

<b>MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING NESTON HIGH SCHOOL</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 1800 - 1930</b>	
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Remote Meeting (Microsoft Teams)</b>	
<b>Present:</b>	Kevin Mothersdale (KM) Kath Roberts (KR) Keith Simpson (KS) Paul Airey (PA) P Duncan Haworth (PDH) K Elizabeth Jones (KEJ) Ian Mellor (IM) Colin Randerson (CR) Kathryn Clarke (KC) Paul Sweetman (PS) Paul Reilly (PR)	Community Trustee and Chair of Trustees Community Trustee and Vice Chair of Trustees Headteacher Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Parent Trustee Community Trustee Staff Trustee
<b>Apologies:</b>	Andy Liptrot (AL) Simon Roberts (SR)	Parent Trustee Parent Trustee [see note at Item 1]
<b>Absent:</b>	None	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Kirsty Cunningham (KCH) Tina Phillips (TP) John Pilcher (Clerk)	Deputy Head Teacher Business Manager Clerk

<b>AGENDA ITEM 1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTIONS &amp; APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Chair welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the school year. The apologies of AL and SR were received. [ <b>Clerks note:</b> SR has since resigned as a Parent Trustee]	
<b>Decision:</b>	<b>RESOLVED:</b> that the apologies of the above-named Trustees be noted.	

<b>AGENDA ITEM 2</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b>	There were no new declarations of interest to note. It was also noted that GIAS information and declarations of interest have been uploaded to the school <a href="#">website</a> .	

<b>AGENDA ITEM 3</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (PART 1)</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minutes: 23.9.20</li> </ul> <p>The Part 1 minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.</p>
<b>Decision:</b>	<b>RESOLVED:</b> Agreed as a true record.

<b>AGENDA ITEM 4</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Action log</li> </ul> <p><b>Carried Forward: (previous school year)</b></p> <p>Action 46 – <b>Action Open.</b> KS to discuss the Visit/Policy Procedure with PA.</p> <p>Action 55 – <b>Action Closed.</b></p> <p>Action 56 – <b>Action Closed.</b></p> <p>Action 57 - <b>Action Closed.</b></p> <p><b>From 23.9.20:</b></p> <p>Action 1 – <b>Action Closed.</b></p> <p>Action 2 – <b>Action Open.</b> KS to request applications of the Staff Trustee vacancy.</p> <p>Action 3 – <b>Action Closed.</b></p> <p>Action 4 – <b>Action Closed.</b></p> <p>Action 5 – <b>Action Open.</b> KS to meet with Trustees to discuss 6<sup>th</sup> Form &amp; Capital.</p> <p>Action 6 – <b>Action Closed.</b></p>
<b>Decision:</b>	<b>RESOLVED:</b> to carry forward actions 46, 2, and 5.

<b>AGENDA ITEM 5</b>	<b>HEAD TEACHERS UPDATE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The Chair invited KS to present the Head Teachers report and Trustees noted KS had circulated documents in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>KS proceeded to highlight the following key points:</p> <p><b>SWOT Analysis:</b> Trustees noted the School is working within the context of the national situation. The Report provides an overview of how the school has managed phase 1.</p>

Staff Absence: KS reported that 10 staff are currently absent, and this comprises 6 teaching and 4 support staff. With regards to student absence, trustees were advised that use of the 'x code' differs this year, as a result of Covid-19. This has an impact upon the way absence figures are reported.

**Question:** The Chair asked, in relation to the SWOT, are plans in place to mitigate the areas identified as weaknesses and threats – for e.g. plans for 2021 exams?

**Answer:** KS answered, the reality of the situation is that full programmes have to be delivered. The school is running a series of programmes in relation to 'in school assessments' and practicals, where possible. KS added that the clear expectation is that the exam series must continue. The challenges are how to get children to the required point, given time off and current absence levels as a result of Covid-19. Trustees noted, the school continues to work with students, and plans are targeting all areas of weaknesses and threats. In addition, the SWOT Analysis has informed the schools internal planning process.

**Question:** CR asked, how are the school managing the pressure of daily management issues versus maintaining the strategic direction?

**Answer:** KS noted that the current daily operational issues are simply immense, having a strategic direction at present is a significant achievement. KS added that the circulated documentation shows that the school has produced strategic thinking that is long term. The school has a view as to where it wants to be in three years' time. KS explained that pre-Covid, the school had clear plans and a strategic vision in place; and this is still the case. However, operational issues are taking up the majority of time. SLT members have worked through half term, a new curriculum model has been mapped and a new Management Information System has been implemented.

CR agreed that pulling together a strategic document, under the current circumstances is a significant achievement.

Brief discussion followed in relation to capacity within the SLT and wider staff teams and Trustees agreed that staff workload, and physical and mental wellbeing is a concern that must be continually monitored.

KS responded to say the approach of the SLT is to ensure 'the right thing in the right place' adding that high quality staff are able to move things forward and pause at the right time.

It was further noted that the school has listened to feedback from staff and parents. Key changes have been made as a result and have been well received. KS added, the team is quite new, this is also about building in sustainability and taking a forward view. If the current team had not been developed in the way it has, the school would now be in a difficult situation.

Curriculum Map Update: Trustees noted that the curriculum map has been consulted upon with staff, students, parents, and unions. The school collectively looked at 'where we were', and subsequently realised that the status quo could not continue. Ultimately, the team felt that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages. Some concerns from parents were aired but very few, KS added that overall, the initiative has received positive feedback. The benefits to the school include a renewed focus on getting the best from students and staff. Practically speaking, KS noted that the school could lose staff and children as a result of anxiety related to physically being in the same place throughout the

school day. The decision was therefore taken to move people around the site, with risk assessed safety measures in place.

Positive Covid-19 Cases:

KS reflected on the recent positive cases of Covid-19 and noted that the school quickly learned how to respond. The first case occurred on 5.9.20 and Trustees noted that it did take some time to get the relevant children off site. KS expressed thanks to TP and Helen Leadbetter for managing the cases. It was noted that the school has built in a new system to record out of hours information and this is working very well. The wider community are also being very supportive. KS reported that as of 4.11.20 there have been 31 positive Covid-19 cases. This is a significant increase and represents an additional 15 cases since 23.10.20 which includes 4 members of staff. It was also noted that in terms of communication, contact is made via methods including text messages. KS informed Trustees that, to date, 93 students are absent with an 'x-code' as a result of Covid-19. It was also noted that there is currently no national benchmark absence data which is unhelpful in terms of assessing the effectiveness of measures, due to the fact comparisons with similar school cannot, at this stage, be made.

PDH commented that the evidence would suggest the school has actually had very few cases and should therefore be congratulated for its management of the pandemic.

KS confirmed that the school has not sent whole year groups home. Rather, the approach has been to double check contacts and to continually liaise with Public Health England (PHE). The School has been very careful and DfE feedback, in relation to the school's approach, has been positive. TP added, PHE have also confirmed they are happy with the way cases are being identified and managed.

Discussion followed noting that any subsequent advice from PHE will be shared with parents. KS added, the school has followed legal guidance and PHE have been supportive. However, it was noted that the school are acting cautiously and will continue reporting developments to the Board of Trustees.

CR commented that, when national attendance data is available, leadership need to be mindful that the school has not been sending home year groups and this may skew any meaningful comparison. KS confirmed that any child sent home on an 'x-code' does not have an impact upon the attendance data. However, there could be issues around exam data, and this will need to be carefully managed.

TP added, positive case notifications lead the school to contact families and children - to ascertain if family members have tested positive. The school then keeps a record.

KS commented that in relation to data, there is national 'big data', but it is not currently broken down contextually for a useful local comparison.

Trustees were also advised that the current guidance is that 'x-code' students should be able to access education immediately from home. This is a huge challenge due to the fact that online learning for up to ten school days may need to be provided.

**Question:** The Chair asked, can schools work collectively on remote learning, incorporating such services as the Oak Academy?

