



Minutes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING OF PEGASUS ACADEMY TRUST

Friday, 13th of December 2019 at 1:30 pm

Community Room, Lower School Site, Cypress Primary School

Members		
Patricia Salami	Member	Present
Geraldine Vassell	Member	Present
Noreen Richardson	Member (new)	Present
Richard Hill	Member / Director	Present
Kevin Smith	Member / Director	Absent
Directors		
Gary Griffin	Director	Present
Ian Patterson	Director	Present
Nina Pogossova	Director	Present
Fiona Fearon	Director	Absent
Shelley Davies	Director	Present
Emma Whapham	Director (new)	Present
Jolyon Roberts	Executive Principal	Present
Lynne Sampson	Executive Principal	Present
Trust Staff		
Jo Ridge	Chief Financial Officer	Present

Clerked by:	Ciara Carroll
Supporting documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term dates options paper for BoD • Exec Principals report to directors Aut '19 • KPIs final • PAT Pay and Appraisal Policy • Risk Register • Minutes of Academy Councils: BINF, CYP, EPS, WHINF, WHJUN • BoD minutes 12.07.19 • Action Log Autumn 2019
Meeting closed at:	16:40

1. Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorum

No apologies for absence were received; FF was absent without apologies.

ACTION: Clerk to follow up with FF after the meeting (Item 094).

2. Declaration of conflict of interest and annual update to register of interests

There were no conflicts of interest declared and the annual update to the register of interests will take place following this meeting.

3. Strategy and future development of Trust

October half term holiday update

A report was circulated to directors in advance of the meeting; the CEO confirmed that all models in the report were legally compliant. Options 1 and 2 had been consulted upon and Option 3 had been derived from a suggestion made by a parent during the consultation process.

The CEO reported that the parental response had been mixed, almost evenly for and against, although the staff response had been heavily in favour of change. A selection of comments were included in the report for reference. Approximately 230 responses were received which the CEO felt was a good level of feedback. It was explained that when parents were happy with a proposal, they tended not to respond. The highest level of responses was from Cypress, which was expected as they are the most engaged parental body.

Option 2 (change to a two week half term holiday) was the option favoured by the majority of staff and parents; it was noted that the proposed changes have appeared to impact positively on staff and child sickness rates in schools that have already implemented this change and directors agreed that it would be interesting to review the levels of sickness in the winter term over the last three years and what impact this change could have.

Option 3 was suggested by a parent during the consultation and was recommended to to directors as it appears to be a viable alternative that would eliminate many of the concerns raised during the consultation. The proposal was a half term that lasts 1 week and 2 days and breaking up for Christmas 3 days earlier than normal.

Directors discussed whether to consult again on the third option but following their decision on which option to select, agreed that it would be better to publish the paper online and point people towards it for their information. Directors briefly touched on the practical application of this change, noting that parents had complained about the cost and availability of childcare out of the normal half term holiday dates. It was agreed that it would not be appropriate for the school to provide child care during this time as this would reduce funds available to spend on education.

It was suggested that Autumn 2020 be considered a trial run and the board would then confirm whether the change was to be made permanent during the summer term of 2021 for the following autumn term.

RESOLUTION: The directors agreed that the Trust should launch a trial of the longer autumn half term holiday to take place during the Autumn 2020 term.

4. Executive Principals report

Cypress Inspection

It was noted that the Cypress OFSTED inspection report was published today and the outcome was 'Good' which was welcomed at the school. However, the Trust had submitted a complaint to OFSTED about the capability of two of the inspectors. The Executive Principal described some of the occurrences that had led them to submit the complaint and highlighted the fact that the verbal post-inspection feedback to MACs and directors had been inadequate.

The school had suggested 23 changes to be made to the first draft of the report and 18 had been accepted which was seen to be indicative of the quality issues experienced. The intention of the complaint is to bring these quality issues to light and obtain an apology to staff who were considerably stressed by the way the inspection was conducted.

The report had been positive and reflective of the significant improvement made at the school. A letter will be sent out to parents with the inspection outcome.

Staff development and training

It was explained that the Staff Development team has been enhanced this year and their focus is to train middle leaders to do "drop in and coach" sessions, where they do an observation of a lesson and followed by a five minute feedback session.

A director asked how staff felt about this change in policy and it was explained that some like it and others do not. Directors stressed that it was important that these sessions were not being conducted by the teacher's line manager as they were not considered part of teachers' performance management.

Assistant Heads

The Executive Principals explained that they would like to formally introduce the role of Assistant Head of School. The role is midway between a Year Group Leader (YGL) and DHoS. The Assistant Head is not required to run the school in the absence of the Head but can do so, if they agree. The job description was presented to directors. A role has been created in the Trust on a temporary basis to fit a need but the post will be advertised in January as a permanent role. This change is required due to some leadership changes that are expected to take place in January.

Numbers on roll

Work needs to be done in Cypress Upper to understand why there is such a drop of numbers in their classes. Each class needs approximately 27 or 28 children in it to break even and currently there are an average of 25 children per class in Year 6. Over-capacity is an issue across the borough; it is hoped that the improved OFSTED rating will help reverse this fall in numbers.

