

HAYESWOOD FIRST SCHOOL

ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of meeting held remotely on at 5pm Wednesday 24th June 2020

Present: Andrew Turrall, (AT), (Executive Head teacher), Andrew Todd, (ATo), (Chair), Sarah Fairman (Deputy Head HFS), Lynnette Payne (Clerk), Beulah Johnson, (BJ), Emma Clipson, (EC), Julia Simmonds, (JSi), Sue Buckley, (SB), Jayne Sharman, (JSh)

ATo welcomed members remotely to the meeting and explained that the format would be different to a normal Academy Committee meeting. There was not a formal agenda and minutes of the last meeting would not be reviewed and agreed as usual. Instead, the focus would be on the questions put forward in advance of the meeting by AC members and any other questions that may have arisen since. The Head had already answered these questions and this document shared with members.

ATo requested AT to give a brief summary of the plans and actions before lock-down, how the school adapted during this period and any problems encountered.

AT explained that the school leaders had limited notice of the lock-down in March 2020 and in the final week of school, staff worked hard to put in place the home learning platforms of Google Classroom and the Class pages on the website ready for this.

During the lock-down period, the SLT across the whole of the Trust had regular meetings, via video call, at first three times a week, then twice a week. On the 8th June, when schools reopened to a limited number of students, these meetings were reduced to once a week minimum. Decisions were made collectively between the Trust and schools, with individual suggestions and recommendations being considered for adoption. Each school was also able to make decisions specific to their setting, after approval by the Trust leadership team. From the beginning, the Trust elected to follow Government guidance and continue to do so, reacting as quickly as possible when this is updated.

The Head added that he understood that AC members felt that there had been very little to do during the crisis and the purpose of the question and answer session was to fully brief the Academy Committee. All questions posted before the meeting have already been answered on the shared document.

Members confirmed that they had all read and understood the document and the Chair asked AT to briefly talk through the answers.

16:06 JS joined the meeting

Questions 1-3 (ATo) - AT explained that there was only capacity for four bubbles of a maximum of fifteen children in line with current guidance. The Squirrels classroom has been used for storage, as it is the smallest in school and has no external ventilation so is less suitable

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for a bubble location. All other classes are in use and the hall is used for activities and wet playtimes.

All bubbles have the equivalent of a full-time TA, giving two adults in class. This was a decision made by the Trust due to the age of the children in First Schools, ensuring that there would be a spare adult to deal with any emergencies such as first aid or possible Covid 19 cases. ATo **asked** whether it would be possible to have any more classes? AT stated that all teachers currently have additional PPA time to enable them to contact parents, plan and up-load home learning, as well as teach their bubble, so there was no more staffing capacity. ATo **questioned** whether another system could be tried, for example a rota system. However, the use of a rota system directly contravenes Government guidance; the bubble model is a safer way of operation. BJ stated that her school was using a rota system, being a BCP school and several other AC members knew of this operating in other schools. AT explained that there was different advice coming from LA's, but Mark Blackman, Head of Children's Services at Dorset Council was advising use of the bubble model without rotas. He added that there is a model rota system in place, ready to implement if guidance changes. JSh stated that, from a parental point of view, every day attendance made the decision to send her child back to school easier than a split week model. SF said that the children were coping well with the system, although not all understood the concept of 'social distancing'

Questions 3-16 (EC) - EC apologised for asking so many questions, but **questioned** the cancellation of the parent's evening that was scheduled for the week before lock-down. AT explained that teaching staff worked flat out to get the home learning in place in that week before the school shut, but in-depth reports will be sent to parents before the end of term. These will reflect the learning up to the end of March, as it would be hard to appraise home learning objectively. Staff are aware that there will be gaps in learning to be addressed when pupils return in the new academic year. The Trust took the decision to ban all visitors to school in the last week of opening, including clubs and scheduled AC meetings. SF added that the SLT had learnt a lot and would be in a much better position if the lock-down had to be re-instigated. SB **questioned** whether all parents had been contacted since the school was closed; AT confirmed that all families had been spoken to at least once, although that might not have been both halves of split families. A log has been kept of all contact and staff will endeavour to speak to all parents and carers before the end of the academic year.

Regarding home learning, AT explained that Trust schools were originally using 'White Rose', especially for Maths. However there were multiple issues with the website's bandwidth and an increasing charging structure after 'free to use' beginnings. The 'Maths No Problem' platform was not evaluated as not being very accessible for parents to use, as it was aimed primarily at teachers. The decision was taken to use BBC Bitesize for home learning, along with 'Oak National Academy'. However, there has been feedback that some learning is repetitive for pupils, so the issue will be reviewed. Trust teachers from each year group are collaborating together to plan and deliver learning. JS added that parents could also access alternative lessons via the school website if they did not want to use the on-line learning platforms. EC

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asked what the response from parents had been to the whole situation. AT said that an on-line Edurio survey had been circulated and the responses had been mostly positive, not all and parents were aware that progress was not as good as when pupils learn in school. Most respondents also felt that the contact from the school had been good. AT will share the summary survey document with AC members. **Action AT**

JSi stated that she had found the lockdown a roller coaster ride, with having to put home learning in place, teach and keep in contact with the 34 families in her class. She was also missing the children. SF added that vulnerable and pupil premium families were contacted frequently right from the first week, with feedback to Dorset Council each time.

