

CORBRIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - SPRING TERM 2021

A meeting of the Governing Board was held on Thursday 4 March 2021 at 5pm, remotely through Microsoft Teams

Invited:	Governor Type:	Start Date	End Date	Attendance:
Jayne Adey	Co-Opted	24/11/2016	23/11/2024	Attended
Roy Bearpark	Co-Opted	17/12/2020	16/12/2024	Attended
Marie Browne	Staff Governor	21/09/2020	20/09/2024	Attended
Chris Bruce	Co-Opted	05/12/2017	04/12/2021	Attended
Ann Harvey	Co-Opted	20/01/2015	19/01/2023	Attended
Jo Holmes Chair	Authority Governor	08/01/2019	07/01/2023	Attended
Marc Horn	Co-Opted	21/11/2019	20/11/2023	Apologies
Peter Jewitt	Co-Opted	15/02/2016	14/02/2024	Attended
Dean Johnston	Observer	29/06/2017		Attended
Jane Kennedy	Headteacher Governor	01/09/2014		Attended
Angie Leggett	Parent Governor	16/03/2020	15/03/2024	Attended
Mark Warland	Co-Opted	20/01/2015	31/03/2022	Attended
Tom Weston	Parent Governor	08/02/2018	07/02/2022	Attended

PART 1 (Classified non-confidential)

Items discussed under Part 1 of this agenda will not be classified as confidential; consequently the minutes and supporting documents should be made available to any person wishing to inspect them.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and consent given for the absence of Mr Horn.

2. Membership Update

The Governors noted with sadness the passing of Christine Merrell and noted with appreciation her service to the school. They thanked the Chair who had written with condolences to the family of the deceased.

Governors welcomed Mr Bearpark to his first full governing board meeting as a Co-opted Governor.

It was noted that one co-opted vacancy currently exists and that the Local Authority vacancy will be vacancy from 26 March 2021. The clerk confirmed that the next panel for appointing LA governors is likely to be end May/June.

Governors noted that as previously discussed the Chair would be standing down as governor from 26 March. The Board thanked the Chair for her service to the school. Mr Weston agreed to discuss with Mr Johnson the possibility of replacing the Chair as careers link governor. **Action Mr Weston.**

It was agreed that the skills audit and GB self evaluation reports under item 8 would inform

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future appointments. **Action: R Bearpark**

3. Election of Chair

Mr Bearpark was unanimously elected to serve as Chair from 26/3/21 until 31/12/21.

4. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

There were no interests declared

5. Consideration and Adoption of Minutes and Action Grid

Minutes of the following full governing board meeting, having been circulated to the Governors, were adopted and signed as a true record:

- 19/11/2020

The following actions from the Action Grid that had been delegated to individuals, groups or committees at previous meetings were reviewed and updates received as follows:

- *Contact Inspiring Governance Candidate & if appropriate arrange for appointment as Associate Governor* Completed
- *Upload Governor register of interests to school website amended Register of Governor Interests and attendance* Completed but would need to be updated on ongoing basis as membership changed
- *Arrange for study of effectiveness of GB & Skills Audit* Completed
- *Analyse Pupil Data from Covid recovery* Completed
- *Complete & submit SFVS to LA* Completed
- *Mrs Adey and Ms Leggett: Governors agreed to carry out monitoring and evaluation visits with the following focus: - Maths and English - respective Link Governors* Pending
- *Discussion of AGP to take place at interim meeting.* On hold due to Covid-19 priorities
- *Item 10 - To consider DFC funding in terms of extra space. To check rates for releasing staff with D Cookson.* Completed
- *Item 13 - Engaging reluctant readers-to report to next T&A Committee.* Completed within reading challenge strategy and reported at T&A committee 3rd Feb.
- It was agreed to remove all other historical items from the Grid **Action: Clerk**

All other such actions were reported on under the relevant agenda item.

