

MINUTES OF MEETING

Company Number: 07743523



Meeting title: Meeting of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Executive Committee

Date and time: Tuesday 21st April 2020 at 2:00pm

Location: Microsoft Teams

Membership

'A' denotes absence

Mr Ken Daly (Chair)
Mr Nigel Stevenson
A Mr Tim Harding
Ms Sue Dryden (Vice Chair)
A Fr Michael O'Donoghue
Mrs Susan Munro
Mrs Anne Recchia

In attendance

Mr James McGeachie (CEO)
Mr D Moore (Trust Finance Director)
A Mrs M Robson (Trust HR Director)
Mrs K Rich (Company Secretary)
Mrs V Scott (Clerk to the Executive Committee)

Action

AT/21/20

Opening prayer

The meeting opened with the Trust prayer led by Mr Daly.

AT/22/20

Approval of the 'alternative arrangements' for remote meetings

The Directors **RESOLVED** to agree to the arrangements which had been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

AT/23/20

Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence from Fr O'Donoghue who was unwell. Apologies were also received from Mr Harding, who was absent due to internet connection issues.

The Directors **RESOLVED** to consent to the absences.

AT/24/20

Correspondence

Mr McGeachie presented a letter from Eileen Milner at the ESFA which had been previously circulated to all Directors and read by them.

Mr McGeachie highlighted that with regard to Complaints, all parental complaints were currently on hold, however all Admissions and Safeguarding concerns would be dealt with.

The Directors **RESOLVED** that they had all read the letter and noted its contents.

AT/25/20

Conflicts of interests and business & pecuniary interests

Mr Stevenson declared that he is a Director at Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and Finance Director for the NCC pension scheme. There were no other declarations,

either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

AT/26/20

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th February 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th February 2020 having been circulated on Trust Governor, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising

The Directors **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes.

AT/27/20

Reports and Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings

➤ **Audit & Risk**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th March 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

➤ **Finance & Estates**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th March 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

AT/28/20

Briefing Paper from the Trust CEO

Mr Daly thanked Mr McGeachie for his very thorough paper, which had been previously circulated on Trust Governor. Mr McGeachie presented his report and thanked all staff in all Trust schools for their hard work during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Safeguarding Update (including SG Protocol).

What is the current provision for the well-being of vulnerable children within our schools?

How are we keeping our staff and children safe in school and at home?

What provision can be made for staff to raise concerns about a child?

The Directors asked the following questions:

Q. The Directors enquired which students comprised the second vulnerable group identified across the Trust to be supported alongside the DfE defined group .

A. Mr McGeachie advised that these were other children without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Social Worker. In order to ensure that these children were safeguarded, the Trust had widened their definitions of vulnerable children to include those identified by schools as requiring additional support.

Q. The Directors questioned how many students were in this group.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that schools had identified between 10-20 additional children who met the wider definition. Not all of these were attending school. The Trust had asked schools to maintain contact with these families. For those vulnerable children who fell within the Government definition, schools liaised directly with Social Workers and EHCP providers.

Q. The Directors asked how successful the implementation of the Free School Meals scheme had been.

A. Mr McGeachie reported that there had been a mixed response. Nottingham City had quickly provided a voucher. The Trust had ordered £15,000 of these as the Government scheme was not operational in the first 2 weeks of school closures. All eligible families had received the vouchers and also during the Easter break. The Trust and had now joined the Government scheme, which had been working well.

AT/29/20

Chaplaincy and Spirituality Update

What provision has been made to support pupils and staff spiritually during the period of school closure?

Mr McGeachie reported that the Chaplains had worked on preparing resources in advance of school closures. The Be Inspirational website was active across the Trust and was supported by the Nottingham Diocesan Catholic Youth Service (NDCYS), who also provided prayer resources via its website and YouTube channel.

The Directors commended the work on the Be Inspirational website and the motivating videos for students.

Mr McGeachie explained that access to these materials had been good.

Mr Daly asked Mr McGeachie to pass the Directors' thanks to all staff who had been involved.

AT/30/20

Finance Update

What is the current budget position 2019/20?

Key budget issues 2020/21

Update on building projects

Mr McGeachie explained that this would be covered in detail at the scheduled Audit and Finance Committee meetings.

