castle school. The successful full funding for an Education Health Care Plan Child by the SENCO had resulted in the appointment of a new Teaching Assistant for Early Years Foundation Stage.</p> <p>Decrease in lateness had been achieved by very positive actions which included a slight amendment to close the school register at the same time as the school gates closed at 8.55. Parents have been reminded of the need for their child to not only attend every day but also to be punctual. The direct involvement of the Attendance Officer and school Office staff had also helped reduced the number of late arrivals.</p> <p>Staff absence was appropriately monitored – 3 members of staff had been referred to Occupational Health. One of these colleagues was currently absent and it was noted that this might become another long-term absence. Arrangements had been put in place to ensure that staff absence did not impact on children's education and learning.</p> <p>Gov: Why have we only learnt recently that Mr. Holdsworth would be leaving the school at Easter</p> <p><i>DL: The resignation date for any teacher wishing to leave at the end of term is always the last day of the first half term. Mr. Holdsworth was only appointed to his new school in that penultimate week before half term, so the news of his departure has only been public knowledge since 26 February 2024 and in that week the Senior Leadership Team produced the current solution for his short term replacement and long term solution of appointment a new post of Head of School. Parents were informed of Mr. Holdsworth resignation last week.</i></p> <p><i>ZM: The Senior Leadership Team would like to thank Ms. Clapton for agreeing to spend two days a week as Head of School at Castle Academy.</i></p>	
--	---	--

Gov: Is the Long-Term solution for replacing Mr. Holdsworth viable?

ZM: Advertising the new September 2024 Head of school role in March 2024 will attract more applicants; this will be a bespoke role and an opportunity for a teacher to professionally develop and be supported to have the skills required for a Head of School role. In the unlikely event that an appointment was not possible Ms. Clapton will remain at Castle for two days a week from September 2024.

JC: There remains a national teacher recruitment issue, but EMAT has seen an increase in applicants for all vacant posts in their schools; this reflects the strength of the Academy Trust and positive reputation on its schools. The Trust view is that it is highly likely an appointment for the new post of Head of School would be made during the 2024 summer term.

Gov: Will the workload for Ms. Clapton be appropriate?

ZM: this issue has been discussed by the Trust, Senior Leadership Team and Ms. Clapton. Planning has been put in place to ensure that the workloads is manageable – this has been possible as the Deputy Head at Stimpson currently has no timetabled lessons, so there is capacity and support for this change to Senior Staff workloads.

JC: The Trust has been actively involved in all the planned Senior Staffing changes and it remains committed to fully supporting staff development and “growing our own” future leaders, managers and teachers.

STIMPSON: LC highlighted the following:

The appointment of a new SEND Teaching Assistant had been very successful – the member of staff has made a very positive start and their work allowed more capacity to assist pupils with complex needs.

The school remained committed to achieving the best possible student attendance, currently 94.95%. Procedures were in place to monitor all pupil absence, most of which was caused by genuine illness. Parents of pupils who arrived late were contacted weekly if punctuality remained an issue. At present, the majority of late arrivals resulted from just a couple of families.

Gov: What action does the school take regarding lateness?

LC: The Head of School talks directly with parents of students who are late. Usually, these conversations result in an immediate improvement in the child’s punctuality.

Gov: What action does the school take regarding staff absence?

LC: The Staff Attendance policy stated very clearly actions that have to be taken. Following an absence, a Review meeting is held and for one Teaching Assistant such a meeting resulted in much improved attendance. A Teaching Assistant with only 80% attendance has been supported and an Absence Review meeting held; if their level of absence continues their short-term contract will be terminated at the end of the 2024 Spring term.

Gov: Have the School Leadership a plan in place if the short-term contract for that Teaching Assistant is now extended?

LF: Yes; an appointment was recently made to the school office and it is hoped that one of the applicants might consider accepting a Teaching Assistant post.

Gov: How do you define “genuine illness” in relation to absence of students?

LC: We ask for evidence of doctors’ appointments or other medical interventions.

Gov: Are the Immediate 3s occurring in the classroom?

LC: No, almost all of these incidents happen in “social time” - break and lunchtimes – it is highly unusual to have children behave badly in class

DL: At Castle Academy the majority of such Immediate 3’s incidents also happen in “social time” – quite often pushing in the playground. Staff look into all such behavior incidents to ensure that there are no systemic issues involved.

HARDINGSTONE – GG highlighted the following:

Due to the high number (9) of pupils in Reception Class with SEND needs, a temporary member of the Reception Team has been appointed on a fixed term contract. This appointment was temporary as one child with SEND needs was moving to a Special school and two of these children had recently relocated from Northampton to London.

The school is currently fully staffed and continues to put in place the Trusts approach of “growing its own staff” – a member of staff who came originally from a Supply Agency to support a Year 6 child, has recently been changed to be employed directly by the Trust.