Growth Strategy

The Vice Chair has compiled a SWOT analysis of the trust which he circulated in the meeting. The Trust would like to start growing and they believe they had the capacity to do so. They have been in contact with the RSC about being considered for academies that require a sponsor. It was acknowledged that this would be critical for the Trust as the falling roll is going to impact on finances in the near term. Any increases in funding are likely to be offset by increased costs as soon as they are received.

ACTION: Add Future opportunities to the next agenda (30-45 minutes) (Item 095).

A director highlighted the fact that the DfE/RSC now feel that it is necessary to have 20 schools in order to make a trust financially viable. The Executive Principals did not feel that having a trust this size would fit with PAT's moral purpose and the large size would prevent their model from working successfully.

The central team may need to be increased in the near future if the Trust does take on a new school. It was noted that the cost of the central team is high but a number of costs are paid centrally in PAT that are borne by the schools in other trusts.

ACTION: Prepare a Future Options paper for the next meeting (Item 096).

NR left at 3:00 pm.

Octavo and training options

One of the directors had prepared information on training options for MACs and directors and circulated it at the meeting. It was a very comprehensive piece of information and was based on the NGA's recommended training programme. It was agreed that it could look a little daunting, particularly to new recruits and there was a concern that giving this information out on induction could cause some people to decline to take up a MAC/director position as they may struggle to commit to that many hours to an unpaid role.

However the training sessions are divided into essential and desirable which would make narrowing down requirements easier and this could be further tailored through use of a skills audit completed by all current and prospective MACs and directors.

While discussing the options that Octavo provide, the change in ownership of the company was explained. It was noted that the Trust has decided to move to an ad-hoc basis for purchase of services. This means that a training course will cost £107 per person per course.

A recommendation was made to buy into the NGA's training offer and to circulate the list of training options to MACs and directors. Directors agreed that it would be necessary to carefully consider the message that was circulated with the training options. It was also discussed how helpful it can be to attend a training session with other people and it was decided to consider whether Octavo could potentially offer a bespoke Trust-wide training session.

ACTION: Review governance induction pack and training materials (Item 097).

NQTs

Directors queried how the NQTs have settled and how they were being supported on an on-going basis. It was explained that there are eight NQTs and there was one member of the Staff Development Team who worked with them for two days a week. They are all working well at this point and everyone is expected to complete their training.

Pupil Outcomes

Cypress: Good results, could be improved further.

WHJUN: Good results, can be increased however this particular cohort is challenging and they are under continuous review. The Year 6 team is doing an excellent job.

EPS: Good results, tend to see accelerated progress in the Spring term.

5. Finance update and approval of Pay Policy 2019

The CEO explained that the majority of the policy has not changed and it is mainly the figures that have been updated. It was noted that an inflationary rise of 2.75% was given for 2019-20 and that an M6 teacher with successful performance management over a period of six years could be earning more than £40K per year.

Following a question from a director, it was explained that the Trust could not justify the cost of Teach First students as they had to be out of class for half of their working time, resulting in an unsustainable supply cost.

Directors also asked why teachers had to nominate themselves to move to UPS and it was explained that they had to provide evidence of their impact on teaching, and the school in general, in order to justify to move to UPS and this was up to them to put this together. Teachers are reminded about this process at the start of the year.

RESOLUTION: The Pay Policy 2019-20 was approved by directors.

6. Risk Register review

The Register was updated, with a number of items added, including:

- Falling roll
- New Arovia software
- Business continuity plans

Brexit will be added to the register, with particular focus on teachers' employment and provision of school meals. The DfE has provided advice on how to mitigate this risk to all schools.

Directors discussed the recommendation in the Academies Financial Handbook (AFH) that all schools should hold their own risk register in addition to that of the Trust but it was agreed that the Trust's register was sufficiently detailed.

7. Staffing update

Three teachers will be required to cover maternity leaves during the rest of the year. It was confirmed that all classes across the Trust will have a teacher for January 2020.

8. Governance update

It was noted that BINF needed new parent MACs.

9. Facilities update

The boiler work has been completed across both sites at Cypress.

It was confirmed that a number of CIF bids have been submitted; the work will only go ahead if the bids are successful.

The finance committee signed off replacement of playground equipment for Whitehorse.

10. Academy Councils

The Summer 1 academy council minutes were received.

11. Board membership changes

Board membership changes were approved at the AGM; directors welcomed Emma Whapham as a new director.

12. Minutes of the previous meeting (26th of April and 12th of July 2019)

RESOLUTION: The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they constituted a true and accurate reflection of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

13. Matters arising not discussed elsewhere and Action Log

Items 077 and 089 to 093 are completed and closed on the action log.

14. Correspondence to the Chair

The Chair is dealing with a complaint at present; it has now been classed as vexatious.

15. Confidential items

There were no confidential items discussed.

16. Any other business (notified to Chair/Clerk in advance)

The directors asked the executive principals to list the three items they were most proud of from this year and their targets for next year; it was agreed that these would come from the AIP.

17. Meeting dates for 2019-20:

- 24th of April 2020
- 17th of July 2020 (last day of term) – suggested to change to the 10th of July.

Suggested dates for 2020-21:

- October 2020
- December 2020
- April 2021
- July 2021

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's signature	<i>R. H. Hill</i>
Chair's name	<i>R. H. Hill</i>
Date	<i>17/07/2020</i>