CONFIDENTIAL - ITEM REDACTED

➤ Building Projects

Mr McGeachie explained that the ESFA had delayed the release of the School Condition Allocation funding to Multi-Academy Trusts and therefore the Trust would not be committing to its planned projects until confirmation was received that the funding would be released.

Q. The Directors enquired whether plans could be progressed at the Good Shepherd in view of COVID-19

A. Mr McGeachie advised that they could and that this was very positive news. Mr Moore advised that planning permission was awaited in order to commence work.

Q. The Directors questioned whether the Trust could commence works once planning permission was granted.

A. Mr Moore confirmed that they could.

Mr Stevenson advised that there had been some new Guidance on construction work, stating that where people can work safely projects can go ahead. Mr Daly added that the government were keen for school building projects to go ahead.

Q. The Directors asked whether the insurance work at The Becket was going ahead.

A. Mr Moore advised that a loss adjustor had been appointed and the Trust were

awaiting the outcome before any works could commence.

AT/31/20

Procurement

Mr Stevenson recommended that all references were collated well in advance.

Q. The Directors enquired whether sample menus were issued as part of the process.

A. Mr Moore advised that they did and explained that the contract had been issued on the ITT.

Q. The Directors questioned whether a contingency was in place for continued COVID-19.

A. Mr Moore advised that a provision had been included to request an extension in the case of continued COVID-19.

Q. The Directors enquired whether the Contracts Register was now live.

A. Mr Moore advised that it was. He explained that a Central Register was expected to be available shortly. Mr Baily and Mr Ottewell had worked on producing a central portal for this.

AT/32/20

Standards/Curriculum Update

How are staff ensuring that pupils have work to do at home?

What areas of good practice can be shared?

Are there any key issues which have needed addressing?

Q. The Directors asked whether lack of availability of iPads and other technology was hindering students' ability access to school work.

A. Mr McGeachie explained that some schools had provided technology for students, while some had produced paper packs. The government had just announced a scheme to provide technology to those students in vulnerable groups. The Trust had not experienced students who had not been able to access work. Schools had been excellent at contacting families where students had not accessed work. BBC Bitesize was also now widely available as a resource for students.

Q. The Directors enquired whether teachers could still give feedback to students.

A. Mr McGeachie explained that depending on the platform used, teachers could give students feedback. Google Classroom was a good platform for this. Some primary schools had successfully used Class Dojo as a means for parents to feedback to schools.

Q. The Directors queried whether schools could track students who were struggling to keep up.

A. Mr McGeachie explained this was currently a challenge; the Trust had asked that secondary years 10 and 12 were prioritised by teachers.

Q. The Directors asked what process was in place to ensure that GCSE and A level grades were consistent across the Trust.

A. Mr McGeachie explained that the Trust had worked on a process for all 4 secondary schools. Data would be use and would include mock results, NEA, tests and class work. Class teachers would then produce a "most likely" grade along with a "confidence indicator"; this would support the Ranking which had to be sent off to the exam boards. The Trust was maintaining a good statistical analysis to ensure fairness.

Q. The Directors enquired whether there was any cross-moderation between schools.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that with the deadline for submission approaching, Mr Maher was leading on this area. Cross moderation on GCSE and A Level mocks had taken place.

Q. The Directors queried if mock results were an adequate guide as some students performed much better by the final exams.

A. Mr McGeachie explained that schools would rely on teachers' knowledge of their own students. He advised that schools would be able to argue a case for exceptionally high results for a student.

Q. The Directors questioned whether there would be an Appeals process.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that there was an Appeals option where parents believed that a mistake had been made in the actual process of assessing the grade. However, as there may be Parental Appeals against grades awarded this could lead to additional Subject Access Requests for the Trust. The Government was offering the opportunity to take exams later in the year for those unhappy with awarded grades.

AT/33/20

HR Update

Are any vacancies/appointments expected in the next month?
Update on staff well-being (Central Team and Schools)

Mr McGeachie explained that at Christ the King school 3 Assistant Headteacher vacancies had been advertised. 8 candidates were short-listed. Interviews were yet to take place.

Q. The Directors enquired after the well-being of the Central Team.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that regular Teams meetings were in place; work levels were still high; the Trust had identified a possible 2 cases of COVID-19 in the Central Team. Both colleagues were now recovering.

Q. The Directors enquired whether there were any confirmed staff or pupil cases reported.

A. Mr McGeachie advised there had been none to date.

Q. The Directors queried whether staff mental health had been considered.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that staff rotas had ensured that the same staff were not always in schools. Headteachers well-being had also been considered and given importance. The Trust had advised Headteachers to be mindful of their own mental health at this time.

Q. The Directors asked if teachers fell in the keyworker COVID-19 testing group.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that no news had been received by the Trust yet. He was hopeful that this would change if a return to school date was issued.

Q. The Directors enquired who organised the keyworker COVID-19 tests.

JWM

A. Mr Stevenson advised that tests had been taken place at the Boots site in Beeston. Mr McGeachie **AGREED** to investigate further.

AT/32/20

Risk Register

Mr McGeachie presented the updated Risk Register and highlighted a new Coronavirus section added to the Register.

Q. The Directors queried how transition would be managed in view of current school closures.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that the Trust would try to organise days in secondary schools; he had asked secondary SENCOs to contact their counterparts in primary schools to identify students who may need more support in transition.

Q. The Directors enquired whether the Trust would follow the Hub Model of amalgamating students into one school location.

A. Mr McGeachie explained that there was less focus on this now. The Trust did have a Hub strategy in place if one was needed in the future.

AT/33/20

Legal & Regulatory

➤ **Meeting Protocol**

Mrs Rich explained that she would adapt the Protocol and circulate to LGBs. She drew the Directors' attention to Action Item 16 and requested whether the Board were happy to convene meetings at short notice for urgent decisions or whether they would prefer that the Chair and Vice Chair made decisions on behalf of the Board. Mr Daly explained that as virtual meetings were now in place, Directors could now convene a meeting at short notice in an emergency situation.

The Directors **RESOLVED to AGREE** that meetings/virtual meetings could be convened at short notice in emergency situations.

➤ **Gender Pay Gap Report**

Mrs Rich presented the Gender Pay Gap Report and confirmed that all male and female employees were paid equally on national pay scales.

AT/34/20

Other Matters

a) Calendar of Meetings 2019-20 and 2020-21

Mrs Rich reported that a draft schedule of meetings had been circulated with afternoon meetings to convene at 2:00pm; HR meetings would commence at 10am. All changes had been highlighted.

b) Secondary Admissions Numbers

Mrs Rich reported that all schools were full up to PAN. Appeals were expected and the Trust awaited a protocol from NRCDES to cover any appeals.

Mr McGeachie explained that Christ the King school had reported only 4 year 7 intake places had been allocated to non-first choice applicants, which was extremely positive.

There were some baptised Catholics still on waiting lists, who would be likely to appeal. Mrs Rich explained that appeal deadlines had been extended this year.

c) For Approval

➤ **Central Maintenance Team - Proposed Strategy & Structure**

Approved by the Finance & HR Committees.

The Directors

Resolved

To approve the Central Maintenance Team - Proposed Strategy & Structure

Q. The Directors enquired what the time-line owed be for this plan.

A. Mr McGeachie explained that the Trust would like to move ahead with recruiting to some roles for September start.

➤ **Cyber Security Audit Plan**

The Directors

Resolved

To approve the Cyber Security Audit Plan

d) Policies

Policies brought forward from Committees

From the Audit & Risk Committee:

- **Trust Health & Safety Policy 2020 (includes highlighted changes)**

From the Finance & Estate Committee:

- **Staff Expenses and Overseas Travel Policy 2020**
➤ **Estates Policy 2020**

The Directors

Resolved

To agree all the 3 policies above.

For information only:

- **Director Privacy Notice**
➤ **LGB Privacy Notice**
➤ **Visitor Privacy Notice**

The Directors

Resolved

To agree the 3 Privacy Notices above.

Q. The Directors queried whether schools would be open over the Summer holidays.

A. Mr McGeachie advised that the Education Secretary had indicated that this would not be the case.

Mr McGeachie thanked the Directors for their support and encouragement.

Mr Daly thanked Trust and all in schools for their hard work and commitment.

AT/35/20

Date of Next Meeting

- **Wednesday 20th May 2020 (rescheduled from Thursday 21st May)**

AT/36/20

Determination of confidentiality of business

The Committee considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed confidential. It was agreed that no items were confidential.

AT/37/20

Closing Prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer led by Mr Daly.

The meeting closed at 3.20pm

Signed:.....(Chair)

Date:.....