



Notes and Action Record of the Holgate Local Academy Committee Autumn 2 meeting Held on Monday 10th November at 16.30 at The Holgate Academy

Membership	Initials	Governor category	Absence
Kate Turner (Chair of Governors)	KT	Appointed AC governor	
Margaret Newcombe (Vice Chair of Governors)	MN	Appointed AC governor	
Phil Bailey	PB	Staff AC governor	
Emma Paine	EPn	Appointed AC governor	A
Emma Paling	EPl	Appointed parent AC governor	
Emma Redgate	ER	Appointed parent AC governor	
Scott Comer	SC	Appointed AC governor	
Paul Simpson	PS	Appointed AC governor	

Staff In Attendance	Initials	Position	Absence
Heather Widdup	HW	Executive Principal	A
Henry Diamond	HD	Principal	
Harsha Chauhan	HC	Assistant Principal	
Michelle Berry	MB	SENCO	
Lynsey Parker	LP	Governance Professional / Clerk to Governors	

Quorum required	4	Governors present	7
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Action Record:

Agenda / action ref	Meeting Ref	Action Required	Responsible Person	Timeline	Update	Complete / carried forward
THA/01/2526	Autumn 1	Governance Professional to write to Mr Comer regarding his attendance and continuation on the local academy committee	LP	29/9/2025	As Mr Comer had not previously been formally notified of his non-attendance and reminded of Governor Code of Conduct and responsibilities, this was	C

					carried out on 23/9/2025. Mr Comer advised he wishes to continue as a local academy committee governor. Any further absence in a 6 month period to result in the LAC terminating his appointment as governor	
THA/03/2526	Autumn 1	Governance Professional to confirm SLT and middle leader lead roles for each link governor area with the Principal and circulate to governors	LP	30/9/2025	Complete and resource area developed on Governor Sharepoint to bring all information, training and guidance together in one place: Link Governor Resources	C
THA/03/2526	Autumn 1	Governors with outstanding Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests returns to complete	KT, EP, ER, SC	30/9/2025	Complete	C
THA/03/2526	Autumn 1	All governors to complete mandatory training via National College	Govs	30/9/2025	Complete	C
THA/03/2526	Autumn 1	All governors to contact CoG or GP with any suggested agenda items / training and development topics for the Autumn 2 strategy and development meeting	Govs	13/10/2025	Complete	C
THA/06/2526	Autumn 1	DC to share position statement process and an example completed faculty position statement with governors	DC	10/11/2025		C/F
THA/06/2526	Autumn 1	HD to explore implementing a 6th formers as tutors / mentors scheme and report back	HD	10/11/2025	Ongoing work in progress, part of plan to introduce as part of 6 th form	C
THA/06/2526	Autumn 1	HD to raise governor suggestions re reading improvement priority with staff for consideration and possible implementation and report back	HD	10/11/2025	Complete. Feedback = audiobooks not part of recommended material for reading challenge. Future governor training and development session on teaching of reading AIP priority planned for Spring 2.	C

Notes of meeting:

Blue text = academy committee governor check and challenge

Green text = academy committee governor decision-making / approval

Q = Question from governors

A =Answer from senior leaders

Agenda item	Key points /summary of discussion	Action Required	Responsible Person	Timeline
THA/10/2526 Welcome and apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from EP.			
THA/11/2526 Declarations of Interest	There were no declarations of interest for any items on the agenda.			
THA/12/2526 Notes of last meeting & update action log	Notes of the previous meeting received and accepted. Action log reviewed and updates provided for all actions from the previous meeting (see above).			
THA/13/2526 Safeguarding	<p>LA Safeguarding Audit: LA Safeguarding Audit complete ahead of 31/12/2025 deadline and signed off by KT as CoG and Safeguarding governor.</p> <p>Governor training on approach and responsibilities to be provided at Summer 2 LAC meeting.</p> <p>Trust-wide training on staff allegations and whistleblowing to be arranged.</p> <p>Governors noted the number of areas fully met and that this was a credit to the hard work of academy staff</p> <p>Safeguarding Bulletin: Q – Are staff consistent in reporting issues?</p>			

