



Minutes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING OF PEGASUS ACADEMY TRUST

Friday 22nd October 2021 at 13.30pm

Virtual meeting (Google Meet)

Directors		
Richard Hill	Director	Present
Ian Patterson	Director	Present
Gary Griffin	Director	Present
Nina Pogossova	Director	Present
Fiona Fearon	Director	Present
Shelley Davies	Director	Present
Emma Whapham	Director	Present
Xavier Villers	Director	Present
Sasha Henry-Crawford	Director	Present
Jolyon Roberts	Executive Principal	Present
Lynne Sampson	Executive Principal	Present
Trust Staff		
Jo Ridge	Chief Financial Officer	Present
Clerked by:		Fay Fonteyn
Supporting documents:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda 22nd October 2021 • Minutes 16th July 2021 • Action Log • Executive Principals' Report Autumn 2021 • PAT Code of Conduct for Directors & MACs • PAT Directors & MACs allowance policy • PAT Pecuniary Interest Explanation • Pecuniary Interest form • Pegasus Academy Trust Resilience Plan • Academy Improvement Plan (AIP)
Meeting closed at:		TIME 15:40

1. Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorum

There were no apologies. The meeting was declared as quorate.

2. Annual confirmation of conflict of interest and changes to register of interests. Agreement to Code of Conduct

RH advised that signed copies must be sent to the CFO. There are outstanding forms for directors to submit. A gentle reminder will be sent after half term

3. Minutes of the previous meeting (16th of July 2021)

There were no declarations in relation to the agenda. RH stated that the confidential minutes are mentioned but has not seen them. LS then emailed the confidential minutes to RH.

As per the confidential minutes JRo pointed out a typo on page 3 which will need to be amended

LS referred to a teaching assistant who had been on long term sick leave and had discussions with the union; has now left. The Anti Racism Policy was referred to, which relates to a recent but rare instance with one staff member and pupil.

RESOLUTION: Directors agreed that the minutes represented a true and accurate picture of the meeting.

ACTION: The typo on page 3 to be amended

4. Matters arising not discussed elsewhere and Action Log

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Action Log

Item 104: Ongoing- complete

Item 110: Ongoing (should be ready for September)- web designs to be done, discharge this item?

Item 113: Ongoing-

Item 120: Complete

Item 121: Complete

Item 122: Complete

Item 123: Complete- JRo to set up an additional meeting. EW has completed for Thornton Heath. RH to process NGA Membership

Item 124: Complete

Item 125: Complete

Item 126: Complete

IP referred to 'PLACE TO BE'

JRo explained that there is enough budget to accommodate more staff but that finding the right people for posts has been difficult. There is movement in Leadership at Ecclesbourne School.

JRo discussed that finding the right person who can engage positively with the children and their learning has been rather difficult.

IP highlighted the principle recruiting the right people.

LS agreed that it is difficult to find support staff of good calibre. JRo noted that some teaching assistants have retired and some due to retire soon; teaching assistants with this work ethic are hard to replace and it has proven difficult to find people with the commitment required in this role.

5. Executive Principals' report including:

COVID update.

Staffing update.

(Items not covered on agenda elsewhere)

The Executive Principals' Report was taken as read. Further discussion and explanation then took place around each section of the report as follows:

Performance

LS updated the Board on the recent Ofsted inspection of Whitehorse and thanked SD for her help and support. LS explained how tough this had been.

A positive finding of the inspection referred to the staff and pupils across the school. There is the national baseline to contend with for reception teachers which has proved to be time consuming.

LS referred to a change in teaching phonics across the Trust using a validated scheme called Little Wandle. Adherence to the scheme has changed some of our practice which the inspection team looked at in great detail. The scheme hasn't been embedded yet across all schools.

LS explained that one of the challenges within the Trust is that pupils are given appropriate text for their stage of development. Sourcing all the books which are needed could cost up to £60,000.

The Trust had purchased a new IT scheme 'Purple Mash'. Initial training had been somewhat overwhelming but staff recognised that it would be an excellent and exciting resource to use.

RH asked what data the inspector had used to support her judgments. JRo explained that the inspector was defensive when asked to clarify a comment about children at WHI working at lower levels compared to others in London schools.

XV asked if we could challenge this; or should we on this occasion take the comment as received wisdom from the inspector.

