

East Midlands Academy Trust - Trust Board Meeting
 Thursday 27th August 2020 at 10am - Virtually via MS Teams
Extraordinary Meeting

These minutes reflect the order of the agenda and not necessarily the order in which items were discussed.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome	<p>Present: Kevin Crompton (EMAT: Trustee) Fiona Wheeler (EMAT: Trustee) Ayo Salam (EMAT: Trustee) Andy Davis (EMAT: Trustee) <i>Joined at 10.17am</i> Stephen Morales (EMAT: Trustee) Asvin Morjaria (EMAT: Trustee) David Houghton (EMAT: Trustee)</p> <p>Joshua Coleman (EMAT: CEO) Paul Wheeler (EMAT: Finance & Operations Director) Chloe Nelson (EMAT: Executive Assistant)- Minutes</p> <p>KC welcomed all and reminded all present that the matters raised within this meeting would remain confidential until the minutes were agreed and signed off. KC made a special welcome to Asvin and David as this was their first meeting as Trustees.</p>	
2. Apologies	<p>Apologies had been received from: Jon Harris (EMAT: Trustee) Leigh Jones (EMAT: Trustee) Monica Juan (EMAT: Head of Governance and Safeguarding)</p> <p>Apologies were not received from Matthew Johanson (EMAT: Trustee)</p>	
3. Quoracy	The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
4. Declarations of Interest	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda in addition to those already recorded on the annual Register of Interests.	
5. Coronavirus Update (including Safeguarding matters)	<p><i>JC reported verbally about COVID19.</i></p> <p>The Central Team have been working exceptionally hard to open next week. The government changed their position on face masks yesterday (26th Aug) morning and so we have been working to ensure the right messages are in place. We have given the opportunity for staff and pupils to use face coverings if they wish to from early March. Over 35,000 masks were ordered across our schools alongside sanitiser. We do not intend to supply pupils with face masks</p>	

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	<p>as we cannot keep up with the demand and so we have sent out communication to ensure people take on their own responsibility.</p> <p>Staff have been consulted with in the risk assessments and parents have been informed through social media and the school websites. In terms of staffing we have 100% attendance ready for September.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about communication to parents and whether NIA communication was behind other schools in the Trust?</p> <p>JC explained that communication for NIA is coming out Friday. Joni Ager has created a workbook which will update staff of all changes and this will be sent out with supplementary guidance throughout the CPD days.</p> <p>Government intervention criteria will trigger the need to wear masks in certain hotspots. NCC have been in contact with PW to discuss what the intervention level is and currently it is only around Greencore not the whole of Northampton.</p> <p>Regarding the change in grades – England government followed Scotland’s decision regarding A-Levels and GCSEs and using centre assessed grades (CAG). Prince William School are the only school in the Trust who have A-level grades and there are two subjects which we are contesting as a cohort – chemistry and food tech. In terms of individuals, with grades lower than anticipated we have shared the appeals process information with these children. The majority of pupils have been assisted through clearing and have secured a positive progression from us .</p> <p>We have had no parents coming back contesting the grades of GCSE pupils even though a few children were graded higher on the algorithm – these pupils have been spoken to on an individual basis. Overall the results process was not detrimental to the school.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the personal hygiene aspects for the schools?</p> <p>JC confirmed a scheme is in place already however if a child does not have a mask then the school will supply them with one.</p> <p>Trustees congratulated everyone involved for all their hard work during this time and the success of the ‘return to normal’ working party. The Trustees shared their thanks for ensuring pupils can return to school in September.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether JC believes grade inflation will have an impact on pupils ability to engage in the next phase of their education. An example given was if a child who got a higher grade than they would under normal circumstances would fail to engage within the next stage of learning. JC stated that if the majority are given this</p>	