	<p>A – Confident that all concerns reported to staff are recorded. Some inconsistencies in level of detail; working with staff to address. But no member of staff that does not record reports / disclosures</p> <p>Q – It’s good to see there is now an unkind category – is kindness rewarded? A – Yes. Change in categorisation between bullying and unkind behaviour has meant that support for victim and perpetrator and work on consequences of behaviour can take place in an earlier and calmer way before issues escalate to bullying.</p> <p>Q - 23% of all students have reported a safeguarding concern. Is this considered high? Are students more confident to come forward and report concerns now? A – We do have a strong reporting culture, happy with figure / level and how concerns are dealt with. Some variance in type and nature of concerns reported – ie some are multiple reports from / regarding the same child; not all are found to require action.</p> <p>Q – Can you explain the different levels of concern recorded? A – Level 2 = largely internal support and monitoring; Level 3+ = external agency involvement</p> <p>Q – What is Operation Encompass? A – Information sharing between Nottinghamshire Police and schools on student involvement in criminal incidents, either as victim or perpetrators. Some issues with currency / timeliness of data provided, but we include in our reporting those incidents that have been reported to us and shared by Police at that point in time.</p> <p>Recent lockdown incident at Holgate was discussed and reviewed; inadequate Police response highlighted; HD meeting with local area Inspector to discuss concerns and ongoing relationship.</p> <p>New maglocks being put in place to keep staff and students safe in the event of any full or partial lockdown in the future.</p> <p>Q – Will the doors with new locks open in a fire? A – Yes and have been tested during a recent drill.</p>			
THA/14/2526	<p>Governor training and development: SEND Academy SENCO MB lead this session.</p>			