6. Committee Minutes

Governors received the agreed minutes from the following committee meetings:

- Resources committee dated 17/12/2020 & 25/2/2021.
- Teaching & Achievement Committee 3/2/21

Resource Committee Items under discussion:

- The Head provided an update with regards to the porch extension. JK had been informed by the LA that the cost for work on the porch would increase by £6000. The Head had contacted Karen Enright at the LA who had said that there had been an error in the estimates and that an additional cost of over £14K was likely. The Head had contacted the project manager, she had gone through the items not completed and had pointed out that the school had already put in £11K. It was agreed that the Head speak with the LA & Paul Irwin who had been involved at the beginning of the process. It was agreed to ask the LA to contribute to the shortfall. **Action Head**

- School mobile –condemned by LA who proposed to replace like for like, however there was the possibility of getting an existing double classroom mobile to replace the single classroom from Ponteland High School – whilst this had been used it was still in very good condition with a projected lifespan of 15 to 20 years. It was agreed the Head & Chair would look into this. It was also possible that this could be re-sited so as to give more playground space, it was agreed any final decision would be remitted to the full governing board
Action Head/Chair.
- The budget was very healthy – the Head had checked with the LA and if more than 10% of the budget was to be carried forward then the school would have to have a list of projects on which spending was planned agreed with the LA. The school already had such a list
- The school was still waiting for planning permission for the three learning ‘Pods’.

7. Head Teacher’s Report

Governors considered the verbal report from the Head Teacher, this format having been agreed as LA policy to address workload.

The following documents had been circulated prior to the meeting

- Parental feedback summary end of Jan 21
- Covid 19 Asymptomatic testing for pupils and staff
- School Improvement Partner Report November 2020

Items under discussion:

- Wellbeing – the school had received very positive feedback from parents and pupils who said they had felt well supported and that the school communicated well, staff also felt this was the case. The school had surveyed parents, pupils and staff throughout the lockdown and had learned lessons from its experience of the previous lockdown. The School Improvement Partner was visiting on 25 March and would be focusing on remote learning; it was agreed that as part of the Chair’s handover Mr Bearpark would meet the SIP.
ACTION: Head to include RB in SIP visit. The lessons which the school had learned would help them work differently in future. The SLT wish to allow disadvantaged pupils to keep the current IT devices loaned out to support remote learning [there would be a need to sign a home school contract] to help with enrichment activities and homework. It was agreed this was a good use of school resources. **ACTION: Head to implement**
- The school had known from the last lockdown which pupils were likely to be most at risk of falling behind. They had invited pupils into school where necessary and were confident that they had done what was needed to mitigate disadvantage.
- The curriculum had been tweaked during the lockdown so that the harder activities were offset to a time when pupils were back in school. The Teaching and Achievement Committee would evaluate pupil progress.
- The school planned that by the end of year pupils would have reached expected learning. They would liaise with the High School and First Schools over transition.
- In the three weeks of pupils return prior to Easter, the school would assess pupils to ascertain precisely where they were in subjects and what support was needed.
- The school was very confident that it would be able to manage the testing of pupils for COVID, staff had home test kits 140 of 177 parents had so far consented to testing, reminders were being sent out.
- **Governors questioned what were the plans for reopening?** The Head replied that all Years 5/6 and staff would be in from 8 March on the pre lockdown timetable. Those Year 7 & 8’s not in school would be tested on Monday & return home, if the tests were ok they would return to school on Tuesday also on the pre lockdown timetable. All consenting pupils

would be tested three times before switching to home testing.

- There had been changes to the risk assessments with these now being at version 6. The main change had been the requirement to wear masks in lessons for Year 7/8. Pupils whose parents elected for them not to wear a mask would not be treated any differently. If staff were able to maintain a 2-metre social distance then they did not need to wear a mask however if they needed to interact more closely with pupils then a mask was required.

8. Budget Update

Governors received and considered a written summary of the school's current budget position from the Head Teacher.

The Budget was agreed

9. Governor's Monitoring Reports

Governors received and considered the following reports:

- Remote Learning – from Mr Warland
- Staff wellbeing – from Mr Weston

Report Subject- Remote Learning

Governors noted:

- A lot of lessons had been learned from the first lockdown.
- A high percentage of pupils were engaging well
- The Google Sheet engagement tracker worked well finding gaps and informing catch up plans
- There was good pastoral support
- **Governors questioned the report mentioned two pupils from the same family who had not engaged what was the situation?** The Head replied that the report was conducted at the four week point, the school had worked with the family and these pupils were now engaging. **Governors questioned but would they return to school?** The Head replied that they would, she is very confident of this.
- **Governors questioned was there a risk that high achievers who had engaged very well could be bored by the consolidation required for other pupils?** The Head replied that this risk would be dealt with through differentiation.