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	<p>opportunity they should thrive but some may falter but this is the same every year as many undergraduates change their chosen specialism or even drop out altogether. JC explained last year pupils were offered an unconditional offer for university places.</p>	
<p>6. Covid-19 Risk Assessment (Update)</p>	<p><i>All risk assessments had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.</i></p> <p>KC suggested the board look at the NIA risk assessment in detail as this covers the main issues across all schools.</p> <p>PW confirmed the process of the risk assessment and explained that the format is the same as previously adhered to in June as this worked well with no major issues. The assessments have been updated with current guidance and larger numbers. Schools have some site specific elements but the majority of points are across all schools. This risk assessments has been put together alongside the 'Return to Normal' planning meetings during the summer break and everyone is aware of the guidance. In the RTN meeting yesterday (26th Aug) it was discussed on how we would refer back to the assessments in contingency plans for a local lockdown.</p> <p>A Trustee asked why the format differs slightly in terms of risk assessments? PW explained that some of the schools had used a previous incarnation of the document rather the most up to date. CN will contact schools and update all assessments to ensure they have risk ownership and monitoring columns.</p> <p>A Trustee asked at what level the risk assessment is done? PW confirmed that it is done at school level first with the Headteachers and then it is reviewed by JC and PW. JC explained what the difference with the risk assessments were from school to school but all headteachers are comfortable that the risks are managed in the same way. PWS have flagged that anything out of their control will be flagged as orange for example school transport.</p> <p><i>PW explained each point on the NIA risk assessment to confirm measures in place across the Trust.</i></p> <p>1.1 Net Capacity - Where schools are able to they will keep children separate throughout the day by either year group or houses to ensure they can get the best ability groups together. All schools have some form of bubble system with activity happening within classes so that if we do get a positive result, we can minimise the amount of people it effects.</p> <p>1.2 Organisation of Teaching Spaces – We have worked with class teachers and laid out each classroom so that children are facing forward and a 2m space is kept between the teacher and children. Most of the larger spaces are not in use and if they are required there is a limited number to these.</p> <p>1.3 Availability of staff and class sizes – All staff have been spoken to and will be shown the risk assessments on their CPD day. A lot of information will be discussed next week to enforce new behaviours with both staff and</p>	<p>CN ensure all schools have ownership and monitoring on RA</p>

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	<p>pupils. There are also individual risk assessments which have been carried out by HR.</p> <p>1.4 Prioritising Provision – We have assessed the needs of the pupils coming back in and have ensured that we have set up the work/support that they need to come back to school.</p> <p>1.5 The School Day – Schools will be introducing staggered start and finish times where it is possible. PWS come in on school buses and so all of pupils will come in at the same time. This has been highlighted as a medium risk as headteachers feel while measures are in place it is reliant on families in most cases to abide by the instructions.</p> <p>1.6 Planning Movement around the school – At the NIA a one-way system is not required as bubbles are set up in different areas of the school. Lunchtime and breacktimes are in separate areas and so they are within their same bubbles. With PWS they have a one-way system to prevent two-way traffic and timetabling has been altered to mitigate the movement around the school.</p> <p>1.7 Curriculum organisation – Schools will be completing a recovery analysis when pupils return. Pupils have been much more resilient than the press have indicated, and additional tutoring and support will be available for pupils who require it.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the year 11 curriculum organisation and information received about eight GCSEs with additional after school provision. Is the additional provision being offered to all children and has this been communicated’?</p> <p>JC explained the government guidance on school curriculum provision with flexibility on reducing some exam provision. A discussion took place around courses at the NIA and the decision would be made on a 1:1 basis. JC will follow this up with Jo Trevenna to ensure that discussions were taking place.</p> <p>JC confirmed that it has been agreed with schools that additional online learning for quarantined families will not be provided, only online links, as schools do not have the capacity to provide both full time in school provision and online . Pupils who are in hospital or medically unable to come into school will be provided with online provision. Cognitive assessments will take place with pupils however for the first few weeks back schools will focus on teaching and learning, and once gaps have been highlighted gaps it will be a slow and methodical approach to close these.</p> <p>1.8 Staff Workspaces – Workspaces have been re-configured including the staff rooms</p>	<p>JC confirm with JT that 1:1 GCSE discussions were taking place at NIA</p>

