



Local Governing Committee Minutes

Held on: Tuesday 08 March 2022 at 5.00pm
Place: Blue Coat School

Present:	Mrs Lyn Johnson Mr Josh Boxall Mr James Okore Ombudo Mrs Vicki Shelley Mr Paul Cowie Mrs Anna Stacey Mr Paul Tuffin Ms Emma Griffiths Miss Lou Peet Mr Peter Merrylees	Chair of the LGC
In attendance:	Mr Mark Gore Ms Lisa Henden Mr Alex Tomlinson Mrs Kelly Goddard	Link Director, IET Associate Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Clerk to the Local Governing Committee

The meeting opened with a Prayer.

01/22	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES It was noted that Mike Draper was not in attendance. Peter Merrylees was in attendance virtually. N.B Following the meeting apologies were received and accepted from Mike Draper.	
02/22	DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS There were no interests declared on any items of business on the agenda.	
03/22	ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER POWERS OF URGENCY There were no actions taken under the powers of urgency.	
04/22	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 were confirmed and would be marked as signed by the Clerk on GovernorHub.	

05/22	MATTERS ARISING/ REVIEW OF ACTIONS LOG		
	ACTION LOG	WHO	COMPLETE
	Autumn 2021 (2)		
	Review associated Chaplaincy Trip Paperwork on behalf of LGC	Chair	The paperwork would be shared with the Chair for review
	Share link to Joseph performance when available	Kelly O'Connor	
	BAME comparative figures for Post 18 destinations, comparative progress against White British pupils (Headteacher Report and standards committee)	Headteacher	A report regarding BAME comparative figures had been produced and would be shared with all Governors.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access Arrangement Policy - Attendance - Collective Worship - Critical Incident Plan Policies to be shared on G'Hub for approval	Headteacher Clerk	
	Standards meeting date change to be amended on GovernorHub	Clerk	
	Well-being meeting date to be circulated	Kelly O'Connor	Kelly Goddard Updated GovernorHub
06/22	MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEE		
	<p>Charlotte Marten had been appointed to the Co-opted vacancy by the Trust Board. Charlotte's biography was received and noted. Charlotte provided an overview of her background and explained the reasons for becoming a Governor at Blue Coat.</p> <p>It was noted that Emma Griffiths was interim Ex Officio Foundation Governor and that on the previous meeting the new Vicar to Holy Trinity Church had been appointed and therefore she would most likely be stepping down in due course.</p>		
07/22	CHAIR'S VERBAL UPDATE		
	<p>Lisa Henden had been appointed as Associate Headteacher and Alex Tomlinson had been appointed as Deputy Headteacher. Both were officially welcomed to the meeting and would attend future LGC meetings as Observers.</p> <p>The Chair had met with Headteacher and undertaken monitoring visits. She had also attended the Trust Standards Committee with Mark Gore and had attended the Trust Chairs Committee. It had been discussed that a Trust Governor training session would be held and Governors were asked to save the date for Tuesday 24 May 2022 at 6:00pm – 7:00pm to be held at Hearsall Primary School.</p>		
08/22	TRUST SCHEME OF DELEGATION		

	<p>The LGC received and noted the Scheme of Delegation which had been approved by the Trust Board indicating the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of Trust wide governance. It was good practice that the document was approved on an annual basis. Governors felt that the document provided a clear explanation of how the Trust worked and how the LGC role fitted within that.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a reference to the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the School Development Plan (SDP) within the document and therefore one would be amended ACTION.</p>	
09/22	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p>Vicki Shelley introduced her report to Governors and drew Governors attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Behaviour and Attitudes- Exclusions had increased but were not high comparatively speaking. There had been an increase in suspensions due to vaping. It was noted that the vapes looked like a highlighter pen, tasted sweet and had a high nicotine content and therefore the school had informed parents to make them aware of this new interest in pupils. The school had taken a hard line regarding this and had excluded on the basis of it.</p> <p>There were also increased concerns regarding social media and a significant amount of staff time had been taken up investigating incidents. Incidents in school often started on social media. There was some discussion about the impact of COVID-19 on pupils social parameters. Governors asked:</p> <p>What health education work was going on around vaping?</p> <p>Information had been provided to tutors and the issue had been picked up through PSHE. All pupils had a timetabled lesson every fortnight except Year 11 who received this in their tutor time. Issues had reduced and there hadn't been repeated cases which showed that the school had dealt with the issue effectively.</p> <p>Unauthorised absences seemed high?</p> <p>Holidays during term time were not authorised. Some parents had also chosen to keep their children off due to close contact COVID-19 cases.</p> <p>Attendance was however good at 93% compared to national of around 87%. There had been an increase in school refusers who had struggled to return to school for a host of reasons. The school used a range of interventions including letters, warnings, attendance plans and Local Authority support which was said to be very supportive.</p> <p>Was there any nonattendance due to exam anxiety?</p> <p>There was anxiety as pupils had not had their natural build up to examinations and pupils were now faced with examinations or decisions about their future to be made. The current Year 9 and 11 were most impacted as they had missed the most amount of time and the older pupils were also said to have been impacted by more long term medical issues than the younger children following COVID-19.</p> 	

Would the issues around absence, behaviour and attitudes improve overtime or naturally resolve as the impact of COVID-19 lessened?