One Teaching Assistant, who works one to one with a Year 4 child, has been placed on a Formal Absence Plan due to poor attendance – her absence will remain closely monitored.

Gov: Does a child lose their support if their Teaching Assistant is absent?

GG: No, every effort is taken to ensure that the support required for a particular child is kept in place; in this instance there is always an adult supporting the Year 4 child.

Data headlines and Progress/barriers in relation to SIP priorities.

The Board was reminded that all acronyms were explained in the glossary of terms provided in the 2023 Autumn Term and that the document was also available on GovernorHub.

CASTLE: AH highlighted the following:

At present 65% of Year 1 were at the expected standard for Phonics and staff were confident that actions were in place to ensure 82% of Year 1 would reach their expected standard by the end of the school year. Staff were confident that at least 75% of children would pass the summer Phonics Test and hoped that it could be as high as 80%.

In Maths recent data had shown that 59% of Year 6 were at the expected standard, a range of interventions and support actions were in place which allowed the Head of School to be confident that 75% of children would be at the expected standard by the end of the school year. A change had been made to the assessment IT program which at present in appropriately allocated all new children to achieve a Greater Depth Level of attainment. The target for Maths was stated to be ambitious but achievable.

For Spelling and Grammar (SPaG) recent assessments showed that 56% of children were at their expected standard. Intense interventions had been put in place to ensure that the final target of 75% would be achieved. Attainment in writing currently in Year 6 remained lower than required. Support had been received from the EMAT English Consultant and writing standards had improved... A detailed and comprehensive Action Plan was in place and the Year 6 Tutor was now supporting SAT's Intervention groups.

ZM: Professional Development time has been given to Teacher Assessment of writing and the amount of evidence required from each student. A range of evidence is required over a period of time and some examples of extended pieces of writing.

Gov: Are all teachers aware of which children need particular support and interventions?

ZM: Yes, every teacher is fully aware of the needs of each of their children; they know "the knowledge or skills gaps". Staff also share information on which interventions are successful and change those that might not work for individual children. Staff are fully aware of the strengths and areas that might need help for every child in their care

Gov: What percentage of children make progress as a result of the intervention process and what is the main focus now of intervention work ?

ZM: All children who are targeted for intervention make some level of progress; the main focus is now on writing. The ambitious target of 75% reaching their expected standard by the end of the year should be achievable but considerable work is taking place to increase the current data of just 41% of students at this level. The support of the Trust's English Consultant has been very useful.

Gov: What do teachers do for those students who currently have reached their targets or are working already at Greater Depth?

ZM: Across all three schools such students receive high quality teaching and still receive appropriate stimulating interventions which they find challenging and allows them to remain at their expected standard or even Greater Depth. In all three schools staff work with all children, no particular group receives preferential treatment – all children are treated equally – whatever their attainment. In simple terms, “no slacking” is allowed.

STIMPSON: LC highlighted the following:

Present data (38%) relating to Phonics is lower than expected and some way from the set target of 74% reaching their expected standard. Gaps in knowledge and skills have been identified and the interventions put in place will result in the final target of 74% being achieved. A recent Phonics screening test showed that the intervention program was enabling more children to make progress.

For Year 6, the target of 74% of children reaching expected progress was ambitious but achievable. A robust Intervention and Booster program was in place and Year 6 staff had been provided with an in-depth analysis that so they were fully aware of each child’s particular needs and skills that needed further help. Regular meetings were held by the Head of School with Year 6 staff. A recent Year 6 Parents Evening had been very successful in ensuring that parents understood the value of completing homework which was often tailored to an individual child’s needs. Ongoing professional development and training has taken place for those staff teaching Phonics.

Attainment and progress in Writing, Maths and SPAG were all carefully monitored and a wide range of actions were in place to ensure that the targets set for these subjects would be achieved.

Gov: You have changed the groupings for Phonic teaching – how confident are you that every child is in the right group?

LC: If the teacher recognizes that a child is in the wrong group, they will quickly be allocated to the most appropriate group.

Gov: Your targets for Reading and writing are high – are they actually achievable?

LC: These are ambitious targets but staff are confident that children will reach these levels. Every child is targeted and supported to reach their target.

Gov: What advice do you offer parents on how they can support their child with Phonics?

LC: We give parents access to Phonic Videos and we encourage older siblings to assist with homework.

Gov: Are there any actions taken if a child does not complete their SPaG home assignments?

LC: Yes, we monitor homework and if not completed a child will stay in on a Thursday lunchtime and be supported to complete the set task.

HARDINGSTONE

Gov: Why have Hardingstone higher targets than Castle and Stimpson?

GG: Historically Hardingstone has always had higher target and there are more children able to work at greater depth at this school.

