

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST**

***held on Tuesday 12th July 2016***

***at The Lansdowne Club, London***

Directors Present: Ms L. Adams (Chair)

Mr J. Beswick Mr C. Bush

Mrs J. Cutchey Mr G. Hely Hutchinson

Mr M. Kerr Ms M. Lloyd

Mr G. Peile Mr S. Staite

Mrs M. Toft

Also Present: Mr D. Hilton (Head of Standards)

Mrs K. Jarvis (Clerk)

Mr C. Paskell (Director of Finance and Operations)

Mrs J. Steel (Head of Personnel)

Invited Guests: Mr J. Wing (Exec Head Burrowmoor & Neale-Wade)

**MINUTES**

**103. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Ms Adams opened the meeting by welcoming all present and introductions were made. Apologies where accepted from Mr Bateson.

Ms Adams, Mr Bush & Ms Lloyd declared an interest in Item 112, stating that they would withdraw from the meeting at this point.

**104. HEADTEACHER PRESENTATION**

A new template had been provided for Heads to complete to ensure consistency when reporting to the Board. Mr Wing, the Executive Headteacher, answered questions relating to the report, that had been provided by Mrs Anne McCarthy, Acting Head at Burrowmoor Primary School. Mr Wing also updated directors on the current position at Burrowmoor, including KS2 SATs results. Areas covered included:-

* A staffing review has resulted in a TA restructure, which will reduce the number of TAs specifically responding to actions in the post Ofsted action plan.
* Attendance figure of 95.8% is slightly low than the previous year. This is mainly due to illness and holidays and the school believes that the attendance will continue to improve due to actions taken to support pupils and parents.
* Persistent absence is above national trends at 7.7% and the expectation is that this figure will reduce
* 12.5 exclusion days is low for Fenland, the main area in which Burrowmoor is situated. Following a question from Mr Bush it was established that these relate to younger children. It was noted that external support from the County Council has been reduced resulting in an increase in social care issues
* The Free School Meal figure is higher than the national average at 32%
* There has been an increase in pupils who have English as an additional language
* Burrowmoor has 4 looked after pupils and 10 pupils on the child protection register.
* Pupil premium spending is being reviewed including the past use of some of this budget on school uniform for pupils in receipt of pupil premium. Mrs Lloyd suggested that school consider if there is a positive impact of purchasing uniform and Mr Wing assured the board that all areas were being reviewed
* Mrs Toft asked if governors challenge the head and senior staff. Mr Wing replied that this area has improved and that governors have a clearer view of their role
* Good Levels of Development are evident in the classroom. Basic changes are having an impact across early years.
* It is intended to introduce learning that reflects the SATs arrangements to give pupils more practice in testing generally but recognising the need to retain a broad and balanced curriculum. Last May a lack of fluency was noted in Maths and English – this has been improved by 15 mins focused work each day
* In response to an Ofsted concern, the leadership module has been restructured, with the removal of phase leaders, giving a clearer, flater module for responsibilities
* A confidential report from the Ofsted monitoring visit on 28th & 29th June has been received, the content of which must remain confidential at this point, however Mr Peile was able to report that children are making good progress and there is effective leadership.
* History, Geography and Science are subjects of concern, which will be addressed in the new term
* Mr Wing reported that initial SATS results are excellent and above national average. There is solid teaching in Year 6, backed by improvements across over the other year groups. Mr Hilton stated that this backs up the work completed over the last year.
* Ms Toft commented that there has been a huge improvement in one year. She asked if there is any data to show how pupils that generate pupil premium have progressed. Mr Wing replied that this is not available yet.
* Ms Lloyd asked why the carry forward has been reduced. Mr Wing explained that this is due to the cost of the interim headteacher

Mr Peile gave his personal thanks to Mr Wing. He informed directors that Mr Wing will be remaining as executive head for the Autumn Term, to assist in transition for the new headteacher. He informed directors that there are still some HR issues to address, and that Mrs Steel is involved.

**105. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 19th APRIL 2016**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2016 were accepted as a true record, with no technical corrections. There were no matters arising.

**106. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

***Finance & Audit Committee (019.04.16)***

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th April were accepted as a true record, with no matters arising.

***Remuneration & Personnel (19.04.16)***

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th April were accepted as a true record, with no matters arising.

**107. CHAIR’S ACTIONS**

Ms Adams confirmed that no Chair’s Actions had been agreed since the last meeting.

**108. LITTLEPORT SECONDARY & SPECIAL SCHOOL UPDATE**

Mr Peile asked directors to refer to his report, that had been previously circulated. He reported that two parents meetings had been held with Littleport primary schools (the key feeders into the new secondary school), and the feedback has been very positive. A website has been set-up for parents to register for updates. It was agreed that an advert should be placed in the local press to encourage parents of outlining villages to also register.

Ms Lloyd asked what guarantees were in place for the building work being finished on time. Mr Paskell responded by explaining the building programme, progress meetings, and utilities set up. Ms Lloyd also questioned whether now was the time to request additional eco resources are added to the plan (thus reducing costs in the long term). There is confidence in Morgan Sindall (builders), who are currently ‘on-track’ but contingency plans have been made for the unlikely event of a delayed opening. Mr Paskell agreed to look into eco schemes with the local authority.

Mr Peile stated that some adjustments to the plans are already needed, for example a lift is needed within the special school site

Ms Lloyd asked when staff will be employed. Mr Peile explained that the Head of School and Site Manager will be employed for January 2017, with other staff being sought for a September 2017 start.

Mr Peile confirmed that Mr Bush has agreed to chair a shadow governing body for the first year.

Directors were asked to approve the names of the two new schools. **Following discussion, these were agreed as Highfield Littleport Academy and Littleport & East Cambs Academy**. It was further agreed that the special school at Ely should change its name to Highfield Ely Academy.

