



DOCUMENT 1  
**Blue Coat School**  
**Local Governing Board**  
**Minutes**

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**Held on:** Tuesday 17 November 2020 at 5.00pm

**Place:** Virtual Meeting via Zoom

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**Present:**

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Mrs Lyn Johnson    | Chair of Governors |
| Mr Graeme Anderson |                    |
| Mr Josh Boxall     |                    |
| Mr Paul Cowie      |                    |
| Mr Mike Draper     |                    |
| Mr Peter Merrylees |                    |
| Mr James Ombudo    |                    |
| Miss Lou Peet      |                    |
| Mrs Vicki Shelley  |                    |
| Mrs Anna Stacey    |                    |
| Mr Paul Tuffin     |                    |

**In attendance:**

|                     |                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mrs Lois Whitehouse | Chief Executive Officer, IET         |
| Mr Mark Gore        | Link Director                        |
| Mrs Lisa Henden     | Deputy Headteacher, Blue Coat School |
| Ms Jane Durkin      | Head of Operations, IET              |
| Mrs Angela Carr     | Clerk                                |

The meeting was opened in Prayer.

**12/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence as all governors were present. The protocol for the virtual meeting was shared.

**13/20 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared in any item of business on the agenda.

**14/20 ACTION TAKEN UNDER POWERS OF URGENCY**

No action had been taken under powers of urgency since the previous meeting despite challenging circumstances currently with the Covid 19 pandemic

**15/20 GOVERNOR MEMBERSHIP**

**i) Chair of the LGB**

Lyn Johnson was confirmed as Chair of the LGB by the Trust Board at the meeting on 21 September 2020.

**ii) Foundation Governors**

Anna Stacey and Peter Merrylees have been appointed and Lyn Johnson and Mike Draper had been reappointed by the Diocese all for four years terms of office.

**iii) Co-opted Governors**

There was one vacancy. Lyn Johnson had discussed the vacancy with Lois Whitehouse and skills were evident in the LGB. It was **agreed** that the vacancy would be retained and that in the future the gender balance and a candidate outside of the educational arena would be sought to broaden the balance of views.

**iv) Parent Governors**

2 new parent governors, Mr James Ombudo and Mr Paul Cowie had been elected for four year terms of office and they were welcomed to the meeting, James Ombudo and Paul Cowie provided pen portraits of themselves, the skills and experience they brought to the LGB and introductions were made.

**v) Updated LGB Terms of Reference**

The updated LGB Terms of Reference which clarified the role and range of work of the LGB had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**16/20 GOVERNOR INFORMATION AND TRAINING**

**i) Outcomes of Skills Audit**

The collated Skills Audit was considered and a strength of the LGB was the range of skills evident.

**ii) Governing Board Training Needs**

**ACTION:** Lois Whitehouse to provide an induction training session to the new parent governors.

**iii) Learning Link**

The LGB were referred to the online training available as the Trust subscribed to the NGA and The Key for School Leaders at:

<https://www.nga.org.uk/Training-and-Development/NGA-Learning-Link-e-learning.aspx>

**ACTION:** The Clerk to provide the password and access instructions to the LGB to access the NGA and The Key for School Leaders.

**iv) Next Governor Briefing Dates:**

The next Directors' Briefing with Kirston Nelson would be held on Friday 4 December 2020 at 10.00am via MS Teams and was open to all governors to attend.

**17/20 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

**i)** The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 were **confirmed** and would be confirmed as signed on GovernorHub.

**ii)** Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda (including actions from the last meeting)

There were no matters arising.

| <b>ACTION LOG</b> | <b>WHO</b> | <b>COMPLETE</b> |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Autumn 2020       |            |                 |

