



Company No.: 08036395

## MINUTES

Non-Confidential Minutes of the Eden Academy Board of Trustees, held via Zoom on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 starting at 2:15pm

Attendance:

Angela St. John	ASJ	Trustee
Barry Nolan	BN	Trustee (Chair) & Academy Member
Brian Eaton	BE	Trustee
Collette Stone	CS	Trustee
Helen Milner	HM	Trustee
Jamie Clarke	JC	Trustee (Deputy Chair)
Mari Ladu	ML	Trustee
Mary Canavan	MC	Trustee
Mirvette Russo	MR	Trustee
Susan Douglas <sup>1</sup>	SD	Trustee & CEO
Vicky Collis	VC	Trustee
Also present		
Hardip Begol	HB	Academy Member (Chair)
Judith Hemery	JH	Academy Member
Keith Holroyd	KJH	Governance & Policy Officer; Clerk
Mark Lemon	ML	Academy Member
Pamela Stentiford	PS	Academy Member

<sup>1</sup> withdrew for item 81

Apologies:

Karen Deacon	KD	Trustee
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The meeting was declared quorate

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
75/2019-20	<b>Welcome, introductions and apologies and the Board's acceptance or rejection for any absences</b>  BN welcomed the Trust Members to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from KD.	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
76/2019-20	<p><b>Declaration of interests</b></p> <p>SD declared an interest in item 81 re. her contract variation and will withdraw from the meeting for this item.</p>	
77/2019-20	<p><b>Items of any other business</b></p> <p>None for this meeting.</p>	
78/2019-20	<p><b>Board approval of the minutes of the previous meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020 were <b>approved</b>.</p> <p>All actions had been completed.</p>	
79/2019-20	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>Ref. item 73: The minutes of the Covid sub-group meeting had been circulated to all Trustees following that meeting.</p>	
80/2019-20	<p><b>CEO report and Covid update</b></p> <p><u>Pupil numbers</u></p> <p>SD explained how the schools had looked at their pupil populations, planning to bring back those pupils with the highest priority, and the current context around those who are shielding. The current advice is that children who have a shielding letter should still be at home. If the parent of a child who is shielding wishes them to return, they should be referred to their paediatrician before returning.</p> <p>Schools are expecting the numbers to increase further before the end of term and are carrying out significant work to help prepare children to return.</p> <p>The latest pupil number information is set out in table 1 below.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed how the numbers are very much in line with those identified in pre-opening plans. Staff concerns have been allayed for many staff and more are now willing to come back into school. There is currently no need to roll-back on these numbers from a staffing perspective.</p> <p>There are 2 children whose parents would like them to return to school but who haven't due to them still shielding. Trustees and Members discussed the recent announcement that shielding orders are being stepped down from 1<sup>st</sup> August as well as how and why shielding letters were issued. It was noted that our schools would not readmit any child unless their shielding letter had been removed.</p>	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	<p><u>Plans for the summer</u></p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed what plans are being put in place for any provision over the summer holiday period. SD explained that in the southern hub there is capacity, through the Family Services team, and sufficient funding to put on some provision for the c. 100 children during a 3-week period at the start of the summer holidays. Families will not be charged for this. This would cover the period where shielding has stopped so we will be able to provide some respite for those families. Because this is being resourced through the Family Services team, we are not in a position to provide the same arrangement for the northern hub schools at this time.</p> <p>'Camp Eden' will run online throughout the school holiday with a range of themed activities and live events. The last week will focus on preparing children to return to school. There will also be drop-in sessions with service managers, and we will continue to provide online therapy during this period. The therapy provision during school holidays, normally reverts to the health authorities and the risk that they might expect us to carry on providing this in the future was noted.</p> <p>Trustees and Members noted that a range of our current extra-curricular support activities, such as food drops etc., will also continue but the formal educational provision will cease.</p> <p><u>Transition</u></p> <p>Trustees and Members noted that SD's report included information requested by the Board's Covid sub-group re. transition.</p> <p>The building work at Moorcroft has been further delayed. ASJ explained that the original contract had gone out to tender but came back as too expensive; some revisions were made, and new submissions tenders are due back today. Assuming these are satisfactory, work will commence shortly with a view to having the new accommodation available from November. The previously discussed contingency plans will be put in place. Trustees and Members discussed how this will impact on pupil numbers and social distancing if numbers are increased further at Grangewood during this period, particularly given the government's expectations that all children will return to school from September. SD explained that the current assumption is that social distancing will not be required in the same way as at present, but that the existing hierarchy of controls should be maintained.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed how much Eden are doing on transition that should have been done by other organisations and how the virtual transition arrangements are</p>	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	<p>working, particularly at Hexham Priory and James Rennie schools where there are 3 young people who still need places secured.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed the turnover at school leadership team level this summer, and the circumstances around this.</p> <p><u>School improvement plans, personal targets, and performance management</u></p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed how much of the SIPs will be rolling over as a result of Covid and the implications of this for personal targets and performance management. It was noted that no staff will be penalised in terms of their performance management because of the current situation.</p>	
81/2019-20	<p><b>Proposal for an extension to the CEO's contract variation</b></p> <p><u>Confidential minutes refer.</u></p> <p><i>SD withdrew from the meeting for this item.</i></p>	
82/2019-20	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>ML updated Trustees on the handover arrangements and completion of her training.</p> <p>The safeguarding hub had discussed whether it would be appropriate for Trustees to attend safer recruitment training. Trustees and Members discussed the current requirements which are for at least one of the panel members to have been trained. This is usually covered by either SD or another senior leader (Director or Head) who have all been trained. It was felt that this made it unnecessary for Trustees and that the training budgets could then be used elsewhere. If any Trustees are keen to do this however, then they should discuss this with BN.</p> <p>A key role for Trustees on panels would be to check that at least one panel member has been trained and that pre-employment checks are covered off.</p>	
83/2019-20	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Trustees and Members noted that they had received the latest report Director of Finance and Operations which had been submitted to the recent Finance Committee and the draft minutes from that meeting.</p>	

