



Company Number: 10561094
Central Walker LGC/04.06.20

Newcastle East mixed multi Academy Trust

Minutes of a meeting of the Local Governing Committee of Central Walker CE Primary School

DATE: Thursday 4 June 2020

TIME: 4.30pm

VENUE: Virtual meeting in Microsoft Teams

Present:

Claire Leith (Chair), Sandra Larmour (Vice chair), Faye Kerr (Head), Stuart Walker, Father Phil Medley, Rev Dr Rae Caro, Jane Caffery, Danielle Wetherall

Required quorum: 3, or if greater one-third of local governors holding office on that date. Governors holding office on 04.06.20: 13. Governors present on 04.06.20: 8. The meeting was quorate.

In Attendance:

Dawn Day (Head), 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 and offered an opening prayer.
2.	Apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from Kim Sandy, Lucy Balmer and Maria Irving. No apologies were received from Kelly Sherriffs and Trevor Lennox.
3.	Declaration of any conflict of interest in any agenda item None.
4.	Agree any items of urgent business not on the agenda RESOLVED: The governing committee agreed to delegate the approval of urgent COVID-19 policy amendments identified in the trust Recovery Plan to the Chair.
5.	Consider minutes from previous meeting held on 23 April 2020 The minutes were agreed as a true record. Action: Chair to post signed copy of minutes to the Clerk.
6.	Update action grid from previous meeting and discuss any other matters arising



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	<p>The next steps for governors reaching the end of their term of office will be taken at the July meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising from minutes: the COFO provided an update on progression of the Early Years building project – the grant agreement has been signed, planning application is made and initial discussions with contractors are underway. Project is aiming for completion during October half term.</p>
7.	<p>Membership of local governing committee No current vacancies and other considerations covered under item 6.</p>
8.	<p>Report of any decisions taken as Chair’s action since the last meeting None.</p>
9.	<p>Trust and School response to COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>a) Update to School operating model during coronavirus pandemic The Headteachers provided a commentary on the report. Pupils numbers in school are rising but range between 8-27 pupils per day across the week. Conversations with staff who have not been able to return to school are taking place, childcare is an issue for some. Kids Kabin activities in school have been very successful. Tapestry is now in place across the whole school for keeping in touch with pupils and families and sharing activities. Half to two-thirds of families in each year group are regularly accessing Tapestry. Facebook is regularly used by the school. Hard copies of learning packs have gone out to children this week. Governors were updated on keeping-in-touch arrangements for staff and on staff wellbeing. RC reminded governors that MINE is keen to support the school in any way possible with spiritual wellbeing as this is such a key part of the school ethos. ACTION: RC and PM to talk with Headteachers on ways to provide spiritual support for the whole school.</p> <p>b) Plans to extend school opening more widely</p> <p>i. Trust rationale The CEO summarised the document and the key considerations of the trust in opening schools more widely: first priority is the safety of staff, pupils and families and then that it must be a quality experience. 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. Concerns and queries have shaped the risk assessment which has also informed the trust risk register.</p> <p>ii. Trust process The CEO gave an overview of the process for assessing the schools as safe for wider opening including the process of signing off 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>



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	<p>iii. Trust methodology The CEO gave an overview of the methodology. Central Walker are underway with capturing the individual school position and working up the risk assessment. A huge part of this is capturing the concerns of staff, families and pupils and bringing the community on board. Individual risk assessments for staff will be carried out if required. A governor asked if the school will have enough staff available to open safely: vulnerable learners and key worker children are the first priority and must be accommodated before wider opening, the situation will be reviewed on a weekly basis to see if there is capacity and space to bring in more learners. The Headteacher reported that school can accommodate Y6 (18 of 44 children have indicated they will return) and it is then hoped to bring in Y1 as well alongside the established VL/KW bubbles. An increased uptake from VL/KW children might result in part time school for these year groups. A governor queried if it is possible for all year groups to return before the end of the year: under the current distancing guidelines this would appear to be impossible unless rotas were introduced across the whole school. The CEO noted that there have been no cases of coronavirus in NEAT schools all of which have remained open since the start of lockdown. This gives confidence that the systems are robust but this has to be scalable and a cautious approach is being taken. A governor asked whether Y6 pupils choosing to return are those who have engaged with learning at home to date and what the picture is for vulnerable Y6 pupils. Some Y6 vulnerable learners are already attending, others are not, some pose specific challenges and need individual risk assessments and detailed conversations with families in order to be accommodated safely. Welfare checks and safeguarding are taking place behind the scenes. The school is working with social care daily for some families. A governor asked about social distancing outside school and how school can be assured that pupils are behaving safely in order to protect themselves and staff. A consistent message has been given about social distancing since the start of lockdown and places may be withdrawn if school is aware of circumstances where families are being unsafe. Messages about 2m and handwashing are reinforced in school.</p> <p>c) School information Governors received the overview of pupil numbers and staffing and the recovery plan. The plan is initial draft form and has moved on considerably – it was used to generate staff questions that inform the risk assessment. The chair commented that processes seem robust and well thought through. ACTION: scrutiny activity to be arranged to discuss and review school processes and procedures under the current operating circumstances on 30 June to feed information into the next LGC meeting.</p>
10.	<p>Financial Reports a) 2019-20 Management accounts P8 accounts are similar to the last reported position: income is above budget,</p>



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	<p>staffing costs are higher than budget and premises costs are lower – overall position is positive £9k against budget. The forecast to the end of year has changed to reflect that income will fall and staff costs to the year end have been amended. The accounts are carrying significant exceptional costs year to date (~£27k) mainly from the provision of FSM vouchers. The trust is using a different provider to the DfE scheme. This has worked well and is free of the well-reported problems of the government scheme. It may be possible to recover some of these exceptional costs but that will depend on the overall position at year end.</p> <p>b) Initial draft budget 2020-21 There has been no significant change since the last meeting as there has been no opportunity for detailed conversations with schools. The uncertainty around early years numbers makes budget setting more difficult. A detailed budget will be available in July.</p>
11.	<p>Agree whole school training days for 2020-21 RESOLVED; governors agreed whole school training days of Friday 27 November (trust-wide training day), Wednesday 9 December 2020 and Wednesday 30 June 2021.</p>
12.	<p>Urgent business Covered under item 4. The Headteachers reported that it had not been possible to make an appointment to the Deputy Headteacher vacancy and consideration has been given to alternative interim arrangements. It is proposed to make a temporary appointment of one term with specific responsibility for the recovery curriculum. This is a different emphasis to the advertised vacancy but is responsive to the current need in the school while a permanent appointment is sought in the medium term. The temporary appointment will only be open to internal candidates as they will need detailed knowledge of the school to be effective.</p>
13.	<p>Date of next meeting Thursday 9 July, 4.30pm</p>
14.	<p>Closing Prayer Father Phil Medley offered a closing prayer.</p>

Meeting concluded at 17.45hrs

Signed.....  Date..... 9/7/20.....