	<p><b>Answer:</b> KS confirmed that where possible this is taking place and Oak academy resources are used. However, some schools use different exam boards which can limit the potential for collaboration.</p> <p><u>Staff Absence:</u> Trustees noted that 4 staff are currently absent. Some staff are returning but there is pressure to cover all lessons with a consistency of teaching. Deputy Heads are having to provide cover on a regular basis. KS added that the school are looking at agency staff – but this introduces some issues of risk (if they are going into a lot of schools). KS noted it is possible the school will reach a point where the full programme cannot be delivered, as a result of staff absence, in fact there is a greater risk of children going home due to staffing as opposed to bubble closures. This might not be as a result of staff displaying symptoms, it could be as a result of track and trace (but this is currently the national picture for all schools).</p> <p><u>Fixed Term Exclusions:</u> KS commented that compared to previous years, this year there are higher numbers of exclusions in older year groups. It was noted that some changes will be made around the site. KS added that several issues involved students integrating back into school following the initial lock down.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> CR noted that internal isolation cannot currently be implemented and asked, does this limit the number of actions that can be taken? <b>Answer:</b> KS answered yes, adding that internal isolations are not used anymore. The school now allocates a member of the SLT to talk with students for an hour and this approach has worked well. KCH noted, this is a very formal process, decisions are made with the raising standards leader and a data tracker is in place. There are currently no detentions, so interventions have to be used quite quickly. KS added that the school’s expectations for behaviour are high, but the usual ‘toolkit’ is simply not available when it comes to behaviour interventions.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> PA asked in relation to behavioural problems, is this as expected? <b>Answer:</b> KS explained that there are a small number of students who have displayed some behavioural discrepancies which were not expected.</p> <p>There were no further questions and the Chair thanked KS for his report.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 6	SCHOOL VISION (DRAFT)
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The Chair noted that a draft vision document had been circulated prior to the meeting and is available via Teams. KS added that some external support was used to help craft the document. Trustees have already provided feedback and some minor tweaks were made as a result.</p> <p>Trustees were advised that once the vision is agreed, underneath this, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the School Improvement Plan will be developed. The School Improvement Plan will come to the Board in December, and these workstreams will culminate in a three-year strategic plan for the school.</p> <p>KS added, in response to comments from PDH wording has been included to reference ‘resilience’. In relation to partnership working and futures working, KS thanked the Chair for his comments and noted this has also been included.</p>

	<p>KS went on to suggest that a small group of Trustees could work with key members of the SLT to develop KPI's for a draft Vision Document for December - targeting a January 2021 release.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> The Chair noted that a discussion about vision, mission, values and culture is a substantial task and asked, can it be condensed?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> KS confirmed that the document can be developed over time with the Board and language can be changed; a small task and finish group could work on refining the final draft with KPIs agreed for the next three years.</p> <p>It was subsequently <b>agreed</b> that PDH, CR, KR and PW would form a task and finish group to develop a strategic vision document.</p> <p>Action. Clerk to organise date with KS and advise the above.</p>		
<b>Action:</b>	<b>What:</b>	<b>Who:</b>	<b>By when:</b>
(7)	<p>Clerk to organise a date with KS and advise the above Trustees.</p> <p>[<b>Clerks note:</b> Meeting to take place 23.11.20. <b>Action Closed.</b>]</p>	Clerk	As soon as possible.

<b>AGENDA ITEM 7</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>TP noted, the external audit took two weeks due to the fact it was remote. There are no management accounts for this meeting. The advice is now for a separate meeting for the Finance and Audit Committee to be held. The Chair added, there is an audit committee in place that meets three times a year. The Chair confirmed that there can be a combined Audit and Finance committee due to the fact the school's turnover is less than £50m per annum.</p> <p>KS thanked TP for the significant hard work relating to the recent external audit and The Chair commented that audit processes are particularly challenging in the current circumstances.</p> <p>[<b>Clerks note:</b> please be advised the Finance and Audit Committee date of 10.12.20 is currently being re-scheduled].</p>

<b>AGENDA ITEM 8</b>	<b>POLICIES FOR ADOPTION</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>TP noted, several policies will come to the December Board. Trustees have been allocated to certain policies, the work will need to be done in advance of meetings and simply ratified at subsequent Board meetings.</p>

<b>AGENDA ITEM 9</b>	<b>AOB</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>There were no items of additional business.</p>

<b>AGENDA ITEM 10</b>	<b>SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2020-21</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Clerk advised that meeting dates have been circulated and agreed for 2020/21. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is <b>9.12.20 at 18.00</b> pm via Teams.

**There being no further items for discussion the meeting closed at 19:10 pm.**