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	<p>1.9 Managing the school lifecycle – The school calendar and timetables have been revised and NIA are finalising theirs now. Pupils moving onto the next phase of their education have been engaged with. Induction and transition days have taken place online and video tours were put onto the school websites.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if 1.9 can be reduced to green? KC confirmed it could be moved to green as no matter how much support is provided there will be some pupils who struggle with transition as it is.</p> <p>1.10 Governance and Policy – Trustees have been included with the key decisions and are happy to open the schools. All meetings for the Trust Board have been set up for next year along with the school LABs.</p> <p>1.11 Policy Review – All policies were reviewed and COVID based policies were reviewed back in April/May. These have been updated, as necessary.</p> <p>1.12 Communication Strategy – Newsletters have been sent to staff with details letters to parents going out Friday.</p> <p>1.13 Staff Induction and CPD – Teams meetings have taken place and inset days will ensure staff are comfortable and happy with the information. A lot of CPD has been carried out during the lockdown with positive feedback following this. PW has rolled out ‘Smartlog’ which is a system of online learning and modules will be used alongside the main training platform.</p> <p>1.14 Free School Meals – Voucher scheme finishes at the end of the week and provision will be back in school. Planning is in place if we are in a local lockdown – we would revert back to the meal provision for a short period of time.</p> <p>1.15 Risk Assessments – Addressed with the walk around and training</p> <p>1.16 School Transport – Predominately in the secondary phase – face coverings will be used on all school transport and in buses children will sit in their bubble groups.</p> <p>2.1 Cleaning – The cleaning regime has been confirmed for the start of term. Outside of normal cleaning then day cleaners are in every school. The additional cost for cleaning of £119,000 has been built into the budgets.</p> <p>2.2 Hygiene and Handwashing – There are adequate supplies of handwash at the moment and staff will be instructed on induction days.</p> <p>2.3 Clothing/fabric – We encourage the use of uniforms again from the start of term and we have replaced 200 fabric chairs with hard chairs as they are easier to keep clean.</p>	

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	<p>2.4 Testing and managing symptoms – We will continue to adhere to the DfE guidance. Test results are coming back promptly now, and action will take place against positive tests. If multiple contacts came in the public health England would be called to put up a mobile test station.</p> <p>2.5 First Aid/Designated Safeguarding Leads – Headteachers are running first aid training at the start of term with the capacity to cope if we lost 1-2 members of staff. Fire Marshall training will also take place to ensure there is resilience within this system.</p> <p>2.6 Medical Rooms – Additional rooms have been identified for this – it is a medium risk at the NIA as an additional room is being set up now so once complete it will change to low.</p> <p>2.7 Communication with parents – As discussed previously we will follow up the communication at the NIA. Once all letters go out this will go down to a low risk.</p> <p>2.8 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – JC asked PW about the intervention for Northampton. PW stated that NCC have confirmed that in Northampton town schools will need to wear face coverings. Schools have been issued with a letter and a template of the poster to use for the schools about wearing masks and how to maintain them. As a Trust we cannot be held responsible for the child's keeping of the mask however we will monitor this.</p> <p>3.1 Pupil Behaviour – The behaviour policy has changed for the pupils and staff will remind pupils of this.</p> <p>3.2 Classrooms and teaching spaces – As discussed in 1.2. PW also confirmed that some schools have put down tape to mark out the teacher space. A Trustee asked about how this works for subjects like drama and music? JC explained that Individual guidance and provision for the individual 'active' subjects will be in bubbles, outside and distanced. Resources and cleaning have also been amended for these subjects.</p> <p>3.3 Movement in corridors – As discussed in 1.6.</p> <p>3.4/3.5 – Break Times and Lunch times – Timetabling and school layout factors in measures for break and lunch times.</p> <p>3.6 Toilets – There will be a limited number of students using the toilets during the school day and additional cleaning will take place. Several toilets have been closed to separate within the blocks.</p> <p>3.7 Medical Rooms – Confirmed plans in item 2.6</p>	