|   |                                  |   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Clarify how many Declaration of Business Interest Forms had been returned to the school           | Clerk                            |   |
| Governors to return any outstanding Declaration forms to the school                               | Governors                        |   |
| Governors to declare their business interests on GovernorHub and confirm                          | Governors                        |   |
| Term of office to be confirmed by the Diocese for PM & AC   | DBE/ Clerk                       |   |
| Advertise for two Parent Governors  | Headteacher                      |   |
| Arrange date meeting date of the Finance Committee including a date to approve the final accounts | Mike Draper                      |   |
| Arrange meeting date of the Standards Committee   | Lyn Johnson                      |   |
| Declare abide by the Code of Conduct on GovernorHub declarations                                  | Governors                        |   |
| New Governor Induction Training to be arranged for two new parent Governors                       | Clerk                            |   |
| Investigate Chairs Development Programme  | Mike Draper                      |   |
| Governors to complete KCSIE Declaration on GovernorHub for September 2020                         | Governors                        |   |
| Issue skills audit  | Clerk                            |   |
| Governors to complete skills audit and return to Clerk by 5.10.20                                 | Governors                        |   |
| Review of Chairs Performance  |                                  | It was agreed that Lyn Johnson's performance would be reviewed and a date with Vicki Shelley and another governor would be organised. |
| Chair review of Governor performance  | Chair                            | Lyn Johnson would review LGB performance and find a format for completion.  |
| Agenda item on next agenda around Staff and Pupil Wellbeing                                       | Clerk /<br>Chair/<br>Headteacher |   |

## 18/20 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Vicki Shelley introduced her report to Governors and the following items were raised for discussion:

- **COVID-19 Update, Numbers and Attendance**

Attendance was good despite the challenges of positive Covid-19 cases and self-isolating requirements. It was reported that since the Report was produced on 9 November 2020 there had been a significant increase in Covid-19 cases approximately 2 per day. The considerable work of Lisa Henden in the school's "Track and Trace" arrangements which were relentless currently, were acknowledged. The increased concern of increased cases which were managed at local level with the LA and Public Health representatives had resulted in a meeting that day and assurance had been sought and provided that the LA was not concerned with the rates of cases evident at the school and the school's management of cases, which were low when compared to other local schools and the size of Blue Coat School. It was reported that children were transmitting the virus opposed to staff and staff rigour in ensuring social distancing measures were reported. It was reported that the LA would issue a letter following the visit which would be shared to reassure the staff as anxiety was evident. It was stressed that managing the Covid-19 pandemic was the school's greatest challenge currently. Lois Whitehouse drew the LGB's attention to the extreme difficulties for the Senior Leaders and the relentless task, including working at weekends, to ensure the school was responding to new positive cases and that the staff team were responding and were supporting each other to maintain children being in school.

A governor asked:

**With the considerable challenges for the staff including remote learning, at what point is it untenable for the staff with extra work to continue? Concerns regarding staff workload were identified and acknowledged that the staff were working above and beyond in school and those self-isolating, is this huge workload at the detriment of other things?**

Vicki Shelley identified that it was tenable as the school had worked hard to strip back expectations on staff including additional meetings, had reduced staff time on site and training which were all conducted virtually to support the staff. The Headteacher was concerned that the school was trying to move forward from the Ofsted Inspection and the staff commitment to step up to support each other and working hard in challenging circumstances was appreciated. A staff member commented that there was a general sense of staff pulling together and that the SLT were appreciated for positive communication as the staff were aware that they could seek help.

Paul Tuffin commented that he had met Kaye Arnold, DSL, virtually and discussed safeguarding arrangements.

**Has there been a permanent exclusion, this is not in the report?**

It was confirmed that there had and that a panel of Directors had met and had upheld the Headteacher's decision and the Independent Review Panel (IRP) was the next stage. The Clerk advised that the DfE Guidance had extended the time to request an IRP to 25 school days. Mike Draper explained that the Trust Board had agreed that exclusions would be reviewed by LGBs and not Directors going forward as this had significantly reduced capacity to hear representations.

**Is there an update regarding exams?**

The arrangements for external exams in Summer 2021 was awaited and it was reported that mock exams had been postponed as this was not deemed to be safe with increased Covid-19 cases currently.

- **Post Ofsted Action Plan**

The LGB were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the content of the Post Ofsted Action Plan and the priorities for the school.

- **Performance Data and Targets**

Vicki Shelley stressed that in the absence of performance data from public examinations that had been cancelled in 2020 that performance data was sparse and the decision had been taken not to test children on their immediate return to school and currently data was being collected.

**ACTION:** Data to be presented for consideration at the next meeting.

Vicki Shelley was thanked for her comprehensive report, the joyous comments and positivity and thanks were conveyed to the staff team working in the best interests of the children.

