



MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held via video conference on Thursday 19th March 2020 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)
Geoff Braham (GB)
Will Bromage (WB)
Alan Broomhead (AB)
Linda Burton (LB)
Jesse Cleverly (JC)
Ken Coveney (KC)
Alan Dunstan (AD)
Jean-Francois Fava-Verde (JF)

Duncan French (DF)
Vicki Hamilton (VH)
Neil McIntosh (NM)
Lucy Phipps (LP)
Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR) – Chair
Annie Temple (AT)
Clive Watts (CW)
Graham Webber (GW)

Apologies:

None

In attendance:

Dawn Challis (DC) – School Business Manager
Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk
Sarah Parish (SP)

Governor challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Quorum was confirmed.
- There were no apologies tendered.
- AOB: As the first point of the meeting, JSR asked governors to formally agree what had previously been agreed by email: she proposed that, in the light of the seriousness of the Covid-19 outbreak, and the government recommendation for social distancing, that this FGB meeting, and all subsequent Langtree governors' meetings should be held remotely via web-based software for the foreseeable future. This was agreed unanimously by all governors present, with no governor voicing any concerns.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.

Signed

Date

2. ATB meeting, 30th January 2020

2.1 Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record, and signed by JSR for filing.

2.2 **Review of Actions/matters arising:** Unless otherwise discussed, assigned actions had been completed. Matters arising not covered by the current agenda were considered:

- **Outstanding DBS checks** (item 2.3): JF and AD are complete, the check for CW is still ongoing but there is no cause for concern. JSR to ask Mary Taylor-Lane to confirm when all is done. **Action:** JSR
- **Complete Prevent and GDPR training** (item 2.2) Still not completed by one governor due to extenuating circumstances. **Action:** JC to complete both training tasks ASAP and confirm to VH and JSR when complete.
- **Charity Law** (item 2.4): DC has provided a very useful document which VH has since circulated. Please ask JSR if there are any further issues or questions.
- JF and AD governor inductions are complete, thank you to VH for all you are doing in this area.
- **Openness of school site** (item 4.4): SB has invited the Assistant Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) to risk-assess the Langtree site, to inform the SLT's current thinking. **Action:** SB to report back at future FBG meeting.

3. **Headteacher's Section:** SB presented his report which had been previously circulated. Discussion raised the following points:

- Admissions this year are very strong – but unfortunately there are 16 applicants with siblings at the school who live outside the catchment area who may not be admitted. Also have five applicants with EHCPs, two of these have such significant issues that we initially refused them – but this has since been overruled. A tribunal appeal is being considered but is unlikely to change the outcome. We will therefore do all we can to prepare for these students and help them to integrate successfully – and then take things forward from there.
- Attendance will take a big hit based on the last week or so due to Corona Virus.
- There has been a much higher number of bullying incidents than previous due to the new inclusion policy. Bullying incidents are now reported even if they consist of inappropriate words of insult that are not directed at someone. *It would be helpful of the type of bullying was differentiated as being targeted at specific students - or otherwise.*
- Exclusions have gone up again this year compared to previous years. *Is the average number of days dropping throughout the year?* SB advised that we have excluded more times this year than for the last couple of years but the length of exclusions is generally less than before indicating less serious infringements. A significant number of the exclusions are accounted for by two very relatively challenging individuals (one relatively recent arrival to the school who will be leaving this year, and one year 9 student for whom we are looking at alternative provision such as a managed move to another school - or possibly the UTC in Didcot which would be able to provide a more practical curriculum).

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- Student progress: We were hopeful that the current Year 11 cohort would make at least the same progress and also receive results in line with last year's cohort – but their summer exams have now been cancelled. We will therefore have to wait and see what the DfE decide to do regarding the awarding of grades.
- Our current MAT status: Langtree is always open to collaborations with other schools – but at present almost all feedback indicates that we, as well as other local schools and colleges, seem happy with the current status quo. However, if others do approach us to collaborate in the future, we would of course look into it. *Rather than waiting to see if anything comes up perhaps we should scope out what options there might be for us to collaborate with others?* We have actually been doing this unofficially for the past two or three years, but at the moment we still don't see a need from other schools – and we have additionally been assured by DfE representatives that as long as Langtree is functioning well (which it is!), the school will not be forced into a large MAT. From our perspective, we do not have aspirations to be part of an empire, and believe that we are more than sustainable as a single Academy Trust for the foreseeable future.
- Corona Virus: Italy ski trip students were welcomed back into school after their trip, because they had been confined to a non-affected area and had travelled in their own minibus. There have been no confirmed cases of Corona Virus within school.
- In accordance with the latest government directive, the schools will be closed from Monday (23 March 20) but Key Worker children and others with significant need will be allowed to come in. The current expectation is that there will be about 8 students on Monday but this number might grow. *What are the main concerns?* This is all very fresh information so we don't yet know what the main issues will be. *Any Safeguarding issues?* Heads of Years are making sure we're offering vouchers to Free School Meals (FSM) students.
- GCSEs and A Level exams have been cancelled, and it is unclear as yet how grades will be given. *How are Year 11s feeling?* A real mix of emotions, still waiting to hear from the government about how grades will be applied.
- We have a list of children who are vulnerable that we will touch base with.
- Learning from home: In the short term haven't planned to set much new learning as this could disadvantage students who are less supported at home. Instead, students will be directed to use the time to go over what they have already learnt.
- *JSR reminded governors that although the school will be closing, our work as governors continues.*
- The scheduled Ofsted briefing session did not take place due to more pressing concerns linked to the Corona Virus outbreak – and in addition it has been reported that Ofsted inspections are currently on hold. This briefing will instead be re-scheduled for later meetings.

4. Governor Updates:

- With huge regret Scott Chambers has resigned from the governing body effective 27th February 2020. Governors were keen to record their warm appreciation to Scott for all he has done as a governor for Langtree over the past year.
- GW has kindly agreed to become the Chair of Curriculum and Standards committee with effect from 20th April 2020.

Signed

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- AB confirmed that he was willing to serve as a governor for another term of 4 years. Governors voted and agreed AB's term of office renewal and voiced their sincere appreciation for all that AB continues to do.
- **Proposal for Sarah Parish to join FGB:** SP introduced herself, explaining that she has been involved in education all her professional life: she has been a Playgroup Supervisor, a Primary School Head Teacher and also a Special Needs Coordinator. SP has been retired for 8 years however she currently sits on Reading's Foster Panel. Governors unanimously voted SB onto the governing board. **Action:** VH to conduct new governor induction, MTL do DBS check.
- **Governor strategic governance group (GSGG):** JSR proposed to close the GSGG as it has achieved as much as it can, Governors agreed. Governors thanked KC for all he has done with the GSGG. Additionally, it was noted that the governor skills audit was worthwhile and this exercise should be completed every 2 years.
- **Diana Hathaway:** Unfortunately, the PTA Race Night was cancelled due to Corona Virus – and we have also learnt that Diana has a health issue. Governors asked SB to convey our huge appreciation for all she has done for Langtree, as well as our thoughts and prayers. **Action:** SB to send card and flowers from School and governors
- **Remote meetings:** Committee meetings are due to take place in May. JSR asked whether governors were happy to continue meeting remotely via the current software (Google Hangouts)? *Yes – but do all have the ability to set remote meetings up?* A staff member can set up committee meetings as there is a need to have a Gmail address. SB can do this for Finance and C+S, and Sarah Burman for P+C. Governors again agreed that they were happy for remote meetings to continue while social distancing continues to be recommended.

GW left the meeting at 9.05pm.

5. Committee Reports

- **Finance and General Purposes:** Minutes of 3rd March had been circulated.
 - There is a £35,000 overspend with an overall deficit of about £17,000. With the school closing due to Corona Virus there could actually be a saving of about £40,000.
 - A lot of work such as painting, wiring, etc. is scheduled to happen during the school closure.
 - GDPR: MTL and SB are doing a lot of work in this area including checking whether Langtree is doing things correctly.
- **Curriculum and Standards:** Minutes of 3rd March had been circulated.
 - Mark Smith, Head of Science, attended the meeting. Mark said that his biggest challenge is Chemistry (with results falling behind Physics and Biology). Mark believes that changing the order of how chemistry is taught will help. *Is there any way of improving the learning experience in Maths to pull science up?* There has always been tension between Maths and Science teaching, for example doing the same calculation but in different ways. We are reviewing our curriculum and methodology of delivery and evaluating our teaching and identifying how to make improvements.
 - Year 11 mock results had indicated that students were on course to achieve their predicted results.

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- Proposed that at KS3 the technology rotation will gradually include more technology content, a new subject 'Product Design' is being developed which may gradually replace other non-technology subjects within the rotation.
- MFL: Langtree is looking at the possibility of moving from teaching three languages to two. If so, this will be discussed further at the Curriculum Committee.
- VH noted that the new Sex and Relationship curriculum should be discussed by the C+S Committee. **Action:** JSR to advise GW for next meeting.

- Pastoral & Community:** Minutes of 2nd March had been circulated.
 - Sam Gould, new school nurse, attended the first part of the meeting. Sam noted that although she is contracted to be at Langtree 9am-3pm Monday to Thursday, not all of her time will be spent at Langtree due to planned area activities (like immunisations and training).
 - There is no school policy on Infectious Diseases – perhaps Langtree should have one? **Action:** VH to investigate and discuss with P+C committee.
 - Formal complaints are being logged and reviewed; however informal complaints were not being taken care of quite as well up until recently – but this is now being addressed.
 - The Equality and Diversity policy was approved (as below).
 - The Sexual Relationship policy cannot be finalised until the 2020/21 curriculum is organised.
 - There were 120 reported safeguarding incidents. The new system is now allowing many more incidents to be reported but few of these, if any, are significant or carried forward. Everything (even a bruise on a leg) is now being logged - this will help track patterns. *Would students be aware that such things are being logged?* The understanding is that students should not be aware.

- Fund-raising Team:**
 - JC has been working with AD and AB, and have concluded that building a £1.5 million drama studio that requires its own revenue to function is perhaps not the only possible approach. There may be an alternative way forward with a different architectural practice - which they are currently looking into. More news to follow in due course.

- Approval of statutory policies:**
 - The Equality and Diversity policy was presented by the Pastoral & Community committee, which they had reviewed and approved. This was ratified by the full governing body.

- AOB:** It was proposed and agreed unanimously at the start of this meeting that FGB meetings and also governor committee meetings could be held remotely via online software with immediate effect, and for the foreseeable future.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 14th May, 7:00 pm

JSR thanked all governors and closed the meeting at 21:45 pm.

Signed

Date

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 19th March 2020:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
2.2	Ensure outstanding DBS checks have been completed	JSR	ASAP
2.2	Complete online Prevent and GDPR training and confirm when complete	JC	ASAP
2.2	SB to discuss the openness of the site with LADO and report back to governors.	SB	July 2020
	Provide update on LEAF's student initiative regarding BP	SB	July 2020
	Ofsted Inspection Framework Informational Sessions	SB	May 2020
4.4	Sarah Parish induction and DBS checks	VH/MTL	ASAP
4.6	Send card/flowers to Diana Hathaway	SB	ASAP
	P&C to revisit OCC judicial review on transgender toolkit	JSR	May 2020
5.2	New Sex and Relationships curriculum to be discussed at next C&S Committee meeting	JSR	May 2020
5.3	Investigate whether Langtree should have an Infectious Diseases policy	VH	May 2020
5.5	Equality and Diversity Policy approved, upload to website where necessary	JC	ASAP
	Critchley's to attend FGB if medium or high risks reported during audit	JSR/DC	Ongoing
	Consider next steps of governor training	VH	Ongoing

Signed

Date