Questions 17-20 (JSh) - JSh said that many of her questions were similar to those already answered, but she would like further details regarding the new Reception intake and the Year 4 leavers. AT explained that all new Reception parents across the Trust had received a slideshow via Parentmail with all the information that would normally be shared at the new parents' meeting. This document also contained links to the school website where there is further information. The plan for the first two weeks of part-time attendance in September had also been sent to parents today, including the opportunity for one parent to attend for one hour with their child on the first day and ask any questions. Parents have also been advised that they can email any queries to the school office prior to the end of term. The usual home visits by EY staff are not allowed to take place and the visits to pre-schools have been replaced by telephone calls. The Reception teachers will be Mrs Everett and Mrs Everitt and AT explained that Hayley Everett was coming from Colehill First School on a one year secondment to take on the role. She has a specialism in Early Years and is a very experienced teacher.

Year 4 pupils will be given the opportunity to return to their First schools across the Trust for the final two days of term. The attendance bubbles are all being shut to enable the Year 4's to be socially distanced across the school site in groups of fifteen maximum. AT explained that the Trust had originally asked the DfE whether the transition years in a three tier system, ie years 4 and 8, could return to school when the year 6's did, but were told that it was not allowed. Mark Blackman of DC has agreed to the new end of term arrangements for these two days. It is hoped that the weather will allow a socially distanced picnic on the school field at lunchtime and an award will be presented to each child. They will also have their photograph taken as a memento of their time at the school. As there will not be the opportunity for a whole class photograph, AT said that the school would try to create a collage of the individual pictures for parents to have instead. **Action AT**

ATo requested more details about vulnerable families and how the school are supporting them. AT said that the SLT had prioritised contact with these families and had been required to share details of this contact with both the Trust and the LA. He added that the gaps in learning and the mental wellbeing of these pupils could only be assessed when schools return to normality. During the phone calls with vulnerable families, staff have signposted services that can support wellbeing, but it is up to the individuals to make contact with these. However large the gaps in learning are when pupils return to school full time, catch-up learning needs to be balanced with

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mental wellbeing. EC asked whether any Reception or Year One pupils had exhibited signs of this since returning to school but SF said that the majority were very resilient. The families of the few children that were struggling have been contacted by the staff member responsible for ELSA to give support. SB added that many pupils where she works had struggled to return to school as they were so used to life during lockdown and could not cope with the change. AT agreed that this was an issue that will need addressing in September when all pupils return. ATo **asked** whether consideration had been given to children repeating the last academic year but AT explained that this would cause issues for the transition years, such as the new Reception intake and the move up to higher tiers of education.

EC **questioned** what the SLT would take forward from the lockdown? AT stated that the school had geared up very quickly for remote learning, with the First schools across the Trust leading the way. The decision was made immediately to use Google classroom, as it allows communication between teachers and pupils and can be developed and refined to suit the school's needs. Teachers are able to comment on children's work, contact can be made by parents and children can even communicate with classmates. JS agreed, saying that parents can quickly communicate with the class teacher without having to involve the school office. SF said that remote meetings had worked extremely well, especially when they involved healthcare professionals, such as EHCP reviews. Many of these participants were usually too busy to attend physical meetings but were able to join remotely from their places of work or home. AT added that remote meetings will be used going forward so that part-time members of staff can be involved without the need to travel to the school site. There is also a need for procedures to be put in place in case there is a need to lockdown in the future. Working out the bubble models for the partial reopening was a challenge, especially with regard to the separation of key worker and non-key worker provision. Next time, the aim would be to have key worker children in bubbles with their classmates. SF expressed her thanks to the Head for his strong guidance and leadership during the unprecedented times, steering both Hayeswood and Colehill First Schools through the crisis. ATo added his gratitude to all the staff and BJ seconded this on behalf of the parents.

The next meeting will be held in the second half of September but the date will be agreed once it is known whether schools will be returning as normal for the new academic year. This may be another remote meeting. AT stated that he is due to have a virtual meeting with Deborah Zachary to discuss curriculum development, having already had one for Colehill First School. DZ knows that small schools have no capacity for long-term curriculum development planning at this time, but the meeting will be useful. The feedback document will be shared with AC members.

LP reminded AC members to complete the on-line NGA training set by the Trust before the end of the academic year and to share copies of their certificates. **Action ACM's**
There were no further questions.

Meeting closed at 5:03pm

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ACTIONS:

***AT** to share Edurio summary document with AC members*

***AT** to create a composite class photo for Year 4 leavers*

***Members** to complete the NGA training modules*