The school needed to do more with pupils with the same resources or less resources. It was possible to see an increase in mental health concerns and the pupils need more support than ever. Staff had also been negatively impacted for a variety of reasons too and staff who were on M4 had not yet seen a cohort through to exam. Eight staff had been absent at some point with anxiety, depression or stress. In the vast majority of cases this was not work related. The demands and pressures were harder now than during the height of the pandemic. The data also showed that SEND and disadvantaged pupils were more negatively impacted.

How could the school ensure that the advance information sheets were understood appropriately and was the school making active use of them?

A middle leaders meeting had been undertaken to discuss the advance information sheets and departments had been asked to further review them and to decide what they meant for the pupils, how the information should be communicated and a page on the website was being set up dedicated to the information. It would be explained that there could still be material on the examination papers that was not listed on the advance information sheet and therefore it was important that all content was covered prior to commencing revision and to move on to the next stage of education. The fundamental point was how revision was approached prior to the exam season.

Was there special consideration for SEND children who would struggle to interpret the nuances of the advance information sheet?

The sheets were accessible for the pupils but the school was looking at how a consistent message would be delivered to pupils.

- **Quality assurance** – The senior team had walked the school and had formulated an action plan. Richard Sutton had also undertaken a review of each departments and Governors **received** and **noted** his reviews and the resulting action plan. The overall picture was positive and curriculum plans were well implemented. Staff had rewritten the curriculum and implemented it through the pandemic and the reports were said to be a testament to the work that the staff had done. It was noted that there were some priority areas including SEND and subject specific needs of the children. There were some flags for children around behaviour in some classes where there had been cover. Leaders had acknowledged those points and were working on a plan. Governors were assured that an external person had reviewed the curriculum carefully.

Governor, Paul Tuffin had also participated in a learning walk and the comments in the reports were reflected. Governors discussed the national impact of COVID-19 and that they were grateful that the school had been open and the children were well cared for but that the school was at its strongest when teaching was consistent with the same expectations. It was noted that Lyn Johnson (Chair of the LGC) and Charlotte Marten had also undertaken monitoring visits to school.

Governors asked: Was there a role for Governors within the curriculum monitoring?

Student voice being undertaken by a Governor would be helpful. Emma Griffiths

offered her support regarding this.

Governors **commented** that SEND students in particular would most likely be impacted by cover arrangements as it was difficult to brief cover teachers on their needs and disruption may be due to students not having their needs met.

Governors also **commented** that it was good to see that every department had a number of strengths and recommendations. There were some departments discussed where there were concerns but that plans were in place to address this.

What was the schools approach to the EBACC going forward?

The school had previously made the decision to allow pupils to drop an option in Year 11 to reduce the number of GCSEs undertaken. However, this had a serious impact on EBACC numbers from 75% to 16% and therefore the school was required to show an ambitious plan to increase this figure. Leaders were aware that this figure may impact negatively in the next inspection.

Were the subjects dropped predominantly language?

The subjects dropped were History and languages.

The Standards Committee had discussed at length, the EBACC and its measure of school performance and acknowledged that it was not in the best interests of the pupils but that a poor inspection was also not in the best interests of the pupils or the school. The Headteacher had sought the views of the committee at length and the school had an action plan in place to suggest to pupils that an EBACC range of subjects should be taken. It was noted that this was further impacted that RE was not recognised as a humanity and that as a faith school all pupils undertook an RE GCSE, therefore pupils choices were correspondingly reduced. Leaders felt that they did not have an alternative option.

Governors **commented** that in previous meetings leaders had spoken about how reducing options was the right decision for the pupils and that the EBACC didn't represent the Blue Coat value of living life to its fullness and this meant that sometimes making tough decisions to allow all pupils to access opportunities that they may not have otherwise had. It was noted that the top three Maths sets would only be able to choose one option which felt that the higher achieving pupils were being disadvantaged. Some Governors felt that this may encourage pupils not to perform as well as they may have in order to choose an alternative option. It was also noted that the school was introducing a Performing Arts A level but that the access this the pupils were required to have two GCSEs in the arts.

Governors were informed that leaders had discussed the situation at length and had explored going back to 10 GCSEs but it was felt that the consequence would be more pressure on the pupils and middle leaders would have to rewrite the schemes of work. Governors asked:

There were other C of E Secondary schools facing the same dilemma. Had leaders discussed removing GCSE RE?

The Articles of Association indicated that the GCSE in RE was required and the subject was only given four hours per fortnight which did not give back enough time for another subject. Governors recognised that pressure needed to be applied to the government and Church of England Board of Education.

