

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST**

***held on Thursday 12th October 2017***

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

**MINUTES**

Directors Present: Ms L. Adams Mr J. Beswick

Mr G. Hely-Hutchinson Mrs J. Cutchey

Mr M. Kerr Mr G. Peile

Members Present: Mrs H. Capron Mr R. Dool

Officers Present: Mr D. Hilton Mrs K. Jarvis

Mr C. Paskell Mrs J. Steel

Ms M. Toft

Also Present: Dr A. Boddison (CEO Nasen)

Mrs P. Brenchly (Assistant Principal of Neale-Wade Academy)

Mrs M. Mills (Head of Albert Pye Primary School & Ravensmere Infant School)

Mr A. Redman (Hub Lead- North Suffolk)

Mrs J. Viner (Head of Reydon Primary School)

**1.** **WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Ms Adams welcomed all present. She introduced Dr. Adam Boddison and explained that he was attending as an observer with a view to becoming a director. Adam introduced himself and directors agreed that he could contribute fully to the meeting.

Paula Brenchly, Melanie Mills, Jo Viner and Andy Redman were also introduced.

Apologies for absence had been received prior to the meeting from Mr Bateson, Mr Bush, Ms Lloyd & Mr Staite. Best wishes were sent to Ms Lloyd for a quick recovery from her recent operation.

No new declarations of interest were declared. Directors were reminded of the need to complete the annual Declaration of Registered Interests form and return it to Mrs Jarvis.

**2. REPORT & PRESENTATION FROM REYDON & ALBERT PYE PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND RAVENSMERE INFANT SCHOOL**

Directors confirmed that they had reviewed the Headteacher Reports that Mrs Viner and Mrs Mills had provided prior to the meeting. Both were asked to highlight areas of particular note:

**Mrs Mills: Albert Pye Primary School (APS)**

* + Proud that APS has moved on from the coasting school category
  + Outcomes for 2017 all exceeded national averages, with the exception of writing
  + School and staff passionate about delivering a broad and balanced curriculum
  + Staff have commitment to improve and deliver quality of teaching and learning
  + Trust-wide CPD has been embraced, including development visits
  + There is some outstanding practise in all stages
  + Particularly proud of success in maths, led by an inspired subject lead
  + Mrs Mills feels APS is well placed and moving forwards
  + Challenges include staffing turbulence, particularly support staff
  + Need to work on obtaining good levels of development
  + The LGB are new and in need of training but were committed to the role

Ms Adams asked if governors provide rigor and challenge. Mrs Mills replied that, as a new group, this is an area that governors need training in, although they are growing in expertise.

Mrs Cutchey asked if there is one governing body across APS and RIS and what are the areas of risk to standards in the school? Mrs Mills explained that one LGB covers both schools. She feels that main areas of risk are reduced support in class, large class sizes, and the possibility of having to replace staff mid-year.

**Mrs Mills: Ravensmere Infant School (RIS)**

* Outcomes of external teaching and learning review agreed with school learning walks
* Although graded Outstanding by Ofsted in 2010 a lot of change has taken place since then
* An experienced deputy head has left, but a quality person has allowed good strengthening of curriculum
* Cohorts are small – therefore data should be interrupted with caution
* Governors need to learn know RIS as well as they know APS

Mr Peile stated that Mrs Mills understates her role in the schools. He explained that she has taken from and fed into the Hub since joining just over a year ago. All staff are active within the Hub and understand that they are part of a wider trust community. Mr Peile emphasised that the pupils were offered a broad and balanced curriculum, with children being given enormous opportunities. APS has won the team of the year award through Stars of Waveney and Lowestoft, which recognises the work of schools in the wider community.

Ms Adams urged directors to visit both schools if possible as they are very different.

Mr Paskell explained that Ravensmere is an inherited site with shared access to a non-ALT nursery provider. Work is being carried out to improve provision of access.

Mrs Capron asked for clarification around the high proportion of boys with additional needs at RIS, but no SEN support. Mrs Mills explained that this is a historical figure. This actually relates to 4 boys out of 60 children.

Mr Dool asked about the difficulty of engaging parents. Mrs Mills explained that, as children tend to come from working families, grandparents are volunteering to school. In answer to other points, she went on to say that Beccles is not an area with high levels of pupil premium children, so additional funding is low, although they do have high levels of SEN.

