

<b>MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING NESTON HIGH SCHOOL</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 18.00 – 20.00pm</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) Duncan Haworth (DH) K Elizabeth Jones (KEJ) Ian Mellor (IM) Colin Randerson (CR) Paul Reilly (PR) Kathryn Clarke (KC)	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 Staff Trustee Parent Trustee
<b>Apologies:</b>	None	
<b>Absent:</b>	None	
<b>In attendance:</b>	John Pilcher Kirsty Cunningham (KCH) Joe Vosseveld (JV) Karen McCarthy (KMC)	Clerk Deputy Head Teacher Deputy Head Teacher Deputy Head Teacher

<b>AGENDA ITEM 1</b>	<b>WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	Governors were welcome to the meeting and there were no apologies to note.
<b>AGENDA ITEM 2</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	There were no new declarations of interest to note.
<b>AGENDA ITEM 3</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (PART 1)</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To confirm accuracy of the Part 1 minutes from the meeting of 14.1.21</li> <li>▪ Matters Arising/Action Log</li> </ul> <p>Carried Forward</p>

	<p>(5) KS to meet with Trustees to discuss 6th Form &amp; Capital. <b>Open.</b></p> <p>(8) Dates for Teams training to be circulated. Clerk/TP. <b>Closed.</b></p> <p>(9) Advertise for a Parent Trustee. TP. <b>Open.</b></p> <p>(10) Circulate dates for an early 2021 meeting (skills audit review for new Trustee appointments). Clerk/School Admin. <b>Closed.</b></p> <p>(11) Four core groups to be established with a specific focus for monitoring KPIs. All/Clerk. <b>Closed.</b></p> <p>(12) TP to circulate the latest policy schedule. TP/Clerk. <b>Closed.</b></p>
<b>Decision:</b>	<p><b>Resolved.</b> Trustees agreed to approve the previous minutes as a true and accurate record.</p> <p><b>Resolved.</b> To carry forward action 5 and 9.</p>
<b>AGENDA ITEM 4</b>	<b>VISION &amp; KPIs</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	Trustees agreed to discuss vision and KPI's as part of the Head Teachers Report.
<b>AGENDA ITEM 5</b>	<b>HEAD TEACHERS REPORT</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>KS advised Trustees that the school is now in a return to school phase and emphasised the current priorities surround a safe reintegration of students.</p> <p>KS then referred to the circulated report and drew attention to the key issues.</p> <p>At present, the SWOT analysis is focused upon the recovery curriculum with 'resilience' also being a key theme. The school has a very strong student voice and will be working closely with pupils in relation to the return to school.</p> <p>Trustees noted discussions continue in relation to the vision and strategy of the school. In relation to future opportunities, there are ongoing discussions focused upon future investment priorities and potential capital spend. KS added that the capacity of the leadership team has also been built and thanked the SLT for modelling excellent leadership throughout the school.</p> <p>Feedback will be taken from senior staff in relation to the themed meetings and KS thanked those Trustees that had already fed back in relation to the effectiveness of the four key KPI groups. Scout leaders have also been identified and KR noted what a positive development this is. KR also commented that significant work is underway in relation to non Covid-19 (C-19) issues.</p> <p><u>C-19 Overview.</u></p> <p>KS advised that reported C-19 cases were up to date at the time of the report. However, not every child will return to school on the 8.3.21 and KS added that the reality is re-opening will be staggered.</p> <p>Trustees also noted that each C-19 case identified has been carefully managed. Only one case was traced back to the school, all other cases were traced back to outside contacts.</p>

In relation to testing, all students are required to take three tests before returning to school. KS noted there will be a three-day run-in period and it is hoped that by 15.3.21 all children will be back in school. Trustees were informed that for the sake of students and staff, the school are trying to take a safe and balanced approach. KS added that Board members will be kept informed of the school's plans as matters progress.

**Question:** CR asked, are the BoT required to sign off the school's approach to re-opening?

**Answer:** KS explained it is technically a management decision but of course, the school are required to follow all guidance. The Chair agreed that this is the case.

KS added that students will be sent home with testing kits and the school will clearly explain the process to all students.

CR proposed that Trustees show their support for the school's approach. The Chair asked for Trustees to indicate their support for the school's plans which were unanimously approved.

Ten testing booths will be operational from 8.3.21 during which time the school will also be operational. Trustees noted that this is a significant logistical challenge, but KS confirmed this is manageable.

#### Student Roll and Admissions.

KS noted that admissions to Year 6 and 7 are higher than ever. This is largely as a result of the promotion of the school and KS thanked all the staff that were involved. Trustees were also advised that KS was on Radio Merseyside which was also a very positive presentation for the school.