Directors were also asked to approve the appointments of Mr Jason Wing as Executive Principal of LECA and NWA, and Mr Simon Bainbridge (current head of Highfield Special School) as Executive Principal of HLA and HEA. Both appointments to commence January 2017. The arrangements for the special school will apply after Highfield Ely join the Trust in September.

Directors were asked to devolve responsibility for admission arrangements to Mr Peile and Ms Adams so that statutory deadlines could be met.

***Directors noted the content of Mr Peile’s report and the progress of the Littleport schools.***

***Directors approved the appointments of Mr Wing and Mr Bainbridge as executive headteachers of LECA & NWA and HEA & HLA respectively.***

***Directors approved the appointment of Mr Bush as Chair of the Littleport shadow governing body.***

***Directors agreed that Mr Peile and Ms Adams could approve admissions arrangements for the new schools so that statutory deadlines could be met.***

**109. NGA REVIEW**

Mr Peile gave his report on the NGA review. This included a copy of the report and the responses that he and Ms Adams had made. He confirmed that an Action Plan, based on responses in the report, would be drawn up and recommendations put into practise. Directors will receive an update at a subsequent meeting.

**110. TRUST DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Mr Peile explained that the aims of the Trust had been reviewed, following discussions with headteachers, as they had been set at a time when Trust was only taking on schools in difficulty. To take account of progression, these have been revised, particularly to include the views and voice of stakeholders. Updates that have been made to the TDP, and Mr Hilton explained the rationale behind the four main amendments. Schools governors and headteachers will be introduced to these, and reflect on how they can incorporate them into their work.

Mr Staite asked how these can be made measurable. Mr Peile responded by explaining that the aims will be built into the TDP, and how they are aligned to each School Development Plan, thus making them quantifiable. Additional views can be sought via parental surveys.

Directors discussed the merit of including a set of non-negotiables, that all schools must adhere to. These will be introduced to heads and governors as areas that are expected to be included in SDPs and monitored accordingly. These will include such areas as the SEF, heads conference, cross-Trust leadership, LAL and the NQT programme.

Mr Bush raised an issue over how the Trust could balance the unique nature of each school with a set of non-negotiables across the Trust. He suggested that some of the context is amended to reflect this. He agreed to work on updating the wording.

***Directors noted the contact of Mr Peile’s report and the amendments to the Trust Development Plan.***

**111. SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

Ms Toft asked directors to refer to the report on safeguarding, which highlighted areas of development throughout the Trust and gave updates on Safeguarding and Safer recruitment requirements. It was noted that the Safeguarding Policy needs updating to incorporate new statutory guidance that comes into force from September 2017. Ms Toft took directors through her report, highlighting the main changes. These include:

* The inclusion of PREVENT and sexual harassment
* Local governing bodies should hold heads to account regarding safeguarding
* All governors to have enhanced DBS and be listed on SCR
* Training should be consistent and renewed annually
* All incidents should be investigated and recorded
* There should be on-going age appropriate education for pupils
* Each school should hold an E-Safety workshop
* Policies should be linked to safeguarding

It is planned to introduce the updates to governors during the Autumn Term governors events. Directors noted that all schools have been asked to submit their safeguarding policies for assessment by the end of term to ensure compliance.

The Board approved the updated Safeguarding policy and asked all local governing bodies to update local policies to reflect the Trust wide policy.

**112. REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP**

Mrs Jarvis referred directors to a report on the membership of the Board of Directors of The Active Learning Trust and the recommendations for updating membership to meet DfE suggestions.

Directors were asked to approve Mr Robert Dool and Mrs Helen Capron as members of the Active Learning Trust. Mr Hely-Hutchinson asked if other candidates had been considered. Mr Peile explained that Mr Dool and Mrs Capron had been approached because they have experience of chairing ALT Local governing bodies, and are aware of the aims and values of the Trust and that board members were asked for names of other potential candidates at the last meeting of the board. Mrs Lloyd confirmed she would look again as to whether a colleague from Chesterton may take on a member role.

***Directors approved Mr Dool and Mrs Capron as members of the Active Learning Trust, subject to their agreement.***

Mrs Jarvis informed directors that three of their colleagues had reached the end of their four-year term of office. Ms Adams, Mr Bush and Ms Lloyd withdrew from the meeting whilst directors voted on whether they should be reinstated as directors. Mr Beswick took over as Chair.

***Directors voted unanimously to invite Mrs Adams, Mr Bush and Ms Lloyd to continue as directors for a further four-year term.***

**113. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

1. Following a report from Mr Hilton regarding changes to Nursery provision, it was confirmed that the Isle of Ely Primary School operates under The Active Learning Trust’s charitable status.
2. Mr Kerr asked for clarity on how directors could organise visits to schools. It was agreed that these should be co-ordinated with Ms Adams visits, as well as any individual visits. Dates will be made available and directors are asked to confirm their availability with Mrs Jarvis, who would be the link to directors who wish to arrange visits to schools. It was also agreed that Mr Peile would draw up an aide-memoire for director visits.
3. Mrs Cutchey asked if KS2 results for all Trust schools were available. Mr Hilton gave an overview of results, explaining that over half the schools have asked for re-marks. Particular areas of note are the excellent results at Grove, Burrowmoor and Westwood, and the poor results at Hillside, Gusford and Kingsfield. These were discussed briefly, with a more in-depth report promised at the next meeting, when progress grades will also be available. Mr Hilton confirmed that central staff will move in to support schools that have not reached expectations.

**114. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT**

**Confidential**

**115. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Directors acknowledged the meeting schedule for 2016/17 that had been previously circulated. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 4th October 2016. Ms Adams closed the meeting by wishing all a restful summer.