

Company Number: 10561094
 Central Walker LGC/03.12.20

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

DATE: Thursday 03 December 2020

TIME: 4.30pm

VENUE: Virtual in MS Teams

Present:

Claire Leith (Chair - CL), Sandra Larmour (Vice chair – SL), Stuart Walker (Vice chair – SW), Dawn Day (Headteacher – DD), Jane Caffery (Governor – JC), Rev Rae Caro (Governor – RC), Rev Andrew Elder (Governor – AE), Father Phil Medley (Governor – PM), Maria Irving (Governor – MI)

Required quorum: 3, or if greater one-third of local governors holding office on that date. Governors holding office on 03.12.20: 12. Governors present on 03.12.20: 9. The meeting was quorate.

In Attendance:

Faye Kerr (Headteacher – FK), Nichola Brannen (Director – NB), Charles Turvill (NEAT Chief Operating and Finance Officer – CT), Hannah Hales (Governance Support Manager - Clerk)

PART 1 (Classified non-confidential)

Items discussed under Part 1 of this agenda will not be classified as confidential; consequently the minutes and supporting documents should be made available to any person wishing to inspect them.

1	Welcome and introductions The meeting opened with a prayer. CL introduced NB and welcomed her to the meeting in her capacity as link director for Central Walker.
2	Apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from Kim Sandy. No apologies were received from Kelly Sheriffs or Lucy Balmer.
3	Declaration of any potential conflict of interest None.
4	Agree any items of urgent business An update on the trust approach to virtual governance: to be covered under item 20 – Trust Items.
5	Consider minutes from meeting held on 08 October 2020 The minutes were agreed as a true record. A governor noted grant funding to purchase

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	<p>IT devices under item 12 and asked for an update on this project: no devices purchased yet as the trust is to taking a coordinated approach to the types of devices to be used in each key stage across the trust. Governors expressed strong concerns that available funding has not yet been utilized to support pupils during these unprecedented times. CT explained the rationale behind the trust approach. Governors expressed concerns that an adequate interim solution needs to be in place to ensure all pupils have access to a device when required to self-isolate. CT reported that the NEAT Central team has organized additional devices when required and emphasized the huge challenges all schools are facing with remote learning including additional barriers such as internet access and how content is delivered.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central team to liaise with Heads to ensure clarity on devices available to school and update on progress with purchasing decisions.
6	<p>Update action grid from previous meeting and discuss any other matters arising</p> <p>All new actions are completed. Outstanding action around RSE policy to be covered in report from Ethos scrutiny group.</p>
7	<p>Any decisions taken as Chair's action since the last meeting</p> <p>None.</p>
8	<p>Membership of Local Governing Committee</p> <p>a) Review updated skills audit</p> <p>Governors received the updated audit and discussed the overall picture. There are no major gaps. A governor suggested using the audit as a tool for individual development.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review skills audit at scrutiny event to match governors with activities that will be beneficial developmentally. <p>b) Appointments, resignations and vacancies</p> <p>Governors considered the reappointment of SW whose term of office finishes in December.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To co-opt Stuart Walker as a local governor for a further term of one year. Governors received the nomination for a co-opted governor and the chair reported on a meeting with the candidate. <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To co-opt Delia Sloan as a local governor for a term of one year.
9	<p>SEND Information Report</p> <p>Jennie Gleadow (SENCO) was unable to attend and governors agreed to postpone this item until the next meeting.</p>
10	<p>Headteacher Report</p> <p>Governors received the report. DD noted that the whole school is attending this week for the first time since 20 October. The Covid absence figures were explained – 240 pupils across the school have been required to self-isolate at some point with only playgroup and nursery unaffected.</p> <p>A governor commented that relationship building and communication with families comes through strongly in the compliments received. An enquiry about Christmas</p>

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	<p>welfare provision led to a discussion of funding received by the school and how this has linked to the universal offer across the trust. Governors sought clarification of the welfare offer and the distribution of funds between the school and the trust. Concerns were expressed by governors that a universal offer risks missing the local knowledge in schools and an opportunity for relationship-building with families. CT emphasised that the offer needs to be consistent to all families as we are one trust.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on funding received for NEAT Christmas offer to families to be communicated to school and governors. <p>(17:30 PM left meeting)</p>
11	<p>Governor Scrutiny and Evaluation Reports</p> <p>CL noted an additional document circulated by the school: strengths and next steps for the school updated since external adviser report. Governors agreed to discuss this at January scrutiny event.</p> <p>a) Curriculum Group</p> <p>Governors received the report from 05.10.20 and SW gave a verbal update from an activity on 24.11.20. This looked at how curriculum requirements are being met and revisited the remote learning and reimagined learning agenda. Concerns were noted in the written report about the availability of devices. This had been covered at item 5.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk to circulate written report of visit to all governors. <p>b) Appraisal and pay progression</p> <p>Governors received the report of scrutiny activity on 05.11.20 with no queries.</p> <p>c) Ethos Group</p> <p>SL gave a verbal summary of the written report. Activities included review of staff wellbeing, which had been generally positive, and an update on pupil voice activities. Governors also reviewed collective worship and plans for Christmas.</p> <p>The Ethos group has scheduled a meeting on 28 January to focus on the RSE curriculum.</p>
12	<p>Pupil Premium Report</p> <p>Governors received the detailed strategy and evaluation report.</p>
13	<p>PE & Sports Funding Report 2020-21</p> <p>Governors received the report for planned expenditure of the grant. Last year's plan was incomplete due to lockdown and so the priorities remain the same. School aims to give lots of opportunities to pupils and an outside provider is working with each bubble. As with the pupil premium plan, expenditure is directed towards human resources.</p>
14	<p>Catch up funding</p> <p>Governors had requested an update at this meeting on progress with the actions outlined at the last meeting. Additional expenditure on phonics and Read Write Ink resources has been made. Additional TA support for all phases (to start in January) is being recruited with adverts currently live.</p>
15	<p>Report from Designated Teacher for Looked After Children</p>

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	<p>Governors agreed to postpone this item to the next meeting to allow Jennie Gleadow to attend and present the report.</p>
16.	<p>Financial Reports</p> <p>Governors received the P2 management accounts and CT provided a commentary. Numbers in Early Years are lower than anticipated due to the impact of lockdown. The local authority is looking to cover funding gaps where staffing has been committed.</p> <p>Staffing costs are underspent as the teacher pay award has not yet been applied and will be backdated to September.</p> <p>The Nursery build project is now progressing – planning was finally approved in November. Target is to start work at February half term with completion by end of April.</p> <p>A governor asked for the financial position at the year end (as the last set of financial information was in July), and the full budget for 2020-21 preferably with a more detailed breakdown of cost centres.</p> <p>CT reported a small deficit at the end of the year and that this included substantial capital expenditure on IT (i-pads and new wifi). A breakdown of % spend against full budget can be provided in the next set of reports – at this stage in the year this figure is not meaningful. CT noted the strategic role of the LGC and to guard against getting too operational in the detail of reports.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final position for 2019-20 and full budget for 2020-21 to be shared with governors. <p>A governor noted that around £22k has been saved against vacancies but only £10k spent on supply and asked whether school is accessing all the supply cover that it needs. CT reported that there is no brake on supply expenditure and sounded caution about reading too much into savings this early in the year.</p>
17	<p>School Level Risk Register</p> <p>Governors received the updated risk register, updates have been made in relation to coronavirus impact.</p>
18	<p>Health and Safety and Safeguarding Update</p> <p>There were no updates additional to the detail in the headteacher report. Governors received the safeguarding audit. Review of progress of actions will be picked up by the Safeguarding Link governor through visits across the year. No visit has taken place yet due to Covid restrictions.</p> <p>[18.18 MI left the meeting]</p>
19	<p>Policies</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors approved the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Attendance policy 2020-21 o SEN and Disability Policy 2020-21
20	<p>Update from Heads and Chairs Forum</p> <p>CL gave an update from the meeting of the Heads and Chairs Forum held on 17 November 2020 where information about the trust strategic approach is shared.</p>

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	<p>Three items were covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sponsorship of St Hilds Church of England School in Hartlepool: this is progressing to formal consultation. There are benefits in bringing an additional church school and secondary school into the trust. - Central team review by an external consultant identified 2 priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Addressing capacity for growth: additional posts will be created (Director of School Improvement – Secondary, Finance Manager, Head of Digital strategy and Delivery) funded by income for growth. o Strategic review of the mission and vision for the next 3-5 years to follow from the current 3-year plan. This will be a big exercise involving all stakeholders, - Clear Central Team specifications (now and for growth) to identify where boundaries of roles are. <p>Chairs had raised questions about risks to the trust around the capacity to support another school and the tensions that arise through delivering improvement by sharing expertise.</p>
21	<p>Urgent Business with the approval of the Chair</p> <p>The clerk updated governors with the planned approach to the modernisation of governance administration in the trust. All governors will receive a NEAT e-mail address and full access to MS Teams where papers and resources will be hosted. A demonstration of MStTeams can be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>It is recognised that an approach using technology needs to be inclusive in all aspects. Governors were encouraged to share any barriers they are encountering currently with the clerk.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk to contact governors not present at meeting to explore any barriers to virtual governance participation.
22	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Thursday 21 January 2021, 4.30pm - Scrutiny and evaluation event</p> <p>Thursday 18 March 2021, 4.30pm – LGC meeting</p>
	<p>Closing prayer and thanks</p>

PART 2 (Classified confidential)

There were no Part 2 confidential items for this agenda.

Meeting concluded at 18.26hrs

Signed Clare Leith Date 18.03.21

