

Minutes Hardingstone, Stimpson & Castle Academies
16 November 2023 17.30hrs
Meeting held at Hardingstone Academy
The second 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	Headteacher		YES	2/2
Dave Hood	Chair	Co-opted	22/04/21 - 21/04/25	APOLOGIES	1/2
Joseph Eyiaro		Co-opted	09/03/23 – 08/03/27	YES	1/2
Mostafa Miah		Co-opted	13/03/23 – 12/03/27	YES	1/2
Sandra Akhigbe		Co-opted	11/01/23– 210/01/27	APOLOGIES	1/2
Mayowa Oriyoe	Vice Chair	Co-opted	19/01/23 – 18/01/27	YES	1/2
Gillian Innocent-Labija		Parent	16/03/23 – 15/03/27	YES	2/2
Ornela Mato		Parent	21/09/23 – 20/09/27	APOLOGIES	1/2
Adrian Lett		Staff - Stimpson	23/01/20 – 22/01/24	YES	2/2
Bethany Harmes		Staff - Hardingstone	28/02/23 – 27/02/27	YES	2/2
VACANCIES 3 Co-opted 1 Staff (Castle)					

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
Barry Wardle	Clerk - EMAT
Luci Clapton LC	Head of School - Stimpson

Dan Lugg DL	Head of School - Castle
Alex Holdsworth AH	Acting Head of School – Castle
Gill Glenn	Head of School – Hardingstone
Sarah Mills SM	SENDCo Hardingstone
Tim Hallis - TH	Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo – Castle
Carol Hamblett CH	SENDCo Stimpson

Agenda item	Discussion	Action / Information
1. Welcome and Introductions	Introductions made. The Clerk reminded the board that all items discussed at the meeting remain confidential until such time as the minutes are approved and signed off.	
2. Apologies	Apologies received and accepted from Sandra Akhigbe, Ornela Mato and Dave Hood.	
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. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair	Mr Mayowa Oriyoe was unanimously elected unopposed as Vice Chair of the Local Governing Board of the Hardingstone, Stimpson and Castle Academies until the first meeting of that Board in the 2024 – 2025 academic year. Mayowa Oriyoe agreed to chair the meeting in Dave Hood's absence.	
6. Minutes of the Board meeting held on the 21/09/23	The Board received and agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 21 September 2023 All actions arising from these minutes had been completed or included as an agenda item for this meeting.	
7. School Annual SEND Reports	ANNUAL SEND REPORT CASTLE: the board received a summary of the castle academy 2022 – 2023 send report. it was noted that 90% of pupils at the school had no Special Educational Need (SEN) (national average – 84%). It was expected that this figure would decrease by the next board meeting as staff had received training on identification of children with SEN. A Governor asked how is the process of obtaining information from other nurseries and making family visits working out?	

TH: relevant staff at nurseries are met and reception leads carry out home visits. Any child identified as having SEN meets with staff prior to them starting at the school.

A Governor asked when further information would be available on funding for SEN?

TH: the school works closely with the local authority to ensure that maximum funding is made available. At present the school is processing the Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) for three children and negotiations for funding for these plans is presently taking place.

A Governor asked if there was anything additional the Board and school needs to do in order to address the increase in children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs?

Considerable and ongoing support has been received from the Mental Health Support Team of the NHS, who have worked with a range of children. The school has recently completed an SEN Audit and this linked with the involvement of the Inclusion Team, will result in further changes such as Staff/Parent and Child Workshops. Staff work very closely with parents to ensure that every child receives the most appropriate level of support.

HARDINGSTONE: The Board was informed that there had been a slight increase in the number of children with SEN. The school currently has two children with agreed EHCPs, with a further 7 at application stage. The Board noted that the Local Authority (LA) is currently taking between 48 – 50 weeks to process EHCP applications, therefore the school continues to pursue and access Higher Needs Funding as interim financial support. The LA EHCP Co-ordinator will visit the school before the end of November 2023.

Hardingstone school used a wide range of other organisations and external professionals to visit the school to assist, diagnose and work with a range of children. The school was able to provide some Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) as the waiting lists for that service remained extensive. Further talks were taking place with the LA concerning SALT as the need for that service had increased over the last two years.