Gov: Do you share your expertise and teaching skills with the other schools?

GG: Our Year 6 staff share their knowledge, skills and ideas with other Year 6 teachers both at Castle and Stimpson but also with colleagues at the Northampton International Academy. highlighted the following.

GG highlighted the following:

Groups had been reorganized with strongest teaching directed to those groups and children who need to make the most significant progress. A thorough and very detailed Action Plan has been put in place to ensure that the ambitious, but achievable targets are met. (Phonics – 96%; Reading Expected Standard (EXP) – 90%, Greater Depth (GDS) – 42%; Maths – EXP 94%, GDS – 35%; SPaG – EXP 87%, GDS – 35%; Writing – EXP 81%; GDS 26%

Curriculum development and enrichment.

CASTLE:

The Board noted the Castle Academy Review Summary report which provided considerable detail on the two-day visit (15 & 16 January 2024) of three EMAT professionals who investigated Safeguarding, Curriculum Overview, Reading, English, Mathematics, Computing, Spanish, Art & Design, Early Years Foundation Stage, Behaviour, attitudes and personal development. This review has resulted in 7 key recommendations which were aimed at improving teaching, management and learning for all pupils.

The school had used the evidence within the Review to develop a Teaching Learning Development Plan. One aspect of the TLD Plan was to work with Subject Leaders and provide them with more time to develop teaching strategies for staff and work with the Senior Leaders on daily book checks.

Gov: How does the Daily Book review by Staff work?

DL: For the first round of these Daily Book Reviews 20 minutes has been used every morning by a member of the Senior Leadership Team or a Curriculum leader to visit one Year Group and one set of books. A short report is then provided to the Class teacher highlighting what has gone well and areas that need to be improved.

Staff have commented that they prefer the instant feedback which is short and to the point. The Second round of Daily Book Review was now happening, and this provided an opportunity to check that the actions suggested by the First Review report had been put in place.

A tracker to allow Castle staff to understand the participation of children in Clubs had been developed. Analysis of the information provided showed that 64% of Pupil Premium children were not attending a club. This has resulted in the creation of a lunchtime club and targeted Pupil Premium children were being encouraged to participate. At present the school ran 9 clubs a week and there was a wide variety of choice – including Football, Basketball, Colouring In, Debating, Chess, Gardening and Cookery

STIMPSON :

The Board noted the Stimpson Academy Review Summary report which provided considerable detail on the two-day visit (7 & 8 February 2024) of three EMAT professionals who investigated Safeguarding, Curriculum Overview, Phonics, Early Reading, English, Mathematics, Geography and Religion Education. This review has resulted in 5 key recommendations which were aimed at improving teaching, management and learning for all pupils.

The school's management had shared the information from the recent Review with all staff and were developing an Action Plan which would feature in all Summer Term staff meetings. The review had also highlighted the need for further staff training on the teaching of Phonics and the use of physical resources for Maths – both of these had already been actioned. Examples were provided of the changes made to the teaching of Religious Education and the use of Face Value Cards and Bean Strings in the teaching of Mathematics.

HARDINGSTONE:

The Board noted the Hardingstone Academy Review Summary report which provided considerable detail on the two-day visit (22 & 23 January 2024) of three EMAT professionals who investigated Safeguarding, Curriculum Overview, English, Mathematics, Geography, Religion Education and behaviour attitudes and personal development. This review has resulted in 6 key recommendations which were aimed at improving teaching, management and learning for all pupils.

The Senior Leadership Team was working with Curriculum Leaders to improve their understanding of their subjects and more confident in their delivery in the classroom

Safeguarding.

	<p>DL gave background information on a serious safeguarding concerns relating to a family of a child in the Caterpillar pod – the school was focussed on ensuring the pupil was safe and remained in regular contact with outside agencies – including the Police and Social Services.</p> <p>LC gave background information on safeguarding issues arising from Domestic Violence for two Stimpson children. There has also been an increase in the number of Early Help Assessments made by the school to support children considered to be either in need or at risk.</p> <p>GG gave a brief outline of several complex cases at Hardingstone, some of which were in relation to sexual abuse. This school had three Early Help Assessments still in progress, all of which involved inadequate parenting.</p> <p>Gov: Do the three schools use the EMAT safeguarding Thompson Team? ZM: Yes, they have been used and kept informed of these safeguarding issues. JC: The Board need to be aware that Northamptonshire has significantly more Children in Care than most other English counties.</p> <p><u>Performance Reports.</u></p> <p>The Board received and noted the Spring 1 Performance reports on Castle, Stimpson and Hardingstone schools. These reports gave updated information on pupil and staff numbers, pupil and staff attendance, effectiveness of Leadership and Management, Quality of Teaching and Learning, Exclusions, Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare, Health and Safety, Parental Complaints , Community and Parental engagement.</p>	
<p>8. Governor updates.</p> <p>i. Visit reports, expectation of visit and draft visit schedule.</p> <p>ii. GovernorHub training.</p>	<p>i. The Board received the following Governor Visit Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pupil Premium Monitoring reports completed by the Chair of Governors, Mr. D Hood – Castle – 18 January 2024; Hardingstone – 23 January 2024 ✓ Vision or Ethos in Practice report completed by Ms. I Akhigbe – 26 January 2024 ✓ Safeguarding Report completed by Mr. D Hood on 14 December 2023 at Hardingstone ✓ SEND report completed by Ms. Innocent-Labija via Teams on all Castle, Stimpson and Hardingstone schools. ✓ SEND report completed by Mr. D Hood on Stimpson Academy on 10 January 2024 ✓ Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment completed by Mr. D Hook at the Stimpson Academy on 14 December 2023 <p>The Chair reminded the Board that he had compiled a Spread Sheet on Governor Visits and reminded all Governors to book their termly visit before Easter 2024.</p>	<p>All Governors</p>