**Mrs Viner: Reydon Primary School**

* Numbers on role have increased from 153 to 184, including pupils from neighbouring villages, which shows that the local community are supporting Reydon
* Results are building from EYFS up through the key stages, with Reydon on a journey
* There is a developing curriculum and children are well supported
* Current year (2017) outcomes are looking strong
* Work in the Trust has helped Reydon to look outwards
* Staff have an honest outlook, and results were as expected last year
* Staff are embedding values and a balanced curriculum throughout the school
* Finances look healthier due to increasing numbers, with a positive carry forward which will be put to good use in the coming year – starting with EYFS, improving the environment and security
* Attendance is around national figures, but staff have plans to improve this further – fines have been introduced
* An area of risk is challenge at greater depth – this is being addressed and supported by challenges within the Hub
* Mrs Viner praised the support of ALT, Mr Redman and the CPD programme

Ms Adams asked if governors provide challenge. Mrs Viner agreed that they do. Reydon governors are a committed group that take part in learning walks and book scrutinies, challenge effectively and acknowledge ALT support. They are fully engaged in the ethos and culture of the school.

Mrs Cutchey asked if, with such a small staff, it has been difficult to cover the two maternity leaves. Mrs Viner explained that Reydon has reacted positively by employing a NQT for a one-year contract to cover. The benefit for the NQT is that they have access to the ALT NQT CPD, and Reydon will have a teaching surplus to deploy on intervention initiatives once the substantive teacher returns.

Mr Kerr asked if the increase of pupil numbers has put a strain on the school building. Mrs Viner explained that the school can accommodate 210 pupils, so there are no issues at present.

Mr Peile reminded directors that Reydon was a school in chaos when they joined the Trust and all credit should be given to Mrs Viner and the staff for the progress made.

*Mrs Viner and Mrs Mills left the meeting at this point.*

Mr Redman spoke about the hub-based work that Mrs Mills and Mrs Viner undertake on behalf of the Trust. Mrs Viner leads on standards and Mrs Mills is leading the North Suffolk Hub conference. Although their schools are situated outside of Lowestoft, Mrs Viner and Mrs Mills are both fully involved in the North Suffolk hub.

Mr Hilton praised Mr Redman’s work in bringing Mrs Mills and Mrs Viner into the hub. He agreed that they are both strong and active members.

**3. REPORT ON SCHOOL OUTCOMES & PROGRESS**

Mr Hilton and Mrs Brenchly gave informative presentations on school results and progress. Directors were asked to note the overall picture of improvement, and acknowledge that results were broadly in line with expectations. Mr Peile informed directors that the Regional Schools Commissioner has asked to meet, and, although we await the 2017 definition, he was sure coasting schools will be an issue for the Trust to answer to. He reminded trustees of the way in which the central team was working with all schools to ensure attainment and progress continued to improve.

Mr Hilton informed directors that the trust is improving in line with national figures at Key Stage 2. There is evidence that good levels of development are growing in schools. Progress measures are significantly in line with or above - especially in years 2 and 6. This needs to expand to other year groups, and the trust need to ensure that gaps are not allowed to increase. Mr Hilton explained the Challenge levels to directors and assured them that Challenge One schools are in receipt of direct intervention, coaching and support. He added that work is being done to ensure realistic targets are set.

Schools of concern were discussed, with it being noted that progress levels were good in most schools with poorer attainment levels. Mr Peile stated that it is not acceptable for the changes in reading tests against expectations to be used as an excuse for targets not being met. Mr Hilton agreed, and stated that one school in particular had set its targets too low. He confirmed that this is being addressed through hub leads.

Mr Dool spoke about his experience as Chair of governors at Hillside, advocating that all staff and governors were working together and honest conversations were being held.

Mrs Brenchly gave a detailed presentation on updates to Progress and Attainment 8. A copy of this is attached for directors unable to attend the meeting. Changes include “consultation on pupils with extremely negative progress scores” *Ofsted 2017*, which means that some scores currently included in published figures can now be removed. There are also changes in how invalidated data is viewed.

It was noted that all secondary data is above national floor levels.

