



Company Number: 10561094
West Walker LGC/27.04.20

Newcastle East mixed multi Academy Trust

Minutes of a meeting of the Local Governing Committee of Walkergate Community School

DATE: Wednesday 29 April 2020

TIME: 4.30pm

VENUE: Virtual meeting in Microsoft Teams

Present: Karen Heslop (Chair), Steve Hogarth (Vice chair), Alison Young, Sarah Stock, Sarah Clennell, Paul Richardson, Donna Harrison, Richard Carr, Lee Davie

Required quorum: 3, or if greater one-third of local governors holding office on that date. Governors holding office on 29.04.20: 10. Governors present on 29.04.20: 9. The meeting was quorate.

In Attendance:

Debi Bailey, NEAT Chief Executive Officer (CEO); Charles Turvill, NEAT Chief Operating and Financial Officer (COFO); Suzanne Hendey, NEAT Director of Governance; Hannah Hales, Governance Support Manager (Clerk).

PART 1 (Classified non-confidential)

1	Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the first virtual meeting of the LGC. The clerk outlined simple protocols to assist with the smooth running of the meeting.
2.	Apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from Chris Warburton-Brown.
3.	Declaration of any conflict of interest in any agenda item None.
4.	Agree any items of urgent business not on the agenda None.
5.	Consider minutes from previous meeting held on 10 December 2019 The minutes were agreed as a true record. Action: Clerk to organise signing of minutes with the Chair.
6.	Update action grid from previous meeting and discuss any other matters arising Item 10 – scrutiny activity on behaviour and bullying: scheduled date disrupted by Ofsted inspection, to be rescheduled when school resumes in a more normal format.



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7.	<p>Membership of local governing committee The clerk highlighted that 4 governors are now within the last six months of their term of office (October 2020) Action: Chair to hold individual conversations with governors whose term is approaching its end to discuss continuation of the role.</p>
8.	<p>Report of any decisions taken as Chair's action since the last meeting The chair reported approval of an Addendum to the Safeguarding Policy which reflects the altered operating model of the school and latest guidance from the Department of Education. Action: Clerk to circulate approved policy to all governors.</p>
9.	<p>School operating model during coronavirus pandemic The headteacher provided an update on the written report. Pupil numbers fluctuate – started out very low but since Easter holidays have begun to increase. The staffing rota needs to be quite flexible to reflect changes in numbers. Activities for pupils attending school vary and play to the strengths of the staff on the rota. Broadly, mornings are basic skills and physical activity with afternoons more fun, often craft-type, activities. A second set of home learning packs have been distributed, there was a high uptake of collection then some have been delivered and the remainder will be posted. Online learning that staff can allocate to pupils and check completion is limited to Mathematics and Purple Mash although the Razz Kids online reading resource has now been extended from Y6 across the whole school. The school is surveying access to online learning to ascertain where families need equipment and internet connection to enable participation. CGP workbooks have been ordered for maths, grammar and punctuation instead of photocopying for the next round of packs. A package of professional learning for staff is being rolled out, this will be broken into chunks with timescales for completion. School is exploring how the September intake of EY and Reception pupils can be introduced to school – phone calls to families and videos of teachers are likely actions. Transition arrangements for Y6 pupils into Year 7 are underway, school will be working closely with Benfield and Walker to support this process. A governor asked if the low numbers reported to be accessing online learning have improved since the report was written: all individual logins have been sent home again and uptake of the three resources will be monitored. Parents and pupils are known to be accessing other resources that school cannot directly monitor. A governor asked about staff morale during this different way of working: those staff who have attended school have been glad to do so and see other staff and pupils. 17 members of staff are classed as vulnerable or have vulnerable family members and cannot attend school. A governor asked how often leadership is reaching out to staff: there is a cascade system – the head to the SLT, SLT to leaders of learning and so on down to each year group team, with regular communication.</p>
10	<p>Financial Reports a) 2019-20 Management accounts The COFO provided a short commentary on the report: overall position is positive, £14k underspent versus budget. There has been substantial additional income</p>



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	<p>although this is offset by higher staffing costs in teaching and supply. Premises costs are high as historical undercharging of cleaning costs at the Nursery has been invoiced. It was confirmed that the contractual position for cleaning is under review. A refund of overcharged PPI insurance has provided a substantial one-off credit.</p> <p>b) Initial draft budget 2020-21</p> <p>The initial budget sets a small surplus compared to the predicted outturn for 2019-20. Income is increased based on higher funding rates. Increase in costs for staffing are around pay awards and progression rather than major structural change, there are some structural changes in the admin team to reflect actual roles. Savings of 6% on LGPS contributions for support staff come from a reduction in the contribution rate. Non staffing costs have been given inflationary increases only at this stage. There will be further work over the next 4-6 weeks to refine the position. Governors were asked to work with school to identify priorities for funding. A governor asked for clarity about costs for NEAT central services: these are recorded under other supplies and services.</p> <p>A governor asked if agency supply costs are predicted to be high in next year – not using presently which will affect outturn position. The Headteacher reported that supply overspends this year are related to the intense period of sickness before Christmas and Ofsted preparation. It is hard to predict what the situation in September may be.</p> <p>A governor asked about providing additional support for staff and pupil emotional wellbeing as normal operating is suspended and next school year is likely to be affected. Discussions across the trust are taking place about options and if this is a priority an assessment of costs will be made. The CEO reported that the trust bid for funding to provide a counsellor as part of the central service is likely to receive more support given the current circumstances and it is hoped to have something in place shared across the five schools.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Trust approach to assessment and pupil grading in light of governments decision to cancel Primary SATs and GCESs/A levels</p> <p>Governors received the report. The CEO noted that the trust is in a strong position as it leads on statutory primary assessment across the local authority through the teaching school. Guidance on principles for making teacher assessments, especially for borderline pupils, are being developed to ensure consistency across the city which will support transition into KS3. The trust use of PIXL gives a good baseline for judgements.</p> <p>Schools will be working with secondary colleagues to ensure that learning gaps are communicated, e.g. aspects that were not able to be taught to y6 pupils.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Urgent business</p> <p>The CEO provided an update on transition arrangements for Y6 to Y7. The Headteacher noted the work that has taken place across the trust to support schools and families since closure was announced and that the parents are so grateful. There has been a lot of positive feedback regarding packed lunch deliveries, FSM vouchers and resources provided. Some phone calls to homes have been the best conversations staff have ever had with those families, parents are really happy to hear from school. The chair thanked all school and trust staff for their hard work and commitment.</p>



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13.	Date of next meeting Governors agreed to hold an additional meeting in June: Tuesday 9 June , 4.15pm for 4.30pm start (anticipated as a virtual meeting due to ongoing social distancing) Tuesday 7 July , 4.30pm
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Meeting concluded at 17.11hrs

Signed.....*H E Haslop*..... Date.....*29/04/20*.....