## 19/20 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

### i) Finance Committee

Mike Draper, Chair of Blue Coat Finance Committee referred the LGB to Document 4 and reported on a meeting held the previous night. It was reported that the Committee had considered the future of the Finance Committee and agreed that there was no requirement for this to continue as business was subsumed within the Trust through the Finance and Audit Committee or the LGB. It was reported that key items for the LGB would be how premium grant funds were spent and that the LGB would not scrutinise income and expenditure as it previously had as this was monitored by the IET Finance and Audit Committee or Trust Board.

The Finance Committee were thanked for their considerable contributions over numerous years particularly Lois Whitehouse and Mike Draper.

### ii) Curriculum and Standards

**It was reported that the main priorities were the school's response to Covid-19, the Post Ofsted Action Plan including changes to the curriculum, behaviour improvement and SEND to ensure children's needs were met and was chaired by Mark Gore, Blue Coat Link Director. It was noted that the comprehensive data and information reviewed by the Committee had been published on GovernorHub for the LGB's information.**

A governor commented on the importance of the LGB understanding the level of excitement to re-engage children in the curriculum.

The remit for the LGB which was different to that of a standalone governing board with responsibilities delegated by the Trust had been considered by the meeting the previous evening and it was agreed that it would be useful to share the Scheme of Delegation to sharpen the focus of the LGB. It was suggested that it would be useful to have training to take the LGB through the different functions to articulate the governor and Director roles and responsibilities and how they sit.

**Regarding Covid-19 Catch Up Funds there is a mismatch of £20,000 increased expenditure compared to income, is this acceptable at Trust Board level?**

Lois Whitehouse confirmed that it was as the key priority was the safety and wellbeing of the staff and children and that all Covid related costs were being collated to make sure that this funding was utilised where possible although timing differences may be evident. The importance of targeting support to children when needed was a key role of LGBs to ensure that all premium funds were targeted and spent appropriately.

**Is the Committee satisfied with the school's plan to deliver what needs to be done to close the gap?**

The huge challenges to close the gaps were reported and it was stressed that the school was doing the best it possibly could and the importance of Quality First Teaching having the biggest impact was reported. It was suggested that stressed that the impact of Covid was a long term issue which would have a significant and sustained impact on this cohort which the school was trying to limit. Concern that there was no clear Government strategy in key areas i.e. exams 10 2021 was not helpful for the school or the children.

## 20/20 PUPIL/STAFF WELLBEING

Anna Stacey reported on the importance of a governors Wellbeing Committee to review staff and pupil wellbeing to ensure that Blue Coat School was a wholesome place to study. It was reported that the Committee had been established with a specific remit. It was **noted** that there was also a Trust Board Wellbeing Committee as wellbeing was a core value of the Trust.

Thanks were conveyed to Anna Stacey for leading the school's Wellbeing Committee who welcomed governors' ideas in advance of the next meeting on 8 December 2020.

## 21/20 GOVERNOR MONITORING

It was **noted** that virtual monitoring had been undertaken by Paul Tuffin and Lyn Johnson as Visits to school were not currently being undertaken in line with the Covid-19 Risk Assessments in Trust Schools.

## 22/20 SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies had been approved by the Trust Board:

- i) Blue Coat Attendance Policy
- ii) Blue Coat Addendum to Behaviour Policy
- iii) Blue Coat Behaviour Policy
- iv) Blue Coat Complaints Policy
- v) Blue Coat Grievance Policy
- vi) IET Pay Policy
- vii) IET FOI Policy

The following policies were presented for approval by the LGB:

### viii) Remote Learning Policy

#### Should the Policy mention staff with disabilities?

It was reported that the Policy was pre-dominantly written for parents and that a staff protocol was available.

Pending the typo on Page 4 being addressed, page numbers being inserted and "governing board" being used consistently, the Policy was unanimously **approved**.

### ix) Appraisal Policy

It was **agreed** that this was a Trust Board Policy for approval.

**ACTION:** The Policy was referred for Trust Board approval.

**ACTION:** Lois Whitehouse, Vicki Shelley and Jane Durkin to review the Blue Coat specific Policy which was needed as appraisals were recorded differently and were needed for transition.