<p>Governor training and development</p>	<p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Information Report – statutory requirement, updated annually and published on academy website. • SEND local offer – Notts County Council website, all county-wide SEND provision published in one place. <p>SEND audit has been carried out part of RISE programme (see below). MB advised that from reviewing our SEND Information Report in advance of the audit visit, RISE partners feedback that the report undersells the support on offer and the breadth of SEND provision at Holgate. RISE recommendations including use of clear and accessible language in line with a reading age of 7, and video walkthroughs for parents, are being addressed by the academy. It was noted that the termly SEND bulletin to parents does go into more detail on specific interventions and programmes of work being carried out at the academy.</p> <p>MB gave an overview of academy SEND context including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • numbers of students with SEND in each year group and different categories of need, compared to Nottinghamshire and national averages • Outcomes, behaviour and attendance data for SEND students compared to non-SEND students • SEND codes • Graduated response and waves of provision • Assess, plan, do, review cycle • SEND Code of Practice • Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - governors noted that identification and/or diagnosis of SEND, and an EHCP for those students with complex needs, does not come with any additional funding to help meet the needs of those students – all additional funding has to be applied for on a case by case, needs-led basis - governors noted that Additional Family Needs (AFN) funding is managed at Family SENCO level; and that High Level Needs (HLN) funding is managed at local authority level • EHCPs • Exam access arrangements 			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with external agencies <p>Governors noted: Some children with a diagnosis may not be on the SEND register, it depends if they need additional support in addition to / different from what others receive as part of quality first teaching / wave 1 interventions in the classroom</p> <p>SEND register fluid and changing, pupils can come on and off depending on their levels of need and if interventions have worked and they no longer require additional support</p> <p>Q – What is EHCP? A – Education Health Care plan. Written by Educational Psychologists for those children with significant need. Parent can lead process and we contribute, or other way around; or agencies e.g social care can suggest. EHCPs do not come with funding in Notts, and support above a nominal level of £6,000 has to be demonstrated as already being provided. Legal requirement to meet the provision in the plans. EHCPs are must be reviewed annually against the child’s targets – at Holgate all children on SEND register have termly reviews. Can support applications to specialist schools which need EHCP to access.</p> <p>Q – are these FFT targets? Do they account for type of need? A – the academy uses FFT 20. This does not take account of needs, so we then look individually at stretch targets and a more realistic target.</p> <p>Pupil progress system helps us to more easily identify what areas / subjects students need more support in in order to achieve target grades.</p> <p><u>RISE SEND Audit</u> Governors considered the RAG ratings and the identified actions and next steps in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes • Leadership • Quality of teaching and learning • Working with pupils and parents/carers 			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and identification • Monitoring, tracking and evaluation • Efficient use of resources • Improving outcomes <p>It was noted that no further feedback / suggested changes to the next steps/actions have been provided from our RISE partners as yet.</p> <p>In relation to the identified next steps, MB clarified and gave assurance to the academy committee governors, and governors noted that:</p> <p>A HLTA at the academy does already work with identified students at Year 6-7 transition and at Year 11-Post-16 / College transition, such as accompanying to college visits.</p> <p>In addition to staff CPD at the November INSET days on quality first teaching and wave 1 interventions, there are plans to develop class / cohort specific adaptive teaching strategies.</p> <p>It was positive to see the number of green ratings in the leadership of SEND category, as this shows that the culture is correct, and that further improvements can stem from there.</p> <p>Work is underway to ensure there is more regular feedback back to staff who have flagged children to the SEND team as being in potential need of additional support. Regular contact takes place between SEND and Year teams to find best solution for individual children e.g. refer to Springboard for discussion on next steps with external professionals. SEND team can help staff to distinguish between need and behavioural choice.</p> <p>Work is underway to improve tracking of interventions and to ensure that all information is recorded in one place including pastoral support and interventions such as behaviour mentoring, counselling.</p> <p>Holgate has teaching staff SEND advocates in each faculty identified through QA as delivering strong quality-first teaching; these staff lead on sharing good practice within faculty. TAs are attached to a specific faculty as specialists in supporting teaching and learning in that particular</p>			
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	<p>subject area. There is currently no formal QA of TAs; at Holgate success/challenge is identified through line management, feedback from faculty teaching staff.</p> <p>Laptop provision has improved through significant investment - 32 laptops now available for student use, plus 2 allocated to specific students. Governors noted that laptops may not be needed for all subjects / lessons – staff are responsible for ensuring that they are available for the children that need them for that lesson. Usage is being managed to ensure effective deployment.</p> <p>RISE partners visited the SEND Hub and gave some useful advice re use of space which is being considered.</p> <p>RISE partners have extended an offer for Holgate to join their forum with Educational Psychologists to discuss best approach and next steps for individual children, and to visit similar secondary schools to observe their SEND practice.</p> <p>Q – Do you have any plans to visit Yeoman Park Academy within Diverse Academies Trust? A – No, due to nature of need at the academy, but we do plan to visit Horizons Academy once open to look at their provision for students with social, emotional and mental health needs and make links with other professionals.</p> <p><u>Q and A session:</u> Q – How confident are the academy of SEND students experiences out in the world beyond education? A – Currently planning work experience placements, ensuring all have positive experience in appropriate setting. Some way to go, but there is inclusive practice out there and employers do recognise need and make adjustments.</p> <p>Holgate’s extra curricular offer and building cultural capital came through strongly in the review and high levels of participation amongst students with SEND was praised. We adapt activity for SEND students so they can access e.g. football club, DoE.</p> <p>Q – This is extremely positive and shows the level of care from the school. Are you actively trying to encourage this participation in extra-curricular activities?</p>			
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	<p>A - Yes, we do look at enrichment and extra-curricular interests during all termly SEND reviews – then SEND team contact club, trip leader, etc, to match children’s interests to provision and put arrangements in place to make accessible to all.</p> <p>Q – How many students are in need of a specialist school? A - 1 student with a special school named on their EHCP, and awaiting a place. Academy has put in requests for 3 other students with EHCP to change the placement from us at mainstream to a special school. This request to change goes to a panel to review all evidence of previous interventions and whether their needs can be met in current setting.</p> <p>Q - What types of SEND needs are in need of a special school placement? A – Often ASC, not all behavioural or SEMH.</p> <p>Q – Would it be useful for the academy SENCO to be present at all Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Governor panels? A – No, not if there are no identified SEND needs.</p> <p>Q - When bids for additional funding are turned down do you get feedback? How does this inform learning to maximise success of future bids? A – Yes we are given feedback, however the academy cannot re-apply that term. Parents can appeal funding decisions. Parental background strongly influences if this happens; the academy signpost parents to Ask Us for support.</p> <p>Q - How do parents engage with the team and different internal and external processes to secure outcomes in the best interests of the children? A – Parents can either have unrealistic expectations of what can be provided in mainstream school with no funding, or conversely, when we are applying for funding or additional external support, do not have the resources or wherewithal to fight for the child, supply appropriate evidence, challenge and appeal decisions. Can be very hard for parents to navigate the SEND system.</p> <p>Parental engagement strategies were discussed, including addressing misconceptions about e.g. access to 1:1 TA support.</p>			
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	<p>SEND staff attend as many academy parental engagement events as possible across all year groups to talk to parents about SEND provision; SEND team has changed times of SEND drop-ins in response to parent feedback to maximise attendance and improve messaging about the service and what can and cannot be offered in a mainstream academy.</p> <p>Complaints and spread of misinformation within the community were discussed and this was noted as an area of reputational risk. Governors noted that despite risk, 50% of all applications to Holgate for September 2026 intake have listed Holgate as their first choice.</p> <p>Ultimately, the academy needs to balance resource and give all students the best opportunity to succeed, not just SEND students. The academy's SEND offer needs to be financially viable and sustainable to continue to meet current and future need.</p>			
THA/15/2526 Determination of Confidentiality	Governors determined that there were no confidential discussions			
THA/16/2526 Report to Trustees	A report will be submitted to Trustees following the meeting			
THA/17/2526 Date and time of next meeting	<p>The meeting closed at 6.10pm</p> <p>Next meeting Monday 12th January at 4.30pm</p>			

Signed by Chair: K Turner	Date:
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