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	<p>A Trustee asked whether the medium risk for the medical rooms was about the capacity of them not the safety of the area? PW confirmed that is correct it is the number of medical rooms not their safety.</p> <p>3.8 Reception Area – This is reliant on parents following guidance however measures are in place.</p> <p>3.9 Arrival and Departure from school – Staggered starts for all schools except for PWS as they arrive on buses as confirmed in 1.16.</p> <p>3.10 Transport – Discussed in 1.16</p> <p>3.11 Staff Areas – Discussed in 1.8</p> <p>4.1 Pupils with underlying health issues – Pupils in risk groups have been identified and we will monitor those pupils and their families. Current advice is that the majority of pupils will be coming into school unless they have serious health conditions and they will be provided with home learning.</p> <p>A Trustee asked why this section was orange as they would like re-assurance these groups are being protected. JC confirmed that assessments have been done on what the schools currently know but until children come back in September then this cannot be confirmed as green. We need to confirm children’s vulnerability on their return to school. The risk is green but until all pupils return this will remain orange. Trustees recognised the difficulty if parents did not disclose information.</p> <p>A Trustee asked what the local Safeguarding partnership has been doing to mitigate the risk? JC stated the vulnerable pupils we know about have been supported and NIA would like to air on the side of caution to confirm once all pupils are back in school. A Trustee confirmed the risk will most likely never be green as it needs to be highlighted often and it should never be overlooked.</p> <p>A Trustee asked that the Trust are aware of those who are shielding however for new intake do we have pre-entry information on those leads? JC explained that information supplied between schools is not always as detailed and robust as the Trust would wish and so the school put in additional measure to allow parents/pupils to declare these issues. Trustees commented that the local Safeguarding partnership for NCC and MKC ought to have taken a lead role in this. Trustees are happy to hear the Trust has done everything they can at present with the knowledge provided.</p> <p>42 Staffing issues – Anyone who is vulnerable or in the high-risk group has had an individual risk assessment from HR and Headteachers are aware of this.</p>	

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	<p>5.1 Mental Health Concerns – Pupils – There has been a restructure of pastoral support and this will be picked up in the PSHE lessons and tutor time throughout the day. At the NIA the local authority has asked for volunteers to set up a mental health and Safeguarding hub in schools and there is space in the NIA to do this. We are currently in discussions to put in a place a multi-agency mental health team to support the county.</p> <p>5.2 Mental Health Concerns – Staff The EAP scheme is available for all member of staff and a large number of new staff will be coming in through a structured induction process.</p> <p>5.3 Bereavement Support – Professional support is available through the EAP scheme and policies are in place to support staff and pupils. We are aware of some staff members and children who have lost relatives during lockdown, but we will confirm more when they all come back into school.</p> <p>6.1 Maintaining Provision – All schools are ready for all pupils to come in.</p> <p>7.1 Review of fire procedures – Discussed in 2.5 that adequate training will take place in all schools. Training is available via Smartlog and fire evacuation drills will be carried out during the first week of term.</p> <p>7.2 Managing premises on reopening after lengthy closure – Discussed in 1.9</p> <p>7.3 Contractors working on the school site – Sports coaches and education support will be operating through our risk assessments and policies. Contractors will be supervised throughout their visit and we aim to have large contractors in during the half term break.</p> <p>8.1 Costs of schools response to COVID-19 - Any extraordinary costs in terms of COVID will be met by the Trust through reserves and contingencies. Mechanisms are in place to claim back from the government and additional money will be approved for the additional costs. The COVID claim went through in July for the current academic year and all has been accepted with money coming through for the primaries and we are just awaiting the secondaries.</p> <p>9.1 Oversight of the governing body – LAB meetings are all in place and Trustees have been involved in the risk assessment discussions.</p> <p>10. Additional site-specific issues and risks – N/A</p> <p>A Trustee asked about additional Safeguarding training as he is anticipating there will be in an increase in children making disclosures due to difficult circumstances during lockdown.</p>	