It was identified that the Policy did not refer specifically to the Performance Management arrangements of the Deputy Headteacher and it was **agreed** that this was not necessary.

### x) E-Safety Policy

**ACTION:** The date of the Policy to be addressed.

**ACTION:** Peter Merrylees' comments regarding the Policy to be provided to Kay Granger for the Headteacher to address.

- xi) **Careers Policy**
- xii) **Examination Policy**
- xiii) **Examination Policy COVID Addendum**

**ACTION:** The Policies were deferred for review by the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

xiv) **Blue Coat Admissions Policy**

The proposed changes to the Admissions Policy were presented by Vicki Shelley and Lou Peet which were highlighted in red.

**Should the opening statement refer to the increase in the PAN by 30 be clear that this will be intake of 295 pupils for 2 years?**

It was stressed that the LA's Admissions Team's advice had been sought and applied and it was clarified that the PAN was 265 and would not be adjusted to admit an additional 30 pupil to accommodate the LA's request to meet the temporary surplus pupil place needs in the secondary sector. The impact of a new free school opening in the City and the impact on other schools was stressed.

Concern regarding appeals was conveyed and assurances were provided that the LA would support with appeals for places. It was stressed that 295 pupils in a year group was not the school's vision as this was too big. The need to create capacity had been **agreed** by the LA and the secondary sector and capital investment to improve facilities had been provided by the LA.

**Regarding reducing the number of attendances of worship from 35 to 30 in a year, is there analysis available of how many children this would have affected in the past?**

It was confirmed that this had been analysed and was not significant numbers.

**Is there a target of admitting 5% of children from the local community?**

It was confirmed that there was no target criteria locally.

**What is the rationale behind including another relative i.e. aunt?**

It was confirmed that extending family members had been deemed appropriate and a positive change.

**ACTION:** The Policy was approved for wider consultation and would be circulated for LGB information before approval by the Trust Board.

**23/20 HEADTEACHER'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Lois Whitehouse reported that the Headteacher's performance had been reviewed and new objectives had been set using the external Consultant and the outcome had been reported to the Trust Board.

**24/20 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Governors **agreed** the dates of future meetings as:

**Spring 2021:** Tuesday 9 February 2021 at 5.00pm

**Summer 2021:** Tuesday 4 May 2021 at 5.00pm

**Summer 2021:** Tuesday 13 July 2021 at 5.00pm (to be clerked by Kay Grainger)

## 25/20 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

### (i) Church School Governance Training Programme

Lou Peet reported that she had completed a church schools governance programme which she had found useful and suggested that other governors complete this programme.

**ACTION:** Lou Peet to provide the Clerk with the details of the course to publish to the LGB.

## 26/20 PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS

Governors **agreed** to publish all documents considered at the meeting.

| ACTION LOG   | WHO  | COMPLETE |
|--|--|----------|
| Autumn 2020  |  |          |
| Review of Chairs Performance   | Vicki Shelley and a Governor                         |          |
| Chair review of Governor performance   | Lyn Johnson  |          |
| Provide an induction training session to the new parent governors  | Lois Whitehouse                                      |          |
| Provide the password and access instructions to the LGB to access the NGA and The Key for School Leaders                       | Angela Carr  |          |
| Data to be presented for consideration at the next meeting   | Vicki Shelley  |          |
| The Policy was referred for Trust Board for approval   | Lois Whitehouse/<br>Angela Carr                      |          |
| Review the Blue Coat specific Policy which was needed as appraisals were recorded differently and were needed for transition   | Lois Whitehouse,<br>Vicki Shelley and<br>Jane Durkin |          |
| The date of the Policy to be addressed   | Vicki Shelley  |          |
| Comments regarding the Policy to be provided to Kay Granger for the Headteacher to address.                                    | Peter Merrylees/<br>Vicki Shelley                    |          |
| The Policies were deferred for review by the Curriculum and Standards Committee.   | Angela Carr  |          |
| The Policy was approved for wider consultation and would be circulated for LGB information before approval by the Trust Board. | Vicki Shelley /<br>Angela Carr                       |          |
| Provide the Clerk with the details of the course to publish to the LGB.  | Lou Peet   |          |

Signed:

Date: