

**HODGSON ACADEMY (02502)**

**Governors Meeting**

**ACTION**

Minutes of the meeting of the full governing body held via zoom on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 4.30pm.

**Present:**

**Mrs N Galloway (Chair)**  
**Mrs H Benwell**  
**Mr C Feeney**  
**Mrs J Harvey**  
**Mr C Jackson**  
**Mr I Lindsay**  
**Mr C McConnachie**  
**Mrs A Preston**  
**Mr T Rimmer**  
**Mrs J Vila**  
**Mr A Walker**  
**Mr I Siddall (Headteacher)**

**Also Present:**

**Mrs E Wallace (Clerk to Governors)**  
**Mr P Marsden (Observer – Deputy Headteacher)**  
**Mr M Pickles (Observer – Finance Director)**

**Apologies:**

Apologies were received and accepted for Mrs S Benson

The meeting was conducted via the Zoom platform. The Chair welcomed participants to the meeting and asked all to note the following guidance which had been issued with the agenda

The Department for Education ‘urges governing boards to be pragmatic in what they cover in meetings during this time, and to be proportionate in the decisions that they are planning to take’. They expect governors to focus on ‘urgent, time-bound decisions’ and understand boards will want to ‘defer non-urgent decisions/agenda items until future meetings’.

The National Governance Association (NGA) has advised that paperwork be scaled back and verbal updates be provided wherever possible during this time.

**20.13 Governing body matters**

**a) Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest regarding the agenda items.

**b) Membership of the Governing body**

Due to the resignation of a Parent Governor and subsequent election being unsuccessful a further election is planned for the new academic year. This would enable the new cohort of Year 7 parents to take part.

#### **20.14 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020, having been circulated, were approved. They will be signed by the chair following the cessation of the guidelines currently in place.

#### **20.15 Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting**

The minutes of the Audit committee meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 having been circulated, were noted by the governing body.

#### **20.16 Chair's Update**

The Chair updated governors on a number of decisions taken since lockdown.

- Performance management for teaching staff would allow for automatic progression to the next available point on their pay scale in September 2020 unless capability issues were in evidence
- The Directors of English, Maths and Science would be transferred to a fixed point on the leadership Pay Scale (L11) on 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2020 to reflect the 'permanent' continuation of their role. This point on the scale ensured there would be no reduction in salary from their current arrangements.

The Chair asked for governor approval, that any critical decisions including the decisions relating to the re-opening of the school were delegated to herself, Mrs Benwell as Vice Chair, Mr Siddall and Mr Pickles as Finance Director.

**A Governor asked** whether such decisions would be reported at further meetings.

The Chair confirmed that all decisions made will be shared at further meetings

Governors agreed that such decisions need to be made in a time critical manner and it would be difficult to gather all Governors together.

Governors agreed to the Chair's proposal.

**A Governor shared** information from the DfE recommending Governing bodies to have a Co-Vice chair for 6 months during the pandemic. The Chair agreed to look further into this matter.

Mrs Galloway

#### **20.17 Headteacher's School Closure update**

Mr Siddall explained he was still awaiting official guidance from the Government regarding re-opening the school.

He advised that he is working on a partial reopening plan for a phased return for Year 10 in a safe manner.

The way the plan moves forward ultimately rests with the Governing body for approval, arrangements for which have been agreed. He explained that the guidance from the Government would determine whether the partial reopening goes ahead and if so, in what form. He confirmed he was proceeding cautiously and the Academy would comply with all guidance.

Mr Siddall also stated that he had conducted a formal survey with staff to inform him of their current situation with regards to capacity to work. As well as this, he had also given students and parents the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have. He explained the quantity and quality of the responses to these surveys were very pleasing.

Mr Siddall invited questions.

**A Governor expressed** their concerns with social distancing in young people. He continued to ask how social distancing would work regarding the school bus service and what economic effect this would have on the Academy's budget.

Mr Siddall discussed that students would receive training in what social distancing looks like. He continued that the Academy was still awaiting updates from the bus service.

Mr Pickles continued the discussion; he stated the buses ran in the early part of the lockdown but were no longer running at present. He explained that buses would hold considerably less students on each bus and the buses would potentially perform multiple runs. He explained that while economics was an aspect for LCC with regards to school buses, safety is the overriding factor and guidance would be issued in due course.

**A Governor asked** whether buses were running solely for Key Workers children.

Mr Pickles explained that this might be the case across the County, it is not currently in place at Hodgson. This would be re-visited if demand was such.

The Chair expressed her thanks on behalf of the governing board to all staff for their continued hard work and support with the students.

**A Governor asked** whether the Academy was moving towards didactic teaching.

Mr Siddall explained that the Academy was looking at a platform to facilitate this. He explained that it would benefit students to have feedback.

The Chair explained that there are stringent guidelines regarding live teaching and recordings from staff homes.

Mr Marsden discussed the feedback from parents regarding students learning at home.

**A Governor expressed** that if the Academy does not return in September online teaching would need to be operational.

Mr Siddall agreed that a platform would be looked into and that he would like to bring all students in on a staggered basis for some in class learning but government guidelines would have to be followed.

**A Governor asked** about transition days for Year 6.

Mr Siddall explained that guidance issued to Primary schools from the Government specifically rules out primary students visiting secondary schools. Consideration is being given to how the transition process will take place.

**20.18 Safeguarding Policy Update  
Supporting Pupils with Medical Condition Policy**

The Safeguarding policy update had been circulated and was approved by governors subject to a number of minor amendments being made including:-

The Chair's training details to be updated

The contact details of the councils LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) to be updated

**A Governor asked** whether financial neglect should be included in the policy

Mr Pickles will investigate this matter

Mr Pickles

The Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy having been circulated was approved by the governing body as presented

**20.19 Y11 GCSE update**

Mr Marsden referred to a document that had been issued to governors prior to the meeting. He explained that all subjects had produced grades and rank orders and they will perform their internal moderation which will then be submitted to exam boards for their own standardization to ensure that results nationally reflect grades that would have normally been obtained.

Mr Marsden invited questions.

A governor asked whether this was the standard process.

Mr Marsden explained that there are various tools available to all schools and academies to assist in the grading. He continued to explain that exam boards will look at all subjects individually and the impact of any changes to one subject would not impact on other subjects.

**A Governor asked** about grading queries.

Mr Marsden explained schools are not allowed to discuss grades with parents or students and the process for appealing as to received grades hasn't been made clear yet. He continued to explain that the grades given by the academy would not necessarily be the final grades the students will receive but support will be in place for any students affected by their outcomes.

**A Governor asked** how students will receive their exam results.

Mr Marsden explained that government guidance would determine how results are delivered. He discussed the possibility of results being given in school with social distancing in place or via online services.

**A Governor asked** about whether there are multiple factors being taken into account regarding grading as some students who may have performed poorly in their mocks, may have been revising considerably more for their GCSEs.

Mr Marsden responded, explaining that teaching staff will identify the most likely grade they would have achieved had they sat their exams as normal. He continued to explain that there would be multiple factors taken into account to decide their grades. He added it wouldn't be strictly data driven.

## **20.20 Finance and Building Update**

Mr Pickles referred to the documents that had been sent out prior to the Governors meeting.

He explained that the building works that were being planned for during the summer would not be delivered due to the current climate. Due to the lockdown income and expenditure patterns had been significantly impacted upon, but the net effect would be savings accrued due in part to building / ICT work being deferred to future years.

Mr Pickles shared a presentation to Governors detailing future financial scenarios and a budget for the new academic year.

This included plans for the improvement and upgrading of classrooms, the building of new classrooms and the redevelopment of the Learning Centre along with indicative costs. It was also noted that due to the current circumstances there would be the need for a recovery plan to be in place to support students following the lockdown.

Mr Siddall stated that all works planned would be brought to Governors for final approval. Governors agreed in principle to these proposals taking place.

Governors recognised the unprecedented circumstances that we were in and agreed to the budget proposals for 2020/21. Budget proposals for future years would be brought to governors at the appropriate time to aid longer term financial planning as would be required of us once further information and guidance was available.

**A Governor asked** whether any staff had been furloughed.

Mr Pickles stated that none of the staff had been furloughed and explained that this was not allowed as salaries are Government funded.

**A Governor expressed** concerns with the Academy suffering with austerity in the future.

Mr Pickles explained that the Academy has healthy reserves which provide a degree of comfort as well as allowing for investment in the school to continue. With sensible budgeting and a pragmatic approach, the Academy's finances can be protected as we move through uncertain times.

**A Governor asked** about essential maintenance during the summer.

Mr Pickles explained that any essential maintenance will still go ahead to ensure safety to buildings, students and staff.

#### **20.21 Confidentiality**

Governors agreed that no information be classed as confidential.

#### **20.22 Date and time of the next Governors Meeting.**

The Chair confirmed that the next Governors meeting will be held Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June at 4.30pm via zoom.