A Governor asked was the school confident funding would be made available?

SM: Yes. Although it can arrive late, the school works very hard to ensure that all available funding is sought.

A Governors asked when the Accessibility Plan would be amended?

SM: Staff were in the process of making appropriate changes and it would be completed by the end of December 2023.

A Governor asked if Hardingstone and Stimpson adopted the same methods as Castle in working closely with new parents and doing home and nursery visits?

SM & CH: Both schools follow the same processes as Castle SEN staff.

	<p>EMAT Head of Education asked if both Hardingstone and Castle schools had adapted the curriculum for the needs of children with SEN and whether these adaptations were taking place in every lesson.</p> <p>SM & CH: Staff are experienced and can identify needs of individual children and appropriate educational scaffolding is provided in every lesson to allow children with SEN to fully access the curriculum and make progress. All lessons are regularly monitored and Senior Management is confident that staff are teaching to the appropriate level.</p> <p>EMAT Head of Education asked why there was a high rate of Persistent Absence for children with an EHCP?</p> <p>SM: The Board was informed that due to complex medical needs one child with an EHCP was often unable to attend school. Arrangement and research was currently taking place to find this child a more suitable educational establishment.</p> <p>STIMPSON: The schools SEN numbers were in line with national averages. The school had recently simplified the referral process for SEN support and staff knew the strengths and needs of every child. Often the most time consuming part of the process to access SEN funding and support was gaining the permission of the parents whose understanding of the procedures often delayed the process.</p> <p>Stimpson was above the national average figures for children with SEMH needs. Considerable resources had been allocated to ensure that where required Individual Health Care, Well Being, Action and Pastoral Plans were created for these children. The school, like the other schools, made excellent use of outside organisations and it had been recently successful in gaining some extra funding from the LA. Stimpson had also included SEN training in recent Staff training days and sessions.</p> <p>A Governor asked if the schools were confident that staff in all three schools had been provided with the correct and relevant training?</p> <p>TH, CM & SM: Yes, the training offered both formally and informally is of an excellent quality and very well received by staff.</p> <p>The Board thanked the SENCOs for their reports and these staff then left the meeting.</p>	
8. Report of the Heads of School	<p>STIMPSON ACADEMY – school context and behaviour</p> <p>Two Teaching Assistants (TA) had been appointed and 24 new children had joined the school during Autumn 1. The new Behaviour Curriculum had been well received by staff and children and management had no concerns relating to the attitude and actions of children. Actions were currently taking place to support a member of staff with an unsatisfactory attendance record. Two staff were currently offering between them, three days a week of support for Orchard Academy.</p> <p>CASTLE ACADEMY – school context and behaviour:</p>	

The Headteacher was currently supporting NIA three days a week and one Year 5 class teacher was working one day a week until Christmas at Orchard Academy. 25 children had joined the school during Autumn 1. Attendance and Behaviour were both good, the school operated a zero tolerance approach to inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour of children at lunchtime had noticeably improved with the new system of lunchtimes being supervised by TAs.

A Governor asked if sharing staff with other schools had any detrimental effects?

AH: There had not been a detrimental impact; the staff at the school remained an effective and professional team.

ZM: The support being offered by the three schools is just until Christmas 2023; there has been careful evaluation of the effects of this support which so far has proved beneficial to the individual members of staff and their temporary school placements.

A Governor asked if Wrap Around Care at Castle was sufficient for parents?

AH: The previous Wrap Around system had not offered value to money as it was being accessed by fewer than 10 children. To ease the transition the school had run a 45 minute session for four weeks before school. This was well received but had now ended. TAs were offered the opportunity to run this provision but no person wished to manage it. Governors were reminded that the school did run a number after school clubs which could be accessed by all children.

HARDINGSTONE ACADEMY – school context and behaviour

Two staff with poor attendance are being managed according to the relevant Trust policies. Behaviour has been good with the majority of the small number of unacceptable behaviour incidents being caused by just two pupils. Behaviour Plans have been put in place and these have already had a significant impact. Support has also been given to staff arising from challenging conversations with a parent of a Year 6 child. A member of staff is being supported to ensure that their teaching and planning is of good quality. If this informal support fails to produce the required improvement a formal Action Plan will be put in place.

STIMPSON ACADEMY – Data Headlines

Ensuring high quality teaching in every lesson remains central to all teachers and considerable resources, planning and support is allocated to this priority. Year 6 has 60 children (last year there were 48 in this year group). 65% of Year 6 have English as an Additional language (EAL) and 15% have SEN. The school has already started with booster and intervention sessions and the identification of children that require such support. Staff are of the view that Year 6 is a strong cohort and that 2024 results will reflect their efforts, abilities and the support received.

The report was presented by Ms L Clapton, Head of School. The school roll was very healthy – Reception Class had 54 children (usually 40). Three of the current Year Groups had no vacancies. Information was shared on staffing - 2 TAs appointed and two more positions advertised, 2 new Teachers had started and were being appropriately

supported and new Leads in place for English and Maths. The term had started very well.

CASTLE ACADEMY – Data Headlines

The recently completed mock SAT papers completed by Year 6 were slightly disappointing, the school has set an ambitious target of 75% pass rate. The school has put in place a range of interventions to ensure that this target is achieved. Phonics has also required some further interventions as recent arrivals have required support due to EAL needs.

HARDINGSTONE ACADEMY – Date Headlines

The school has some very ambitious targets for Year 6 i.e. Reading 90%; Maths 94%, Writing 81%. The Head of School, who was also the Year 6 Class Teacher was confident that these targets would be met in 2024.

A Governor asked how targets were set?

GG: Children are constantly monitored, assessments take place three times a year and where required, support/interventions are always put in place.

A Governors asked if the present Year 5 at Hardingstone were as strong as the present Year 6?

GG: Every year group was different. The present Year 5 had 50% good achievers and 50% who required considerable support. Every year group is encouraged to do their very best as clearly the successes of any Year 6 child are dependent on the teaching and support they had received since joining the school.

SM: Children don't get to Year 6 and achieve good outcomes without the drive in all years to provide them with the skills, knowledge and tools to gain the highest possible levels in Year 6.

STIMPSON ACADEMY – Curriculum Development and Enrichment

The school continues to offer Reading Workshops for parents, generally they had been well attended. Popular developments with the children have included the Forest School and GoCycling. The Eco Student Committee had organised a Power Down Day when there will be a real attempt to drastically cut the use of electricity for a day at the end of November 2023. The school continued to offer a wide range of events and activities for both children and parents.

CASTLE ACADEMY – Curriculum Development and Enrichment

The school is organising with other Trust schools a Big Sing Event for Thursday 20 June 2024. Staff and children have also worked on various initiatives to improve both the local environment and its relations with the local community. One Castle Student was placed in the top 50 of over 100,000 children in a national multiplication table competition.

HARDINGSTONE ACADEMY - Curriculum Development and Enrichment

The school hosted a training session led by the Executive Headteacher for over 30 teachers on basic skills, fundamentals and refining of the feedback policy. Two mornings were used to run an Open Event for potential new parents/children who could join the school in September 2024. A very successful Year 6 Residential had taken place, the Big Friend Little Friend initiative was now embedded in the school and very popular with all children.

STIMPSON ACADEMY – Safeguarding

A pupil with significant needs had recently joined Year 6. A part time timetable had been agreed and arrangements put in place for an EHCP. The Board also noted that a Pastoral Lead was currently giving one day of support at Orchard Academy in Milton Keynes.

CASTLE ACADEMY – Safeguarding

The school had recently made one referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which had resulted in the pupil being assessed as a Child in Need. Three children had a part time timetable but arrangements were in place to increase the hours in school for all three children.

HARDINGSTONE ACADEMY – Safeguarding

Governors were informed of a very serious safeguarding matter in relation to a sexual assault on a Year 3 child. Mention was also made of a Year 6 child who had made false allegations against their peers and staff.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board received the Performance Reports for Autumn 1 for all three Academies.

A Governor asked what action was being taken to resolve the Persistent Absence (PA) of 39 children from 37 families at Castle Academy?