Mr Dool expressed concern that so much emphasis is placed on data at a national level which does not affect pupils. Progress scores at Chantry Academy were recognised as exceptional, particularly in light of this being the first year that no coursework has been included in results.

Mr Hilton stated that the historical rivalry between Neale-Wade and Cromwell has been eradicated since Cromwell joined the trust, and the schools are already sharing resources and ideas.

Mrs Brenchly explained the next steps that are planned for secondary schools:-

* Collaboration between schools, eg school to school reviews
* Sharing experiences
* Shared CPD opportunities
* Alignment of assessments
* Intervention programmes
* Curriculum reviews
* New specifications – staff training , eg exam skills, new mark schemes

Mr Peile explained that the heads at Chantry, Cromwell and Neale-Wade are learning from each other through reviews, and working together on grant bids. Mr Dool asked if there would be any benefit in trust secondary schools working with other secondary schools from outside the trust. .

Mr Peile informed directors that trust secondary schools do excellent careers work to prepare pupils for the next stage of their lives - Neale-Wade Academy have recently won a quality mark in Careers advise, and Cromwell Community College are part-way through the same process.

*Mrs Brenchly left the meeting at this point.*

**4. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY 2017**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2017 were accepted as a true record.

Mr Peile informed directors that the Articles of Association had been approved by the DfE, but there is a back-log at the Charities Commission that meant that the new Articles cannot be put into action yet, resulting in governance at Cromwell Community College remaining the responsibility of the Board for the time being.

**5.** **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

It was noted that agenda items relating to committee reports had been covered within the main Board meeting to enable all directors to discuss. There were therefore no separate committee minutes to review.

**6. CHAIR’S ACTIONS**

Ms Adams reported that she has agreed the following Chairs’ Action since the last meeting.

The ALT Exclusion Policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect updates from the DfE in relation to pupil exclusion. Mrs Jarvis circulated a summary of the amendments and explained the changes proposed.

**7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Directors were asked to approve a Trust-wide policy statement for Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking. The introduction of this was explained by Mrs Steel.

***Directors approved the statement, which will be circulated to all schools.***

Directors were asked to adopt a process for employment of apprentices. Mrs Steel explained the process and targets, which are estimated to be that the trust should appoint 40 apprentices. Training would be supported by access to the apprenticeship levy funding that schools already contribute to. Mrs Steel confirmed that there is no government time-scale in place to meet targets, and that apprentices can only be employed directly by the trust.

***Directors approved the process and authorised Mrs Steel to move this forward.***

Mr Peile informed directors that he had been invited to attend a symposium, hosted by Google, in California, on 1st and 2nd November. Accommodation and meals are provided – flights would need to be paid for by the trust. In accordance with guidance in the trust Financial Controls Manual, Mr Peile requested permission to attend. Directors were supportive of Mr Peile attending this high calibre event and recognised the prestige of being invited.

***Directors approved Mr Peile attending the symposium as described and authorised the cost be covered by the trust.***

Mr Peile asked that, should the Articles of Association be approved before the next meeting, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board be authorised to sign the updated documents off.

***Directors agreed that Ms Adams and Ms Lloyd should be authorised to sign the updated Articles of Association should they be approved by the Charities Commission before the next meeting.***

Mrs Adams proposed that a schedule of visits by directors to schools be organised for the Spring term 2018. This would be arranged to best suit all involved.

***Directors agreed that Mrs Jarvis be tasked to organise a programme of director visits to schools.***

With his permission, Ms Adams recommended that Dr Boddison be nominated to join the Board.

***Directors present unanimously approved the proposal that Dr Boddison become a director of the Active Learning Trust Board.***

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

***Confidential***

**9. NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 13th December 2017.

Mr Peile informed directors that the Regional Schools Commissioner has written to request a member of her team visit a Board meeting in the near future. It was agreed that Mr Peile reply and offer the next meeting date of 13th December.



**MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**

**OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST**

***held on Thursday 12th October 2017***

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

Present: Ms L. Adams

Mrs H. Capron

Mr R. Dool

Apologies: Ms M. Lloyd

**MINUTES**

The Members of the Board of the Active Learning Trust met to approve the appointment of Mr Adam Boddison as a director to the trust.

The members present approved the appointment, noting that this had been recommended by the Board.