It was noted that although the inspector had not been very sensitive she had some valid points.

LS noted that we could challenge the inspector's feedback and had tried to do so during the inspection. LS had previously complained and subsequently appealed following the inspection at Cypress but the judgments were not changed.

A draft report will be published after half term. the school's leadership will be able to correct any factual inaccuracies before the final report is published.

SD confirmed that although the inspector was challenging, she did say that she was determined to make the report as positive as she could to reflect the very many good

areas of practice.

SHC asked about report recommendations for advice and specific timeframes for improvements to be made.

LS confirmed that no follow up visits would be made before the school was reinspected in approximately 30 months.

There was no necessity for an action plan to be produced but LS explained staff at WHI were keen to work on the suggested areas for improvement and also share the implications with colleagues at other schools in the Trust.

SHC asked how does it look in terms of inspections coming up? LS explained that all schools apart from Cypress are in frame for inspection

RH asked how many inspections the inspector had carried out this year. LS explained that we do not have this information.

JRo expressed his disappointment and annoyance about the requirements and narrow remit of the new Ofsted framework. He explained that previously inspections have been based on results and now it appears that judgments are made on what is seen on the day. There seems to be limiting judgements, which can really hinder a school with phonics and reading being one area where a poor judgement automatically means a school can be rated at best 'requires improvement'.

JRo advised that after half term we need to come back with a plan to address the points for action detailed in the report. He suggested that a subcommittee of directors should review this plan and then monitor its implementation. Some areas will need further investigation. It was noted that the headline of the report will be disappointing.

GG explained that we may need to change policies regarding phonics, and questioned how many inspectors conducted the visit. LS advised that there are things we can learn and mentioned lessons about reading, provision of special needs and the individual plans and monitoring of books.

NP addressed LS and expressed her understanding and sympathised with the fact that we have been operating under difficult circumstances. NP said she felt that this would now be a "work in progress" with focus on the provision of special needs.

SHC stated that we should continue as a board to be supportive and positive.

Covid update

LS explained to the board that the inspector did not seem to take the impact of Covid into consideration, though she did praise the support that has been provided to students during the pandemic.

School Improvement

Pupil Progress meetings, SATS and phonic screenings were discussed

Governance

Previous chairs of Academy Councils have been re-elected for the current academic year.

A session on the roles of directors and MACs, particularly during an Ofsted inspection, is to take place on Friday 12th November between 10am-12pm at Whitehorse main site.

IP confirmed that he will be attending.

People and Leadership

It was noted that a teacher has resigned at Beulah, and that the vacancy needed to be filled. We have one newly qualified teachers (now called Early Career Teachers) at Beulah as well as graduate teachers who have almost qualified and have mentors in place to support them.

One of the deputies at Ecclesbourne has resigned from her leadership post and is returning to class teaching. The Head of School is suggesting there should be one deputy and a full time inclusion manager.

Financial stability

No result of the audit outcome as yet.

The CFO stated no major issues had emerged. The completion and monitoring of pecuniary interests and an attendance register at meetings needed to be in place. It was noted that there was additional spend on lunch times due to bubbles which had to be set up during the pandemic. The CFO confirmed that we are back on course now and saving some money.

JRo said he was concerned about energy prices. JRo and the CFO had had a discussion with a broker and had recently secured a good deal with an energy company, which means in the short term the Trust should not be affected by increases in gas and electricity prices.

IP commented about not having enough children to fill Cypress, Ecclesbourne and Whitehorse. JRo confirmed that numbers are stabilising.

The numbers of children attending our nurseries had increased since last year when we were 40/50 children down.

There are not enough pupils to fill the schools in Croydon and more widely in London.

6. Finance update including early EOY indications pre audit

IP discussed the management accounts with the board. The finances of the Trust are in a strong position. Deprecations and pension contributions are part of the management accounts.

IP discussed the strong financial position of the Trust - with incomes being higher - due to covid, early years funding etc. Money is being spent on capital items with three major works including roofs and boiler at Cypress, Cypress office and Whitehorse playground resurfacing. Due to safeguarding issues on entry to the school, the job to relocate the office at Cypress job was essential.

