



Company Number: 10561094  
Walkergate LGC/09.06.20

Newcastle East mixed multi Academy Trust

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

DATE: Tuesday 9 June 2020

TIME: 4.30pm

VENUE: Virtual meeting in Microsoft Teams

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

Required quorum: 3, or if greater one-third of local governors holding office on that date. Governors holding office on 09.06.20: 11. Governors present on 09.06.20: 10. 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	<b>Welcome</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the LGC including the new parent governor Sam Murray.
2.	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were accepted from Chris Warburton-Brown.
3.	<b>Declaration of any conflict of interest in any agenda item</b> None.
4.	<b>Agree any items of urgent business not on the agenda</b> The clerk raised the approval of urgent policy amendments due to coronavirus – to be dealt with under item 12..
5.	<b>Consider minutes from previous meeting held on 29 April 2020</b> The minutes were agreed as a true record. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to organise signing of minutes with the Chair.
6.	<b>Update action grid from previous meeting and discuss any other matters arising</b> The chair reported on conversations with individual governors whose terms of office



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	<p>to coming to an end in October. There will be at least 3 vacancies, in addition to the current vacancy for a trust governor, and this will include a vacancy for Chair. The clerk outlined the trust's response to this situation and the support that will be offered to the governing committee to build the team.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Membership of local governing committee</b> Covered under item 6.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Report of any decisions taken as Chair's action since the last meeting</b> The chair reported the approval of an updated Addendum to the Safeguarding Policy and an amendment to the First Aid Appendix of the Health and Safety Policy. <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to circulate copies of updated policies to all governors.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Trust and school response to coronavirus pandemic</b></p> <p><b>a. Update on current operating model (attached)</b> The headteacher provided a commentary on the report. Key worker numbers continue to increase and school is now running 9 or 10 groups each day. It is intended that Year 6 will come back w/c 15 June. An additional 35 pupils have indicated they will return (already 12 in key worker groups) meaning there will be 6 Y6 bubbles. The main site will be at capacity at this point. More staff have been on site and half day training on new procedures has been delivered. All staff had the opportunity to contribute to the risk assessment process and that will be signed off this week. Home learning through workbooks (including answers), Mathletics, Purple Mash and RazzKids has continued. Phone calls and postcards home have been used for keeping in touch with families.</p> <p><b>b. Plans to extend school opening more widely (attached)</b></p> <p><b>i. Trust rationale</b> The CEO gave an overview of the trust rationale behind the approach taken to wider opening of schools across NEAT. Key worker and vulnerable learner children must be prioritised which means reserving some capacity for numbers in these groups to increase. For pupils that do return it must be a quality experience to build their confidence and that of families and staff. It is easier to achieve this with Y6 pupils first. Year 6 will also benefit from time is school to prepare for their transition to secondary school. The trust is well-connected at local and regional level to benefit from and contribute to collaborative support for schools. The Promise Board in Newcastle has been the main forum in the city for a collaborative approach by schools. A generic risk assessment signed off by unions as robust was agreed with the Promise Board and schools have used this as their starting point. At all stages, schools have involved staff in discussions. Staff concerns and queries have shaped the risk assessment which has also informed the trust risk register. A recovery plan template from the Diocese was used to shape schools' initial thinking around risk and actions.</p> <p><b>ii. Trust process and methodology</b> The CEO gave an overview of the process for assessing the schools as safe for wider opening including the process of signing off</p>



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	<p>and subsequent weekly review of risk assessments by the Executive Team. Governors are included in the initial sign off process to receive assurance about the robustness of the process.</p> <p>A governor asked about the concept of 'bubbles' and how they operate, a governor asked about the maximum capacity of the school under these arrangements. It is very clear the first priority of the government is key worker and vulnerable children and if these numbers continue to increase it may be that Y6 pupils will have to move to a rota for attendance. Currently one end of the main site has 12 classrooms occupied by key worker and vulnerable pupils. Y6 will occupy 6 classrooms at the other end with a maximum capacity of 48 pupils. After this school will have to reopen the early years site which is a more complex layout to manage. Risk assessment of the use of this building has begun so that capacity can be increased.</p> <p>A governor asked about any challenging behaviour incidents: only one from an EHCP child who has struggled with different routines and procedures, a part time phased approach has been adopted. The SENCO is completing risk assessments for all EHCP pupils to ensure that they can be kept safe.</p> <p>The chair commented that she has received a great deal of information from the school and the trust to keep her up to date.</p> <p><b>c. School information</b></p> <p><b>i. Pupil and staffing numbers</b></p> <p><b>ii. Recovery plan for school</b></p> <p>Governors received contextual information supporting the school's planning for wider opening.</p>
10	<p><b>Financial Reports</b></p> <p><b>a) 2019-20 Management accounts</b></p> <p>The COFO provided a brief commentary on the accounts to the end of period 8. The overall position is positive thanks to additional income from the local authority for early years and high needs pupils following their end of year reconciliation. Restricted opening has had a negative impact on other income received (trips, catering) and this will be significantly below budget by the year end. Teaching and supply costs are overspent as a legacy of absence earlier in the year and additional capacity for Ofsted. Cleaning costs at the Early Years centre have been undercharged by the local authority for several years and this has now been invoiced resulting in an overspend against budget. An exceptional credit for overcharged PFI insurance has improved the year to date position. Overall position is a surplus ahead of that budgeted with a positive picture forecast for the year end. This position includes ~£27k of exceptional costs related to coronavirus (mainly provision of FSM vouchers to families) and there is scope to recover some of this from the DfE.</p> <p><b>b) Property improvement proposals</b></p> <p>A positive forecast for year end gives scope for some significant projects over the summer. Governors received details of plans to remodel the main entrance at main school site to address some safeguarding considerations and improve visibility for office staff. Plans to create a dedicated entrance for Millers Dene at the Early Years site will address the challenges posed by the current shared</p>



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	<p>reception area. The headteacher outlined the rationale behind each project and governors expressed support for both to go ahead.</p> <p><b>c) Budget 2020-21</b> There is no update to report on the budget for 2020-21. Time for detailed conversations has been limited due to the operational demands on schools. A final proposed budget will be available at the July meeting.</p>
11.	<p><b>Agree whole school training days for 2020-21</b> <b>RESOLVED:</b> governors agreed the dates of whole school training days for 2020-21 as Monday 7 September, Friday 29 November and Friday 28 May.</p>
12.	<p><b>Any urgent business</b> <b>RESOLVED:</b> Governors agreed to delegate the approval of urgent coronavirus-related policy amendments to the chair.</p>
13.	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b> <b>Tuesday 7 July, 4.30pm</b> (anticipated as a virtual meeting due to ongoing social distancing)</p>

Meeting concluded at 17.18hrs

Signed.....

Date.....

17/7/20