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Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	<p>JC explained that the cash balance deficit at Grangewood is due to monies owed from local authorities. The cash balance deficit for the central fund relates to monies owed from the schools which would be paid when they receive outstanding income from local authorities.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed the level of expenditure on Covid related costs and what could be reclaimed from central government.</p>	
84/2019-20	<p><b>Eden Academy Trust statement on race inequality</b></p> <p>BN updated Trustees and Members on the context and background to the statement issued jointly by himself and SD, and the fact that this had been warmly welcomed across the Trust.</p> <p>A working group has been established which has now met twice. It is looking at developing ideas about the sort of actions we could be doing as a Trust to support colleagues at this time but also to tackle issues of systemic racism both long and short term. There are currently 21 members of staff on the group from across all schools and central teams, including teaching and non-teaching staff. The group has written some ToRs setting out its short and long-term goals and intends to share early ideas with BN and SD before the end of term. These will be sent to Trustees for consideration.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed what the focus might be but were pleased to see that the terms of reference reflect wider inclusivity. BN and SD had not set the agenda for the group. Early indications are that its remit may include support for individual schools, to reflect the different circumstances at each.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed whether the working group would encompass parents and whether we ought to be recognising the group on the main Eden website. SD explained that it was currently a staff group but expects that they will comment on the inclusion of parental views. It was recognised that there are some communities with whom we do not currently have effective engagement. It was also confirmed that the statement from BN and SD should be on the website.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed the importance of managing expectations. It is important for the values of the organisation to be reflected and that people take a constructive approach to the working group and subsequent discussions. The terms of reference should be framed so as to set expectations about what can be achieved.</p>	

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Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	<p>Trustees and Members noted that the working group had already talked about representation within our governance structures, particularly at LAB level, accepts that it will need to participate in the implementation of solutions and is already providing access to a wider range of networks. Trustees and Members discussed the current make-up of the LABs and how reflective they may be of the school populations. It was noted that detailed information is available about pupil populations at school level and is publicly available.</p> <p>Trustees and Members considered whether the Board should be reflecting the feedback from the working group with all our school groups; staff, children, and parents.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed what the implications may be should there be significant numbers of additional staff required to shield in the event of a 2<sup>nd</sup> wave due to changes in the priority and national risk assessments and whether this should this be reflected on the risk register.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed whether there is anything we should be starting to do from an academic point of view around schools' practices, policies and resources or await the working group's outcomes.</p> <p>Trustees and Members also discussed how the Board will consider the outputs from the working group. They also reflected on how any additional workload for the Board would be managed but <b>agreed</b> that Board capacity would be found for this important issue. The Board recognised that individually and collectively it needs to educate itself further on some of these matters.</p>	
85/2019-20	<p><b>Feedback from the Trustees' self-evaluation survey</b></p> <p>BN thanked Trustees for responding to the recent survey and summarised some the headline messages as set out in the report.</p> <p>BN outlined the discussion he'd had with Members prior to this meeting, regarding the implementation of a more formal assessment to be undertaken in the new school year. This would be designed to provide an assessment of the Boards improvement capacity. Trustees and Members discussed what other organisations have used the framework and how this would be an evolution of the Board's past self-assessment practice.</p>	

**Table 1**

School	# on roll	# shielding	# in school this week	% of possible attendance <sup>1</sup>
AS	80	11	54	43%
GS	105	38	18	27%
HPS	104	12 <sup>2</sup>	54 <sup>3</sup>	59%
JRS	146	11	72 <sup>4</sup>	53%
MS	84	23	18	30%
PFS	147	17	42	33%
SHS	46	35	9	84%

**Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> Those not shielding
- <sup>2</sup> 6 on formal shielding letter and 6 on the advice of the school nurse
- <sup>3</sup> 2 cohorts of 27, for 2 days each
- <sup>4</sup> 2 cohorts of 36 for 2 days each

Ref.	Ratification items	Action
R17/2019-20	<p><b>Budget</b></p> <p>JC outlined the position regarding the current budget positions. Trustees and Members noted the stated position re. deficits, pupil numbers and the projections for years 2021-22 and 2022-23 and the discussion at the Finance Committee on how any initial in-year deficits would be managed.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed the potential for additional costs relating to any requirement to continue both home-based and in-school provision were some parents to refuse to send pupils back to school in September and whether local authorities could subsequently withdraw funding. SD explained that based on current government assumptions attendance would be mandatory. Should there still be shielding provisions in place however, then we would continue to provide home-based provision for those pupils so a local authority would not be in a position to withdraw funding as would be continuing to provide provision and meeting the best endeavour's criteria.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed the government's announced £350m funding for tutoring and £650m for catch up in general. SD explained that special schools would receive an allocation and strong representations had been made to the DfE to allow maximum flexibility about how we use the money allocated. The National Tuition Service wouldn't be helpful for the majority of our pupils. Trustees and Members discussed how we might use our allocation to bolster our SaLT provision for example.</p>	

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Ref.	Ratification items	Action
	<p>Trustees and Members discussed the estimates within the budget for national pay awards and the expectation that there would be additional direct grants towards funding these, as had happened previously.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed how budget changes will be reviewed moving forward. They noted how the budget takes account of the issues raised by the Finance Committee and Trustees and were reassured that there is sufficient flexibility within the budget submitted, noting that the current budget submitted represents the worst-case scenario.</p> <p>Trustees and Members discussed how Covid may impact on performance management and any ongoing implications for pay awards.</p> <p>Trustees <b>ratified</b> the budget.</p>	
R18/2019-20	<p><b>Complaints Policy</b></p> <p>Trustees discussed the draft policy submitted, noting that this reflected the revised model policy from Schools' HR.</p> <p>Trustees and Members questioned the change from "vexatious" to "remain dissatisfied" and whether this was a deliberate softening of approach or whether the change was made for some other reason as they have quite different meanings and interpretations.</p> <p>It was <b>agreed</b> that KJH would refer this query back to School's HR for clarification.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Seek clarification from Schools' HR regarding the change in terminology from "vexatious" to "remain dissatisfied"</p>	KJH
R19/2019-20	<p><b>Safeguarding appendix</b></p> <p>Trustees noted that this paper updated the previous appendix ratified by the Board in April and reflects the latest DfE guidance.</p> <p>Trustees <b>ratified</b> the policy appendix.</p>	
R20/2019-20	<p><b>Governance meeting schedule 2020-21</b></p> <p>Trustees noted that the proposed schedule of dates for committees and LABs had been discussed and agreed with the various Chairs and Heads.</p> <p>Trustees <b>ratified</b> the schedule.</p>	

Ref.	Ratification items	Action
R21/2019-20	<p><b>New IT network</b></p> <p>Trustees noted that this paper would have come to the March meeting but had been deferred to free up that agenda for Covid discussions.</p> <p>ASJ explained the background to the paper, the reasons behind the differing timescales for the northern and southern schools based on their current infrastructure, the move to predominantly cloud-based provision and the improvements to user experience. Trustees would need to approve the proposals set out in the paper if work were to be scheduled during the summer holiday period.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the outcomes from the earlier refresh and how this reflects in the current proposal and noted that moving to cloud-based provision would improve our business continuity resilience.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the proposed timescales set out in the paper and any contingencies required, noting that the new system would be built in parallel with the current arrangements so any delays would not present an operational issue.</p> <p>Trustees <b>ratified</b> the proposal.</p>	

### Closing remarks

Trustees and Members wished to praise SD for her exceptional hard work over recent months in leading the Trust's response to Covid and enhancing its reputation through her collaborative work with other organisations and bodies.

Trustees and Members noted that this would be the last Board meeting for CS as her term of office would be expiring in the summer and she had not sought reappointment. BN thanked CS on behalf of the Board and the wider Trust for her long association with Eden and Moorcroft previously, and her many contributions.

There are confidential minutes for this meeting.

Meeting closed at 4:20pm

**The Eden Academy Trust** is a charitable company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales  
Register number: 08036395  
Registered office: Grangewood School, Fore Street,  
Eastcote, Pinner HA5 2JQ

## ACTION SUMMARY

Agenda item x/2019-20		Action	Who
R18	Complaints Policy	Seek clarification from Schools' HR regarding the change in terminology from "vexatious" to "remain dissatisfied"	KJH