Play equipment and toilet refurbishments had also been needed, with the majority of expenditure taking place during the prior year.
IP explained that the Trust has significant surpluses with Ecclesbourne making the biggest contribution to these.

An area mentioned as part of the budget forecast is employers National Insurance contributions, which will rise by 1.2% with effect from April 2022.
IP discussed the need for books which is around £30,000. A good place to be spending money but may affect surplus position.
The CFO mentioned NI and backdated pay rise for teaching assistants.
IP said in summary that we are in a strong financial position

IP left the meeting at 15:06pm

7. Governance update

RH said that the academy councils are well led and managed.
A new MAC has been appointed at Whitehorse Infants.
RH explained that we need to make sure we have enough members, this needs to be chased up, more support may be required to Governance.
No change to board membership.

8. Facilities and CIF update (not mentioned at [5] above)

JRo discussed new boilers that have been grant funded. There are works being carried out on Cypress upper school site, including the library which is currently under construction.
There is a roofing problem at Whitehorse which will cost around £40,000. The Trust has the finances for this job to done, as financially we are in a very healthy position.
We have spent £35,000 on private speech therapy, which is taking place in all of the schools.
Money to be spent on literacy and phonics re Ofsted inspection.
SHC mentioned IT.
JRo confirmed that IT is in a good position and that a large number of chrome books have been given to pupils. Chrome books are a third of the price of a PC

9. Board membership changes

No changes

10. Confirmation of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 - training and assurance

Directors were informed that all Trust staff have received safeguarding and child protection training and copies of the revised "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Directors to read sections 1 and 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education document.

11. Approval of resilience plan

LS thanked SHC for her help with the plan. She will now work with SHC to produce a finalised version.

LS spoke about the next meeting potentially taking place at a conference room. XV expressed his interest in a face-to-face meeting, XV has only met a few of the members in person. JRo suggested perhaps a location for all to get to easily may be London Bridge with hybrid solutions still being an option. RH suggested Cypress as being more cost effective

ACTION: amendment to resilience plan required from LS

12. Approval of Directors and MACs Allowance Policy

JRo presented a revised Allowance Policy for Directors and MACs. The board noted that the Trust's business office was now located at Cypress Upper School and not Whitehorse Junior School. With this change the policy was approved. The directors thanked JRo for his work on this policy.

RESOLUTION: The board approved the revised Allowance Policy

13. Proposal for Trust Mini Bus

JRo discussed the proposal for a minibus. Previously the Trust had a minibus, and it was very useful for sports days/trips and to promote Pegasus within the local community.

There had been the opportunity to purchase the previously leased minibus at the end of its three year lease, with just 6,000 miles on the clock but unfortunately at the time the Trust could not afford the £18,000 cost.

Some parents are nervous about us using public transport and so may prefer their children travel by minibus.

We would be looking to purchase a second-hand minibus at a cost of £16,000 - £20,000.

The CFO said that academy trust, as a charity, are exempt from the congestion charge and the ULEZ charge.

RESOLUTION: The board approved and authorised a mini bus, with a spend of up to £20,000

14. Correspondence to the Chair

No correspondence to the chair

15. Confirmation of confidential items

JRo and the CFO have been overlooking compliance.
 SHC and XV have provided their bio and picture for the webpage, the other directors need to submit theirs before next meeting to ensure the website is compliant.

LS asked RH and XV to conduct the appraisal of the executive principals, a third person is needed

**ACTION: Members need to submit a bio/picture for the webpage.
 More information is needed for webpage**

16. Any other business (notified to Chair/Clerk in advance) including items raised for attn. of Directors by MACs

ACTION: Meeting to be set up to discuss the recent Ofsted inspection, dates to be secured before end of the autumn term. The meeting to take place online

17. Meeting dates for 2020/1

26-Nov Fri	13:30	Finance Committee
03-Dec Fri	10:30	Performance Appraisal &
	12:30	Remuneration Committee
10-Dec Fri	12:30	AGM & Board of Directors
28-Jan Fri	13:30	Finance Committee
25-Mar Fri	13:30	Finance Committee
22-Apr Fri	13:30	Board of Directors
05-May Thu	09:00	MAC's/Director's Day
01-Jul Fri	13:30	Finance Committee
15-Jul Fri	13:30	Board of Directors

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's signature	
Chair's name	
Date	