**Question:** The Chair asked, is 19 leavers a high number?

**Answer:** KS explained that the reasons behind each of these cases are known.

**Question:** DH asked, are students accessing alternative provision coming off the school roll?

**Answer:** KS answered that there is a mixture, some are dual registered, and some have gone to alternative provision and are now off the school roll.

Trustees noted that KS has met with the Local Authority to raise the issue of generic social and economic demographic figures and trends across the Wirral. This relates to the need to build physical capacity within the school, particularly in relation to 6<sup>th</sup> Form.

DH noted that the LA position is that 150 additional places will be required by September 2024 for Neston alone.

IM commented that building a dedicated 6<sup>th</sup> Form centre will increase capacity across all year groups. KS agreed but suggested the complexities of the issue need to be understood, there could be various solutions potentially including a learning centre. KS emphasised that discussions do need to be held in terms of how big does the school wish to be and what should the PAN be.

The Chair agreed that its critical to engage with the Local Authority (LA) on this issue. DH emphasised that the LA's approach will be based on the numbers of residential

developments within the catchment area. KS noted that these discussions will need to come back to the Board and conversations with the LA will emphasise that 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision will need to be specific to Neston. This will also be discussed at the Finance and Audit Committee.

In School Provision.

Trustees noted there are over 100 key worker children attending on a daily basis.

Safeguarding.

KS assured Trustees that Safeguarding issues are continually being looked at. However, there were no serious incidents to report.

Character and Wellbeing Day.

KMC provided an update in relation to the Character and Wellbeing Day noting that every year group took part. The Pastoral Team, Senco, SLT and Careers Team supported the event and there was input in relation to personal development. The outcome from the day is that over 120 bespoke Return to School Plans are now in place. Staff feel a lot more secure in relation to their role within those plans and KMC suggested staff felt the collaboration across departments was extremely useful and subsequently the day will become a yearly event.

Brief discussion followed in relation to reporting of activities that involve small numbers of pupils and Trustees agreed, for the sake of confidentiality, numbers under ten should not be numerically specified.

SEND.

Trustees reflected on the pressures upon SEND funding. Wirral Authority is under increasing pressure, and there are not enough specialist places. SEND funding is also being reduced at a national level. KS advised that the school are now carrying out a full SEND review. The potential Year 6 cohort also has a high level of SEND pupils which adds to the complexity.

DH confirmed the SEND budget regionally will be overspent. This is representative of the national picture; all special schools are full, and this is equally the case across the Wirral.

KS emphasised that this will have a significant impact upon the school and in terms of vision and culture, the Board need to be aware of this is as a 'threat' (in terms of the SWOT analysis). The school are looking at solutions and analysing the curriculum map and staffing to address SEND needs going forward.

Behaviour.

KS confirmed there was nothing significant to report. However, there will be a focus on standards upon return to school, with clear expectations about re-engagement. The school are also looking at curriculum access for options for children going into Year 10. Some children are also very anxious about returning to school and will need a lot of emotional support.

Pupil Premium.

Trustees were advised that all legal requirements have been met. However, the SLT will be looking at this more closely upon pupils return to school.

**Question:** The Chair asked, in relation to C-19 reimbursement and are the school using the national tutoring programme?

**Answer:** TP explained the first tranche has been received at circa £40k. This is being used for in class support and IT devices. Tutoring funding has not yet been accessed. The school has to pay 25% of the cost and it is only for the most disadvantaged but there will be a C-19 catch up funding review taking place shortly. Work has been ongoing since September and KS added that the use of the funding has to be high impact. The school's approach is not 'catch up' it's 'recovery support' which does not always equate to tutoring.

Staffing & Wellbeing.

KS noted that regular meetings are taking place. The school has communicated with staff and supported colleagues throughout the pandemic. Referrals have been made to external agencies as required. The biggest issue is 'long Covid' and a significant number of staff have such symptoms. This is a concern, and the school are trying to understand how long-term support can be provided.

Behaviour & Character.

KMC confirmed that Student Voice and Parent Voice are now things to develop going forward. KR confirmed that it was a very informative and positive meeting. KS emphasised that this was a significant piece of work, particularly in the current circumstances and thanked all staff and trustees involved.

Curriculum Leadership.

JV reported that this was a very full meeting. It provided a good overview of various aspects of school life; the blended learning package was also demonstrated. CR added that the breadth of experience was very impressive, new staff are also taking on key roles. The Chair added, the change from Sims to Arbor was a huge undertaking in the current situation. KS emphasised that this is a demonstration of democratic leadership within the school to continue developing leaders across the entire school community.

Communities & Partnership, Finance & Premises.