	<p>ii. The Board was invited to the Governor Monitoring Workshop to be held both via Teams and in person at the EMAT offices in Pyramus House, Grange Park on Monday 18th March 2024 between 5.30pm and 7pm.</p>	All Governors
<p>9. Review reports.</p> <p>i. Castle , Hardingstone and Stimpson</p> <p>ii. Thompson Team annual Safeguarding report</p>	<p>The Board noted and discussed these reports earlier in the meeting – see Pages 8 and 9.</p> <p>The Board received and noted the Annual Safeguarding Report 2022 – 2023 from the Thompson Team. The report showed the work undertaken by the Thompson Team to ensure the safety and well being of all members of each school community. The Trust had an unwavering commitment to the creation of a safe and nurturing environment where every child could thrive. The report contained considerable detail and information gained from the work with Thompson team with each of the Trust’s schools.</p>	
<p>10. Policies. Safeguarding & Child Protection.</p>	<p>The Board noted the EMAT policies on Admissions and Complaints.</p> <p>The Board unanimously approved the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy 2023 – 2024 for Hardingstone Academy</p>	
<p>11. Governor Homework</p>	<p>Governors were asked to watch a short video on the Teaching of Phonics before the next Board meeting.</p>	EMAT & All Governors
<p>12. Any other business.</p>	<p>The Board watched a short video clip of a recent meeting of Northamptonshire County Council. At this meeting County Councillor Danielle Stone read out comments from some Castle Academy children on the litter and poor state of the immediate environs around that school. Action had been taken to litter pick the road near Castle Academy and talks were in progress for NIA and Castle school on specific projects to improve the local environment. It was hoped that a mural could be painted and that one section of the road be closed to reduce areas currently used for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the Eco- Committee of Stimpson school should give a short presentation at their next meeting on their work, ideas and plans.</p> <p>A Governor requested that better lighting be available at Castle Academy as after the last meeting, held at that school, they had felt unsafe whilst walking to their car which had been parked on the school grounds.</p> <p>The Chair stated that at the recent Chair’s Forum (All Chairs from each EMAT school) the focus had been on Absence and Punctuality. It had been suggested at that meeting that Teacher Governors on Local Boards could take oversight of these areas. The Executive Headteacher stated that this proposal was appropriate, and she would speak with the Staff Governors on its implementation.</p>	<p>ZM/PO</p> <p>ZM/AL/ HG/BH</p> <p>ALL GOVS</p>

	The Chair informed the Board that he has also recently attended a EMAT Trust Board meeting, which had been informative and very welcoming. The Chair reminded all Governors that their role required them to challenge and support all three schools.	
13. Dates of meetings for the year:	Dates of meetings for the year: 2023-2024. 2 nd May 2024 17.30hrs meeting 5 in Hardingstone 11th July 2024 17.30hrs meeting 6 in Castle	

The meeting closed at 19.40

Minutes agreed as a true representation and signed
Signature
Print Name
Date

**Actions from meeting no 4 Hardingstone, Stimpson & Castle academies held on the
07/03/2024**

Action	Owner
1. Launch of Phase 2 on GovernorHub to be given by Paul Osborne at most convenient LAB meeting. Page 2.	PO
2. Phonics Video to be watched by all Governors prior to next meeting. Page 11	All Governors
3. Stimpson Academy Eco-Committee to give presentation on their work at next LAB meeting Page 11	ZM/PO
4. Lead Governor with oversight of Absence and Punctuality to be offered to all Teacher Governors. Page 11	ZM/AL/HG/BH
5. All Governors reminded of the need to challenge, support and read all papers for a meeting. Page 12.	ALL GOVERNORS