Governors shared their views on the EBACC and were passionate about whether

	<p>it was right for the pupils of Blue Coat. They further asked: If the pupils were steered to pick EBACC subjects what would the percentage of participation be? The percentage would be approximately 65%.</p> <p>What would happen for SEND pupils and other requests? There was a comments box on the option form which would be reviewed and considered on a case by case basis. There would be exceptions where appropriate and with the best interests of pupils in mind.</p> <p>RESOLVED: After much discussion the LGC endorsed the decision made by the Standards Committee that the school would encourage EBACC participation by all students when choosing their options. However, this was not their desired choice but recognised the complex requirement being placed on the school to do so. They agreed to monitor the decision and assess the impact of the decision taken.</p> <p>It was agreed that the decision should be communicated to staff. ACTION.</p>	
10/22	<p>ACADEMY SPECIFIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Reports - Governors received and noted the Performance and Standards Committee Minutes. The Wellbeing Committee had been postponed and a new date would be circulated. ACTION. • Governor Monitoring Reports - Paul Tuffin had undertaken a learning walk regarding behaviour for learning and the quality of teaching. He also commented that some of the quality of art work was staggering. Charlotte Marten had also visited the school. The Chair reminded Governors that it was essential that they undertook their link Governor monitoring. The Chair commented on confidence and professionalism of the pupil interview panel for the Deputy Headteacher interviews which included pupils across all age groups. Peter Merrylees was to undertake a monitoring visit on SIAMS. ACTION. • External Reports – The reports were noted during the Headteacher Report. • Finance Termly Report – Review of finance and operations activity within the academy – The Finance Report produced by the Chief Finance Officer was received and noted. • Review Academy Risk Register The risk register was received and noted. • SEF – The SEF had been shared with the Coventry Monitoring Officer. It was suggested that a note regarding consistency of good practice and some areas being more consistently at good should be added. It was noted that the new 4 for All initiative helped each department articulate how they could consistently address SEND. 	
11/22	<p>COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of ways in which the LGC is engaging with the local community to provide feedback to the academy or to develop its reputation 	

	<p>The LGC agreed to form a Working Party to discuss stakeholder engagement as follows:</p> <p>James Ombudo, Lou Peet, Josh Boxall and Paul Cowie.</p> <p>Governors discussed secondary school admissions offers and noted that the school was full but that numbers were skewed across the city. The school had been asked by the Local Authority to expand due to a pupil number bulge that had moved through from primary to secondary. This had brought with it capital funding for a new sixth form building and a toilet refurbishment. The school was a second place for preferences in the city following President Kennedy.</p>	
12/22	<p>POLICIES AND COMPLIANCE</p> <p>It was noted that the following were received via email following the last meeting and ratified at the Standards Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access Arrangement Policy - Attendance - Collective Worship - Critical Incident Plan - Home Visits Policy - Use of Force to Restrain Pupils Policy <p>The following policies were received and noted as reviewed by the Trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour policy - SEND policy - Admissions policy 23-24 policy - P16 Admissions policy - Early Careers Teacher policy <p>Charlotte Marten offer to speak with the CEO regarding the Post 16 admissions policy and her personal experience regarding compliance of the admissions code.</p> <p>It was suggested that a table of contents be added to the SEND Policy. The Clerk would make the Headteachers PA aware. ACTION.</p>	
13/22	<p>COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of any key issues to communicate – The CEO indicated that the finance of the school was tracking in line. The budget for the forthcoming academic year was currently being worked on. 	
14/22	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>i) Ukraine</p> <p>Governors asked: What was the school doing in response to the situation in the Ukraine?</p> <p>Leaders had looked at the children in cohort. The school had a very small number of Russian students who were receiving intervention with the pastoral staff. It was noted that the Polish students had been the most impacted and pastoral check ins were being undertaken. Pupils had asked if they could do a collection through a local business.</p>	

	Governors reflected that this was in line with SIAMS and courageous advocacy. Materials had also been provided to staff to use if required. The Bishop had also visited the school to award the school equality diversity and inclusion award and had prayed with a group of staff and children. Governors thanked Lou Peet for leading in her work on worship.	
15/22	ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA Governors were urged to inform the Chair of any items they felt would be required.	
16/22	PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS Governors agreed to publish all documents considered at the meeting.	
17/22	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS Governors noted the dates of the next meetings as: Tuesday 28 June 2022.	

ACTION LOG:

ACTION LOG	WHO	COMPLETE
Autumn 2021 (2)		
Review associated Chaplaincy Trip Paperwork on behalf of LGC	Chair	The paperwork would be shared with the Chair for review
BAME comparative figures for Post 18 destinations, comparative progress against White British pupils (Headteacher Report and standards committee)	Headteacher	A report regarding BAME comparative figures had been produced and would be shared with all Governors.
Spring 2022		
Trust Scheme of Delegation – amend reference to SIP and SDP to one or the other.	CEO	
New date for Well-being Committee to be circulated	Headteacher, Chair and Headteacher PA	
EBACC decision to be communicated to staff	Headteacher	
Undertake SIAMS monitoring	Peter Merrylees	
Add a table of contents to the SEND Policy	Headteacher PA	

Signed:

Date: