

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES - ONLINE ZOOM MEETING9th December 2021 – 4.00pm**PRESENT**

Ian Burton
Jackie Gladden
Karen Owens
Richard Snowdon

Sue Donnelly
Mike McGarry (Head)
Jim Rimmer (Chair)

Clare Gaskell
Harriet Michael-Phillips
Collette Simms

ALSO PRESENT

Tom Dolly (DHT)
Andy Pritchard (RD)

Vicky Ashworth (AHT)
Judith Gordon (FM)

David Cregeen (AHT)
Pauline Neilson (Clerk)

APOLOGIES

Cathy Morris
Gayle Phillips (AHT)

Jonathon Mumford

Carolyn Ainsworth (AHT)

21/27**WELCOME****ACTION**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

21/28**DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interests in relation to the agenda.

21/29**TRUSTEE BOARD CHANGES – INFORMATION**

Richard Snowdon had been re-elected as Parent Trustee for the 4-year period ending 26/09/25.

Kevin Grimes's (Community Trustee) term of office had ended. There are now 4 Community Trustees as per the new the constitution.

Jonathan Mumford has tendered his resignation with effect from 31 December 2021 and, therefore, will no longer be a Trustee after that date. Information will be sent out in the Spring term requesting nominations from Associate Staff in the first instance.

Trustees thanked Jonathon for his contribution to the work of the Board and wished him well for his new post in HE.

It was proposed that Harriet Michael-Phillips should join the Board as a co-opted Trustee for one year in the first instance. Mrs Michael Phillips was moved to the waiting room while Trustees discussed her appointment. Trustees confirmed her co-option and she returned to the meeting. Her term of office will be reviewed prior to 08/12/22.

Term of office to be reviewed prior to 08/12/22

21/30 MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF 23rd September 2021**Accuracy**

Trustees accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising

All Trustees had now signed The **Code of Conduct**.

21/14 - **Strategic Planning Group** - following discussions it had been decided that there was no longer a need for a sub group as the SDP was now much more comprehensive and included all strategic issues. This plan is discussed regularly during the Ofsted Focus Group meetings.

The **SDP** had been shared with Trustees at the last meeting and would be discussed again at the next meeting. Trustees would be notified of any changes in the interim.

21/31 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE - 16/11/21

The minutes had been previously circulated for information and were accepted by Trustees. There was one recommendation from the Committee that will be discussed later in the meeting.

[See Minute 21/34](#)

21/32 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

This was taken as read with the following items highlighted:

Covid

Covid cases had dropped off a little, with 7 cases noted in the previous week. There were currently no staff off with Covid.

The vaccine rollout for 12–15-year-olds had seen about hundred students vaccinated, but many more had already been vaccinated in the community.

Masks are being worn in communal areas, hand-sanitising etc., is ongoing. Students sometimes needed reminding, but overall had been generally compliant.

Covid cases in the first half of the term had affected attendance with up to 40-60 pupils off at one time, but this had now dropped to 5 or 6. Absence through other ailments such as colds, sore throats etc. had also been reported.

The Flu vaccine had been delivered the previous week and there had been a big take-up, with about 600 children vaccinated.

Attendance

90.5% - Yr. 7 to 11.

2.5% - due to Covid

3-4% - attributable to colds, waiting for tests etc.

There are still some persistent pupil absences but staff are working hard with these cases.

Pupil attendance is a big concern across the country and the national attendance figure for Years 7-11 is 87%.

Deep Dives into all subject areas started this term and have continued at a rate of one per week.

There had been lots of good practice observed, but more work still needs to be done e.g. SEND.

Following the appointment of the full time SENCO, data is much more accurate. It was noted that staff could benefit from more SEND training and it is hoped that an expert from the LA will be invited to deliver this. The focus would be on strategies in the classroom and a real focus on Quality First Teaching.

Teacher Assessment

There was still no certainty about exams in the summer. There were concerns about the Omicron variant of Covid, and absences in Yr. 11. Ofqual had met in November and new guidance was expected.

Yr. 11 had just finished their mocks.

Finance – see separate report. All as per projections including paying back of loan.

Admissions numbers

The consultation period on the reduction of the PAN (from 196 to 168 in September 2023) has started and closes in mid-January. All documentation regarding the consultation is on the school's website and on information disseminated by Sefton LA.

Back to basics

Behaviour over the last couple of weeks has been causing some concerns; some students are still suffering from the effects of lockdown.

Most students are well behaved, but there had been a few undesirable incidents recently. A Trustee panel may be needed early in the new year.

The issues had been discussed at the Secondary Heads' meeting with other schools reporting similar behaviour. Permanent exclusions, within the Local Authority are at an all-time high.

School was managing the situation as well as possible. There had been some managed moves to other schools, although there are some pupils who are moving towards the permanent exclusion stage. We are trying a range of strategies with families/students to try and avoid that.

Staffing

The changes in staffing were outlined in the report that was sent to Trustees with the Agenda.

Adverts will be placed in the new year for the current Acting Posts (Head of Science and Head of MFL).

The SENCO appointment had been an excellent move; the Head would be meeting with her to finalise her permanent contract in the next couple of days.

OFSTED

This was discussed briefly. School is expecting a visit anytime early in the Spring Term. This had been due last year but, due to Covid and lockdowns, schedules were running about a year behind.

The OFSTED group would be meeting next week to look at questions 1 (Wellbeing) and 9 (Capacity for working with partners).

Parental Survey

This was completed in the week before half term and the document is on GovernorHub. The responses had generally been very positive. The questions had been largely the same as last time, but there was a considerable improvement from the previous survey's answers. The majority of parents seemed to be pleased with the direction the school was travelling in.

A small group of parents had expressed some concerns, but this was not entirely unexpected; if contact details had been given school had contacted them on an individual basis. A letter about how concerns will be addressed has also been sent to parents/carer and is on the school website.

Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)

Any emails received, regarding the above, have been shared with Trustees. The Regional Schools' Commissioner preference was still for the two Formby secondary schools to join an existing MAT, but both schools had made their views clear.

A meeting is scheduled to take place with the Regional Schools Commissioner on 15th January 2022 and it is hoped that further clarity is forthcoming. This meeting is crucial and further action could be agreed after the discussions.

Proposals to form a MAT can be submitted at various times during the academic year and a professional bid writer could be employed to assist with the process.

Q: Would it be useful for Trustees to have summary of deep dive outcomes?

A: Yes. The last ones will be completed this week. Once SLT had viewed them and identified strengths and weaknesses, the information will be shared with Trustees.

Deep Dive reports to be sent to Trustees

Sue Donnelly (SD) agreed to send out the questions raised at the Audit Committee meeting.

SD to send Trustees questions raised at Audit Co

Trustees discussed Deep dives briefly and questions were asked about SEND and the bottom 20% of students. The Head had been communicating with schools that had recently been inspected, and had gained a lot of knowledge about possible questions etc. Two members of staff had recently visited Archbishop Beck and shared their experiences.

A Peer-to-Peer review between schools from different parts of the LA is due to be established and, the hopes are, that this will lead to a coordinated view. SEND is huge on the National agenda, and the emphasis is now on all teachers being responsible for SEND. Some staff had voiced concerns, so school needed to ensure they were adequately supported.

Trustees thanked the Head for his comprehensive report.

MINUTES OF OFSTED FOCUS GROUP 7/10/21

21/33

Circulated for information.

SDP

21/34

Nothing further to report at this stage

21/35

FINANCE

The Audit Committee had examined the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31/8/21 and the Audit Management Letter (containing recommendations).

The Letter of representations had also been presented for information. All the documents are on GovernorHub and the recommendation from the Audit Committee was to accept the accounts as presented.

The following details were noted:

- The October Management accounts (adjustments for auditors) showed the deficit reduced from £62k to £52k.
- Initially it was reported that the 1.25% Social Care Levy would not be centrally funded. It has since been announced that the ESFA do plan to fund schools. The costs in the current year are expected to be £20k with £50k for the coming year.
- The increase in energy costs was noted – more information on this in the Spring Term.
- Repayments of cashflow loan - A new payment plan is being considered and this could reduce some of the pressures on cashflow.

A full business case had been presented to the EFSA that included a number of issues and demonstrated the increase in numbers and impact of sustainability for the 6th form in particular.

Annual Report - this had been presented to the Audit Committee for which the minutes had been circulated. There had been a slight change since the meeting in relation to grants and the carried forward figure.

Auditors had required sections of the report to be amended from the circulated draft to show clearly that Trustees were aware of issues.

The deficit in the LA Pension scheme had increased, but it was noted, that this was less than that of a number of schools.

Problems with cash flow have eased.

Auditors had been much happier and had issued 2 unqualified audit statements.

Trustees accepted the accounts and will recommend them, as presented, to the next Members meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their hard work and commended the school on the much-improved financial position.

Management Letters

There was a continuation of the recommendation from last year about the accounting of assets. The problem was due to how the accounting system recorded data. The only solution to this is to purchase a new accountancy package. This would be a costly exercise and, as a new accountancy package would be required should the school join/form a MAT, any decision to purchase a new package will be deferred until after the MAT

Recommendation to Members AGM to accept accounts as presented

issue has been resolved. It had no impact on balances and was merely an accountancy issue.

There had been 2 Register of Business forms outstanding but the SBM confirmed these had now been received.

Risk Register

The information included details of Policies.

The new Risk Register document was much better suited to the school's needs. The main risks were explored and mitigations had been recorded.

All schools now included the impact of the pandemic and the Audit Committee had briefly discussed what would happen if there were a second RI inspection.

Item 13 - ICT systems – there had been some possible issues with the operating system Windows 11 but it now looks likely that Windows 10 support will be extended; most hardware would need to be replaced within 4 years in any case, and the ICT strategy would reflect these issues. The support on the servers would cease from 2023, but this issue was in hand.

21/36 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT/ SAFEGUARDING

A report had been circulated and the main issues highlighted:

The mandatory Safeguarding training had taken place in September; all staff (apart from those absent due to illness or on maternity leave) had undertaken the training.

The training had also been offered to all cleaning and auxiliary staff and welfare staff are expected to be included soon.

There had been 2 focus group meetings for Yr. 10 and 11 (PHSE). The results had been very interesting and some additional work is still required.

There had been some derogatory language used in Yr. 10 and small groups had already attended some awareness sessions. It is hoped, in the future, to engage external speakers to address this issue with all year groups.

The Police Community Team had visited school to talk about knife crime and were coming in again in January.

The following Personal Development activities have taken/are taking place:

- Personal Development – weekly sessions
- Assemblies – Human Rights and Equality - presentation this week.
- Other initiatives – food for food banks etc.

- The new GCSE for citizenship should have a positive impact.
- Mental Health – encouraging students to talk about a number of components,
- Extracurricular – lots now back and running.
- Long Term – working out which students not involved with extra-curricular activities and encouraging more involvement.

Trips and activities included:

- School Choir
- Jolly Christmas concert
- Art
- Capital of Culture
- Meetings scheduled with the SENCO and pastoral teams who regularly referred pupils.
- External Links – School Health etc.
- School was targeting Student Voice and there were changes to the school council
- Inclusion Club - over 30 students involved
- A number of other guests had visited school such as Manchester Camerata came in to perform for students, Bronnie – musical artist who talked to pupils about mental health, resilience and confidence, etc.

Tom Dolly (TD) agreed to provide a full list of activities for Trustees.

TD to provide Trustees with a full list of activities/ trips

21/37 CATCH UP/ PARENTAL SURVEY - TD

Catch-up Funding last year amounted to £73k. TD outlined the details of the report. This report is also on the school's website. An additional focus had been on the National Tutoring Programme.

Parental Survey

Details had already been covered in Headteachers report.

21/38 BEHAVIOUR UPDATE – VJA

Weekly meetings have been established. The feedback from Heads of Year and Pastoral team has been very positive.

There had been an unpleasant Tik Tok incident involving a student early in the year. The post had remained until a pupil took it down themselves, in spite of representations to Tik Tok.

The end of term Rewards Assemblies and trips had been very successful.

School is continuing to work with Behaviour hubs and there have been a couple of visits to other schools. A visit had been due to take place the previous week but this had proved too difficult with Covid issues.

Members of staff from Carmel College had visited school. The visit had been very inspiring and there had been many good ideas shared.

Numbers of detentions have increased; these mostly take place during the school day.

There are still some persistent offenders and school is planning targeted support and intervention including Pastoral Support Plans.

A number of issues have arisen with some parents because of Covid, resulting in some Operation Encompass meetings.

Some students still need a lot of support. A 'Return to Basics' has been implemented to reinforce expectations.

There had been 9 exclusions (5 the previous year) but no permanent exclusions.

Active Sefton has funded one full day per week for 5 students 1:1 intervention and support. This is a 6-week rolling programme and has been well received by pupils.

Bully Busters – assemblies have been launched and a peer-mentoring programme planned.

The "key programme" had identified separate cohorts from each year group (organised by Bully Busters). This is a specific Yr. 11 programme.

Attendance levels have been affected by Covid - National figure is 87.2%; School figure is 90.2%. Some pupils are on reduced timetables.

Use has been made of Education Welfare Service SLA; Attendance panels can be convened if required.

A pupil survey has been carried out in ICT lessons and provided details from a broad spectrum of pupils.

Parents have been providing valuable feedback; there are a number of pupils suffering with poor mental health, anxiety and stress, etc.

Trustees posed some questions about the survey and RS commented that it would be good to show how the cohort had changed since the last OFSTED. It was noted that this was a difficult area to quantify, but a number of indicators show improvement. There is still some way to go.

Individual pastoral/safeguarding issues have been tracked and, once identified, support and help has been available. It was noted that all external services are under pressure at this time.

21/39 LINK REPORTS

The Head thanked all Trustees who had met with staff and produced comprehensive reports. There had been open and honest conversations; the reports would be discussed further at the next Ofsted Focus Group meeting.

An appeal was made to Trustees for names of any professional individuals who would be willing to speak to year groups or at assemblies regarding careers. They should contact Dr Ainsworth with details.

There are currently two vacancies for link Trustees – English & Literacy and PE & Expressive Arts. Harriet Michael-Phillips agreed to become the link for both faculties.

21/40 POLICIES

- Trustee Allowance Policy – **ACCEPTED**
- Pay Policy (and appendices) had been reviewed by the Pay Committee on 23/11/21 and was now **ACCEPTED** by the Full Trustee Board.

The Headteacher reported that he had reviewed the Charging and Remissions Policy – this policy is now on the school website.

21/41 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Details had been provided for Trustees. The next round of Parents' Evenings will be held online.

21/42 PAY & PERFORMANCE

The Pay & Performance Committee met on two occasions:

- i. On 10 November 2021 to review the pay and performance of the Headteacher
- ii. On 23 November 2021 to review the pay and performance of all teaching staff and all members of the SLT (with the exception of the Headteacher)

The Committee **AGREED** that all staff eligible to progress on their relevant pay scale should do so, with effect from 1 September 2021.

21/43 AOB

Trustees congratulated school on the Carol Concert.

DATE AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Thursday February 3rd 2022

Meeting closed 6.05pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Jones', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Signed _____ Date 3 February 2022