TP thanked DH and IM for their involvement in the meeting. The site manager also took part.

**Question:** CR asked for a progress update in relation to the school roof?

**Answer:** TP explained that Morgan Sindall attended the site today and will continue works after Easter.

	<p>Brief discussion followed in relation to the 3G pitch, TP noted that any income received has to be reinvested in grass roots football. As a result, there will be a £25k sinking fund but the Football Association are supporting the school to reinvest in local sports.</p> <p>IM added that the information in relation to what constitutes ‘the community’ was also very useful and will be of help to the BoT going forward.</p> <p>KS also expressed thanks to the range of non-teaching staff supporting the school.</p> <p><u>Teaching &amp; Learning.</u></p> <p>KC noted that the school are utilising a lot of research and Trustees agreed that the recent Teaching and Learning meeting was very useful.</p> <p>KS noted, in relation to the circulated Appendices, the School Improvement Reports are also included. Trustees were advised that KS continues to meet with the SIP to take discussions forward.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all contributors and noted that the reconnection of Trustees to key areas of the life of the school is extremely positive.</p> <p>The Chair also explained that he is working with KS and the SLT to develop a ‘broad brush’ overview document of the school’s plans and priorities for the next six months. Trustees noted the Chair will circulate a document shortly.</p> <p>Discussions moved onto the current focus, specifically the priority of a safe return to school from now until Easter. Post Easter, it will be important for the Board to start thinking about the future, to develop vision and KPIs for the next 3-5 years. This will involve skills development and appointing new Trustees, based upon a skills audit. 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision will also be a key element within the overall strategic development of the school. KS added, relationship, reconnections, recovery, and resilience are bedrock principles for the emerging strategy.</p>		
<b>Actions:</b>	<b>What?</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>By when?</b>
(13)	Chair to circulate six-month plan document to Trustees.	Chair	As soon as possible.
<b>AGENDA ITEM 6</b>	<b>GOVERNING BODY</b>		
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Following discussion in the previous item, the Chair noted the intention to recruit to current vacancies in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the summer term.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed three terms of office are due to expire this year i) IM – 31.7.21 ii) PA – 31.7.21 and iii) PR – 10.12.21</p> <p>It was also confirmed that CR will be the Health &amp; Safety link Trustee.</p>		

<b>AGENDA ITEM 7</b>	<b>FINANCE UPDATE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>TP confirmed the monthly management report had been circulated and this will be discussed in detail at the Finance and Audit Committee on 9.3.21.</p> <p>Trustees noted the forecast is slightly better than expected but there is an in-year shortfall, mostly due to low 6<sup>th</sup> Form numbers carried forward to Year 13.</p> <p>TP added, there is also a loss of catering income, although even this was not as bad as expected. However, the current running cost of C-19 is estimated at circa. £51k.</p> <p>It was also noted that the teachers' pay grant has been paid for the next five months April – September 2021.</p> <p>The Chair emphasised that all these aspects will be looked at in detail by the Finance and Audit Committee.</p>
<b>AGENDA ITEM 8</b>	<b>WEBSITE COMPLIANCE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>KS confirmed the school website has been audited recently. The auditor commented that the school are clearly demonstrating best practice in relation to remote learning.</p>
<b>AGENDA ITEM 9</b>	<b>ADMISSIONS POLICY</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Trustees noted the key deadlines for confirming admissions arrangements (note: as provided in the agenda).</p> <p>KS added, discussions will need to be held going forward for 2023/24.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> DH asked, in relation to 6<sup>th</sup> Form, do we need to have discussions with the RSC in relation to changing admissions for Year 12?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> KS confirmed the Heads Group are meeting this week and he will raise it there and come back to the Board with an update.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> CR asked, would the issue arise for Year 12's coming from outside of Neston in terms of teacher assessed grades being realistic?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> KS agreed this is a complex issue at a national level.</p>
<b>AGENDA ITEM 10</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Young minds</li> </ul> <p>KS noted, Young Minds approached the school to take part in a national project. KS will issue further information once received, if any Board members are interested in engaging with the project, KS asked for Trustees to contact him.</p>

<b>Actions:</b>	<b>What?</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>By when?</b>
(14)	KS to circulate information and Trustees to contact KS in relation to the Young Minds project.	KS/All	As soon as possible.
<b>AGENDA ITEM 11</b>		<b>DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b>	Dates for future meetings are available via Teams (click here for <a href="#">link</a> ) and as below: Times and format to be confirmed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 25.3.21</li> <li>▪ 13.5.21</li> <li>▪ 17.6.21</li> <li>▪ 12.7.21</li> </ul>		

**There being no further items for discussion the meeting closed at 20:00 pm.**