



# Minutes

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING OF PEGASUS ACADEMY TRUST

Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2020 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	Apologies
Jolyon Roberts	Executive Principal	Present
Lynne Sampson	Executive Principal	Present
Trust Staff		
Jo Ridge	Chief Financial Officer	Present

<b>Clerked by:</b>	Katie Bird
<b>Supporting documents:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PAT BoD Agenda</li><li>• PAT Code of Conduct</li><li>• PAT Pecuniary Interest</li><li>• PAT BoD Minutes 17.07.20</li><li>• BoD Action Log</li><li>• Executive Principals' report to directors Autumn 2020</li><li>• KCSIE Part 1 2020</li></ul>
<b>Meeting closed at:</b>	15.30pm

### 1. Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorum

Apologies for absence were received from Emma Whapham.

## 2. Annual confirmation of conflict of interest and changes to register of interests

The Chair requested that directors complete their annual confirmation of conflict of interest and sign the Code of Conduct, both should be sent to Ciara Carroll.

**ACTION: Complete annual confirmation of conflict of interests and sign Code of Conduct and send to CC (Item 100)**

## 3. Minutes of the previous meeting (17th of July 2020)

RESOLUTION: It was agreed that the minutes as presented above represented a true and accurate picture of the meeting.

**ACTION: Copies of minutes to be printed and signed by the Chair when possible (Item 101)**

## 4. Matters arising not discussed elsewhere and Action Log

### Matters arising

Directors heard an update on the work taking place at Cypress Primary School to improve the access to the Year 4 classrooms. The entrance has been made wider than originally planned to allow for social distancing and handrails will be added for safety due to a steeper than anticipated gradient. This entrance will reduce footfall at the main entrance.

[A director queried whether the additional work would impact the cost and exceed the planned £12k budget.](#) It was explained the handrails would take the work above budget.

[A director asked what progress was being made with the school office.](#) It is anticipated that the work would commence during half term. This would include steps from the playground up to the new business office where the Trust central staff would be relocating. The work to build the steps is likely to cost in the region of £30k. The remaining work in the office would cost approximately £100k.

**ACTION: JR to confirm final cost for office work. (Item 102)**

Directors heard that there was a delay with the delivery of the Chromebooks which are on order for Year 3 PPG children. This was due to a large number of Chromebooks being prioritised for the USA before other countries.

[A director questioned whether there were other devices in school that could be used whilst the delivery was awaited.](#) It was explained that there are already a number of devices in school. In case of a lockdown there are approximately 30 devices per school to lend to pupils who need them.

### Action log

**Item 097:** RH and CC to complete

**Item 098:** Complete

**Item 03:** RH to investigate. The audit will be taking place for two weeks from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October.

## 5. Executive Principals report (items not covered on agenda elsewhere)

### Ofsted

Ofsted will be resuming their normal inspection schedule in January 2021. Until then any visit made to the school would be in a helpful capacity and would include looking at a blended learning approach and preparation for another lockdown. None of the schools in the Trust have received a visit to date.

Schools will, in part, be inspected on how well they meet equalities legislation with particular regard to “protected characteristics” and a school must be seen to be teaching on these topics. Consideration is being given to how to consult parents on this topic. Any changes to the curriculum would be in place by January 2021.

A director asked whether the Ofsted visits were taking place in person. It was confirmed that the visits are taking place in person.

A director questioned whether blended learning would be a legal requirement and it was confirmed that it would be. LS reported that despite the high demands on the schools the Trust is confident about the blended learning approach and had received a high number of ‘hits’ on the online learning platform during lockdown, including it is believed from children who do not attend schools in the Trust.

### Attendance

Attendance throughout the Trust continues to be good at 95%. Feedback from parents is positive.

A meeting took place with the School Improvement Partner who was complimentary about how the schools within the Trust are operating. All staff have received updated training on KCSIE.

### Covid-19 Update

It was highlighted that there has been one positive case of Covid-19 at Whitehorse Manor in a member of staff who works in the Breakfast Club. Six children self-isolated as a result, none of these children developed symptoms and are now back in school. A two-year old at Beulah nursery also tested positive for Covid-19. All children and staff were sent home and a deep clean of the premises was organised. All children have completed self- isolation and are now back in the nursery.

Directors heard that the Trust is well prepared in case of a ‘circuit breaker’ lockdown. Teachers are better prepared than they were in March and are more confident delivering online presentations. Children are being prepared to ensure that they are able to attend. Attendance expectations are high and children who do not attend online lessons will be called afterwards. Consideration will be given to the mental health of both staff and children.

A director asked whether any staff members had needed to isolate. It was explained that so far only one staff member at Whitehorse Junior School had needed to do so.

A director questioned how the children who did not attend the virtual class meetings during lockdown were doing now that they had returned to school. LS explained that the children are pleased to be back at school and fortunately there do not seem to be large gaps in in expected levels of progress in maths and reading. However, there are slightly larger gaps in

writing. The 'Reconnection Curriculum' has helped support these children and will reduce gaps in learning. There are some behavioural issues with a small number of children, but this is to be expected after several months at home.

A director asked how the 'catch up funding' would be used to support these children. There are discussions taking place about how best to support the children and maximise the learning, consideration is being given to one to one tutoring or larger groups.

A director asked what the home learning package looked like for the younger pupils during lockdown. It was explained that the work that was sent out was a lot more practical and included activities such as painting and treasure hunts. Blogs were posted on the online learning programme by the Early Years Lead. The schools understood the pressures that parents were under working from home and having young children to look after.

A director questioned whether all the children with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) had returned to the school. It was confirmed that all of them had returned.

Directors questioned whether there would be a return to standardised testing this academic year. It was explained that this is not clear at the moment. The year is likely to be fragmented for some children with periods of isolation and missed learning.

A director asked whether the Executive Principals expected the results to fall this year. JR explained that it is difficult to say what may happen but, if he were pressed to give make a prediction, that it seemed likely there would be some dip in results. However, this would be a nationwide problem with all schools in the same position.

A director asked what the Trust would be doing to support the children in 'catching up'. JR explained that the 'reconnection curriculum' is in place to support the children and would be bolstered with the professional approach of the schools to meet the needs of all of the pupils. It is important to remember that each child's experience of lockdown and the months of school closure will have been different. The Trust is keen to focus on moving forward and not focusing on what has been lost. He reminded Directors that research cited in the reconnection plan from Professor John Hattie shows that school disruption following a natural disaster, e.g. New Zealand earthquake, has had almost no impact on a child's long term educational outcomes.

A director asked whether additional hours in maths and English would benefit the children and it was explained that this would not be beneficial for the children as they need variety and artistic activities to provide a rounded education.

### Pupil Numbers

Directors heard that Beulah Nursery is full. However, there are spaces at both Whitehorse Manor and Ecclesbourne Primary. Due to a change in the waiting list system, Whitehorse Manor lost out on first preference children whose parents had to apply for a place again.

Pupil numbers in Cypress Primary are lower than we would like with approximately 20 to 22 children in each Year 6 class. Despite efforts to retain children at the school more children have left this year which seems to be due to families relocating in the years before their first child starts secondary education. Work will be undertaken to reduce mobility across the school. The current staffing structure will have to be reconsidered if children continue to leave.

### Capacity for growth

Directors heard that a school that had been anticipated to join the Trust had gone to another Trust.

Directors discussed other possible options for growth including schools further afield. It was noted that virtual planning was a success and opened up the possibility of widening the geographical area that the Trust operates in. The Trust is in pre-consultation regarding Virgo Fidelis Senior School and are considering other secondary schools.

LS and JR were thanked for their report.

## 6. COVID Update

This item is covered in item 05 above.

## 7. Finance update including early EOY indications pre audit

Directors heard that pre audit figures show that income was higher than budget by £151k due to higher than anticipated local authority funding, SEND funding and EYFS funding. Expenditure was £190k less than budget due to savings on catering costs, agency staff and other smaller expenditures including photocopying. Overall, the Trust has finished the year in a favourable position. There were differences between the schools' financial positions which would be discussed in detail at the Finance Committee.

A director asked when the audit would be completed. It was explained that this would take place in approximately two to three weeks time.

## 8. Staffing update

LS reported that there are currently three teachers looking for work within the Trust but no positions available.

A teacher is relocating to Leeds and interviews for her role are taking place next week.

There are currently eight Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) and some bright graduates who have teaching experience but do not have teaching status. The NQT support has been expanded and their training continues.

A director asked who is mentoring the trainees. Elizabeth Ellis and Pam Smythe are sharing the mentoring. Sharon Russell, Head of School Whitehorse Infants, recently observed an NQT and was impressed with the content and delivery of teaching.

A director questioned what was happening with the appointment of a Head of School at Cypress Upper. There is currently an internal advert with two deputies having expressed an interest in the role.

A director asked whether the deputies were experienced within the Trust and it was explained that they are both very experienced.

## 9. Governance update

The Chair reported that he had been successful in recruiting three co-opted MACs for Whitehorse Infants and Junior. There are currently two director vacancies. It is hoped that these positions would be filled ahead of the AGM in December.

FF updated directors on the Academy Council at Beulah Infants noting that recruitment of parent MACs had been challenging in the past. The Council is looking to appoint a teaching staff and non-teaching staff MAC.

#### **10. Facilities and CIF update**

Directors heard that the Trust had been unexpectedly successful in securing two CIF bids for fencing at Whitehorse manor and new roofs at Cypress Primary School in a new second round of funding, having been unsuccessful in the first.

It is possible that the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which provides grants for public sector bodies to fund energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation measures, may be able to provide funding for the replacement of boilers at Cypress Primary School and Beulah Infant School. In order to secure the funding the Trust must demonstrate an innovative idea such as a ground source heat pump.

#### **11. Board membership changes**

This item was covered under Item 09.

#### **12. Confirmation of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 - training and assurance**

The Chair reminded directors to read part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education and confirm to CC once completed.

**ACTION: Directors to read part one of KCSIE and confirm to CC. (Item 103)**

#### **13. Correspondence to the Chair**

There was no correspondence received.

#### **14. Confirmation of confidential Items**

There were no confidential items discussed.

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

There was no other business.

#### **16. Dates for 2020-21**

11-Dec Fri 13:30 Board of Directors & AGM  
23-Apr Fri 13:30 Board of Directors  
16-Jul Fri 13:30 Board of Directors

Strategy Meeting:

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 1.30 – 3.30pm.

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