AH: PA was currently 8.4%, 5 of the 39 children were on the SEN register and 14 of these children were eligible for Pupil Premium (PP) funding. The school's Attendance and Welfare staff were working with the families to encourage better attendance. The Board was reminded that that to "trigger" being classified as PA the child only had to have been absent from school for 3.5 days in the first 7 weeks of the school year and that PA figures were therefore expected to improve as the school year progressed.

A Governor asked whether lateness was an issue across the three Academies?

ZM: There has been a noticeable increase in lates, for example Hardingstone Academy has had 179 lates in Autumn 1. This increase is also evident across Castle and Stimpson. Whilst there were genuine reasons why some children were late for school e.g. distance, vehicle access for parents with a disability; it was clear that further investigation was required. Governors were reminded that the timing of the school day had slightly changed requiring some children to arrive 10 minutes earlier; also arrangements concerning the closing of the school gate and parents/children signing in

ZM

	<p>late had also been modified. The Board asked for a report on the issue of the administration of lates at all three Academies and the consequences of these changes.</p> <p>The Board further requested that EMAT consider whether the Trust Attendance Policy is sufficiently clear on the consequences of the issue of lateness.</p>	EMAT
9. Governor Visits	<p>GOVERNOR VISITS</p> <p>The Board was reminded that all Governors were expected to complete one visit per term to one of the Academies. The meeting was informed that the Trust and the schools would, if required, help to reduce any barriers preventing regular governor visits.</p> <p>ZM stated that contact would be made with all Governors to arrange times, dates and focus of Governor Visits for the rest of the Autumn term.</p>	ZM
10. School Annual Reports	<p>ICR MEETINGS AND OFSTED DATA SUMMARY REPORTS</p> <p>The Board noted the ICR meeting reports and the recently published Inspection Data Summary Reports (IDSR) for all three Academies.</p>	
11. POLICIES	<p>The Board received and approved the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour Policy • Admissions Policy 2025-26 • Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy • Pupil Mental Health Policy for all three schools. <p>The Board received and noted all Trust wide policies relevant to each school that had been sent to all Governors on 9 November 2023.</p>	
12. Survey Results	<p>SURVEY RESULTS</p> <p>The Board received the results of the surveys completed by Parents/Carers, Staff and Students from all three Academies. Governors agreed that the surveys provided significant information and that they were positive and reflected the hard work and professionalism of staff. To ensure effective use of the information gained from surveys the Board asked consideration be given to the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future reports to contain data to allow Governors to see changes in answers to questions. • Consideration be given to how and when children complete the surveys – including use of widgets and explanations of terms used such as “recommend”. • Parents to be given longer to complete the surveys and also encouraged to complete them when attending the many events held by each of the academies. 	ZM and Heads of Schools

13. Any other business.	EXCLUSION TRAINING – Governors were invited to attend the Exclusion Training that had been organised by EMAT on 7 th and 12 th December 2023.	
14. Dates of meetings for the year:	Dates of meetings for the year: 2023-2024. 18th January 2024 17.30hrs meeting 3 in Castle School 7th March 2024 17.30hrs meeting 4 in school 2 nd May 2024 17.30hrs meeting 5 in school 11th July 2024 17.30hrs meeting 6 in school	

The meeting closed at 19.25

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

**Actions from meeting no 2 Hardingstone, Stimpson & Castle academies held on
16/11/2023**

Action	Owner
1. Further investigation will take place into Pupil Late arrivals – including procedure and timing of closing of school gates in morning and consideration of streamlining signing in arrangements for late arrivals.	EHT, HEADS OF SCHOOLS & A RIGLER
2. Add Statutory definition of ‘Lateness’ in relation to prosecution to Attendance Policy	A RIGLER & THOMPSON TEAM
3. Governors to arrange visits and timings with Executive Headteacher – every Governors is expected to make one visit per term .	EHT AND HEADS OF SCHOOLS
4. Pupil and Parent Surveys – more thought to be given to improving understanding of the surveys, use of widgets by children and utilizing times when Parents are in the school for consultation evenings or other activities and production of EAL versions	EHT AND HEADS OF SCHOOLS
5. Parental/Child/Staff Surveys – future reports to include data to allow comparison with previous surveys	EHT AND HEADS OF SCHOOLS