Report – Staff wellbeing

Governors noted:

- **The staff felt an afternoon break was important to keep energy levels high, would this be possible?** The Head replied that it would be difficult however there was a plan to allow for this – this has been discussed with staff and was popular. It would not be a permanent feature but part of the transition back to school.
- **Governors questioned when would the school be able to end the bubble system and need to limit pupil movement between classrooms ?** The Head replied that there had been no guidance yet on this

The Head and Chair thanked Mr Weston and Mr Warland for turning their reports round so quickly

10. Senior Leadership Team restructure proposal

The Board considered the document which had been circulated by the Head prior to the meeting.

Items under discussion:

- There had been regular discussion of these matters. The effectiveness of the current model [A] had been continuously reviewed
- The Head was strongly of the view that after consideration a new model [B] would serve the school better this being 'Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher (SENDCo), supported by a Key stage 2 Pastoral Leader and a Key Stage 3 Pastoral Leader'
- The proposed model would be more expensive however the school budget was very healthy, and the pupil number forecast used, conservative. It was highly likely that the new model would not cause any difficulties financially although it would benefit the school in leadership. Furthermore the school with forecast future budget surpluses was under a duty not to 'sit on' this money but to use it for the benefit of pupils attending the school.
- School staff also favoured this model as it increased the number of non-contact hours. Governors noted that this was desirable as workload in lockdown had risen considerably and there would be workload implications from the pandemic going forward for some time.
- **The Board voted on the proposal which was carried unanimously ACTION:Head to communicate the decision to staff and carry out the required recruitment**

11. Request by Hadrian Learning Trust to change the curriculum for feeder middle schools to QEHS

The Head lead on this:

Mr Atkins, Exec Head HLT, had contacted the Head and there had been a meeting of Middle Schools & the High School – the academy wished to offer Spanish at GCSE and to this end wanted the feeder middle schools to change their arrangements so that they reduced the number of French lessons in Year 7 & 8 and added Spanish lessons. The Head had queried whether this would cause a shortfall in the French provision due to the loss of lessons but had been told that there would be additional French lessons in Year 9

- **Governors questioned did the school have the capacity to offer Spanish?** The Head replied that it did not
- **Governors questioned could the High school assist with teaching possibly by remote teaching?** The Head replied that she had asked and they could not
- **Governors questioned could the school deliver the Spanish with recruitment?** The Head replied that the only financially viable way to do this would be by use of temporary staff. This would be disadvantageous as these staff would not know the school's pupils & there would be a lack of continuity
- **Governors asked what the main aim of HLT was in providing Spanish in years 7 & 8?** The Head replied that HLT wished to increase the number of students taking a language at GCSE.

The Head was to meet the Academy's language consultant and it was agreed governors put questions for this meeting to the Head in emails. **Action All Governors**

12. Safeguarding Update

This was covered in the Head's report

13. Governing Board Self Review Questionnaire results and Governor Skills Audit results

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The Chair thanked the Board, the company collating the responses had said that the response from governors was the best they had ever experienced. The results had shown full coverage of all skill areas with one query by the report provider on legal expertise however on discussion it was clear that the school had strong coverage in this area. The self-review showed that the Board's systems were robust.

14. Prevent Training

Governors noted that this had been particularly useful in helping them understand the challenges in preventing radicalisation through lockdown.

15. GDPR Update

Governors noted that an audit was in progress to ensure that the school's Information Asset Register was updated, particularly with any Remote Learning applications in place. The DPO would be responsible for updating the schools Information Asset Register accordingly to ensure full compliance was achieved.

16. Urgent Business

Governors discussed the following items of urgent business:

- The Head and Board thanked the Chair for all the work she had done for the school, it had been a tremendous effort and was much appreciated. When Covid allowed there would be a full celebratory event to mark the support the Chair had given
- Signage was discussed and a format agreed

17. Future Meetings

Governors agreed dates of future meetings as follows:

Summer Term – Interim meeting Thursday 13th May 5pm
Full Governing Board Thursday 17th June 5pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19:15

FOR INFORMATION – Presentations and supporting information shared with Chairs/Vice Chairs at the termly briefing sessions are available in the governance pages at: northumberlandeducation.co.uk/governors

Chair _____

Date _____

PART 2 (Classified Confidential)

Matters discussed in this part of the agenda were classified as confidential and minuted as such. Any reports circulated with the agenda papers were enclosed for Governors only, coloured pink and marked “not for publication”.