Norton Junior School
CAST Committee Meeting – 3.3.20 @ 5.00 pm

Present: A Hayes, RJ Walton (Chair), K Jenkins, G Chadwick, S Oliver, L Hollingworth
Apologies: M Bates, K Turner-West

1. **CONFIDENTIALITY / DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST** – There were no declarations of personal or business interest in respect of any item on the agenda or raised at the meeting.

2. **XP Updates** – Discussion centred around wider Trust and NJS specific developments, including:
   - Trust expansion re Plover, Gateshead and XP Trust 6th form provision and support for Big Picture alternate provision.
   - Restructuring and capacity development in terms of XP leadership roles.
   - Relocation and restructuring at NJS and development of outside units for intervention and nurture group purposes, as well as creating additional meeting space and Buddies.
   - Extended discussion around a proposal to change Autumn Half Term holiday arrangements for October 2020 followed. Adrian summarised proven benefits and his research outcomes in terms of positive impact on attendance and health and wellbeing for both pupils and staff. Attempts to collaborate with the wider pyramid since the start of this academic year had not come to fruition. Governor comments summarised:
   - *Governors appreciated that Infant and Junior Schools would be aligned but queried whether this clashed with local secondary school arrangements.*
   - *Governors flagged up potential child care implications for a number of families and anticipated many 'disgruntled' parents.*
   - *Governors questioned whether there had been parental consultation and felt that consideration of parental views and opinions would have been a better course of action, given the short timescale and feeling this would be a radical change to a number of families.*
   - *Governors made the point that flexibility for family holidays would not necessarily increase, given that older siblings would still be in school and Campsmount was not yet aligned.*
   - *Financial savings could have been made or extended holidays taken, had the change of dates been notified earlier.*
   - *Governors expressed the view that change should be driven by the views of the community and that the best outcome would be for all pyramid schools to have the same holiday pattern.*
   - *Whilst there were likely to be issues with the short notice given this year, governors unanimously supported the notion of a two week holiday period in Autumn of the 2021/22 academic year; pledging to put parent pressure on Campsmount to encourage them to align.*
   - *Governors made the point that in some professions and industries it was necessary to book leave dates a whole year in advance. The majority of parents will have already booked their leave for this year.*

   Resolved 1 – Adrian Hayes to liaise with Miss Tunney, Headteacher at Norton Infant School, to share governor views and recommendations.

3. **School Improvement Plan – RAG rated** – Distributed in advance and questions invited on each Key Issue:
   - *Governors made reference to the strategic and supportive placement of senior leadership into upper and lower phases and questioned the impact of 2 NQTs and 1 RQT on the quality of teaching and learning. Discussion centred around the continuous professional development and investment of time and resources in new staff, in order to build future capacity.*
   - *Governors discussed curriculum developments; the launch of 'Crew', development of effective marking and feedback in writing, a review of reading strategies and a review of Subject Leadership roles in terms of current format –v- a cross-network Trust model.*
   - *At Governor request, Adrian explained the notion of Expeditions and 'Crew', and how children were engaging in more contextual based learning; engaging more with the wider community and world wherever possible.*

- *Discussion centred around the way in which 'Crew' was empowering children to take control of their own learning and progress; children supporting each other and developing social emotional moral and British values. Children able to recognise, praise and celebrate the values of kindness, respect, tolerance, independence, positive behaviours and having the opportunity to have their voice heard, without naming and shaming of individuals.*
- *Ongoing Trust network meetings facilitate the giving and receiving of support and a whole Trust Training Day on 26th June 2020, with Teachers and TAs in attendance, is currently in the planning stage.*
- *Governors noted that, with the financial support of the Trust, a B11 Ofsted Inspector would be reviewing and supporting school through a comprehensive Learning Review on Monday 9.3.20.*

Resolved 2 – Review of Governance and Trust Leadership to be an Agenda Item at the next CAST Meeting 16.6.20.

4. **KS2 Data & Teaching Profile** – Document distributed in advance and Adrian talked through KS2 projections. Governors questioned:

- Greater depth predictions in Reading; anticipating a level of parity between Reading, Writing and SPAG. The reasons why this could be anomalous were explained, alongside test format and content of three progressively harder texts. Rev'd Walton expressed interest in viewing a Y6 SATs Reading Comprehension paper.
- School's current focus on promoting a love of reading through the sharing of high quality texts in whole class teacher led reading sessions was shared.
- Questioned as to whether school felt it had capacity to develop early career teachers into good teachers rapidly, Adrian confirmed that school was in a good place to do so.
- Further questioning considered the school's capacity to retain well developed NQT's and the challenges of succession management moving forwards.

5. **Any Other Business**

a) **Health & Safety – Coronavirus** – School adhering to professional advice and proactively promoting good hygiene and hand washing routines throughout school. School continuously monitoring and risk assessing in order to continue to operate safely and to limit any potential disruption to the community as far as we reasonably can.

Date and time of next meeting Tuesday, 16.6.20 @ 5.00 pm