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	<p>JC thanked Kevin for confirming this and the Trust have been in discussions with the schools on this. It is an unknown at the moment however the social worker position is vacant and the Safeguarding forum has been put into next years diary to support staff.</p> <p>A Trustee asked whether the risk assessments were based on information from Public Health English, HSE and government guidance? PW confirmed yes and some of the risk assessments reference this including the staff handbook. When communicating with parents we have included links to relevant websites including the DfE guidance. Trustees were happy with this in terms of accountability and to ensure it is triangulated guidance.</p> <p>A Trustee asked what the plans are for the risk assessments going forward? PW stated we will monitor these going forward and the owner will review these on a monthly cycle.</p> <p>A Trustee asked whether it would be possible to have a one-page summary to draw out key concerns across the Trust as a whole? PW confirmed this will be provided at the next Trust Board/FHRE meeting.</p> <p>Trustees thanked Paul and the team for their robustness and comprehensiveness of the risk assessment. A Trustee confirmed in comparison to the local authority school the Trust have been much more thorough, and they have no concerns.</p> <p>DECISION: Trustees voted unanimously that they are happy for schools to re-open for the first week of September 2020.</p>	<p>PW to provide one page summary of all school risk assessments for TB/FHRE committee</p>
<p>7. Finance Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff Pay Awards - July Management Accounts 	<p><i>Staff Pay Awards and July Management Account documents had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.</i></p> <p>PW explained the staff pay awards which highlighted the main elements of the paper. The recommendation for Trustees was that the Trust follows the national policy and awards 2.75% for support staff and 3.3% for teaching staff.</p> <p>The pay strain totals £173,000 on assumption government do not fund any of the teachers pay rise. Catch up funding money and capital money has been confirmed but there is no commitment to the pay award.</p> <p>A Trustee raised concern for the money long term and the government not providing sufficient support. Another Trustee explained that there is no</p>	

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	<p>conclusion yet and the government should reflect on the pressures the schools will be under.</p> <p>The Chair asked Trustees is any of the feel we should be going against the national recommendation?</p> <p>Trustees confirmed no departures to what the national government are recommending. Trustees discussed the recommendations made and felt that the finances looked positive.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the pay awards to the executive team and PW explained under the academic financial handbook 2.3 there should be more rigour in place when considering pay rises for the executive team. PW recommended additional consideration is taken place in terms of the executive pay. The Chair confirmed that this would have been preferred as written statement prior to the meeting and would like the recommendation for support staff award to be shared with the central team.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if there is any other scrutiny, they should be cognisant of?</p> <p>PW explained that the academic handbook just states the executive team and so this would not be the case for the whole central team just PW/JC. JC explained the education cap and that the pay award is already part of the budget setting process.</p> <p>A Trustee confirmed that due diligence needs to be demonstrated around this and so though they accept the support staff rate to be given to the central team the paper needs to be amended to confirm what the executive pay award means.</p> <p>PW confirmed he will amend the recommendations to include executive pay amounts and re-send through for Trustee approval.</p> <p>A Trustee confirmed this seems reasonable and as this is already budgeted in the current paper it should not be a problem with costs.</p> <p>DECISION: Trustees confirmed the recommendations made on the staff pay awards paper to be in line with the national recommendation. Support staff pay will include the central team and the paper will be modified to highlight the amount paid to the executive team.</p> <p>The Chair asked if any Trustees had any concern on the July Management Accounts?</p> <p>Trustees has no issues. The chair thanked and congratulated the finance team on the paperwork and the finances as they stand.</p>	<p>PW to amend and re-send staff pay awards to include executive pay amounts</p>
<p>8. Policies ratification</p>	<p><i>All policies had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with allegations of abuse against staff members • Staff Members Code of Conduct 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NQT Induction <p>All policies were formally received</p> <p>The decision on 'Dealing with allegations of abuse against staff members' will be ratified once the Chair has followed up the technical details with HR and is happy to sign off the policy.</p> <p>The decision on 'Staff Members Code of Conduct' is that Trustees have ratified the policy and are happy to approve.</p> <p>The decision on 'NQT Induction Programme' is that Trustees have ratified the policy and are happy to approve.</p>	<p>KC to follow up technical details with HR</p>
<p>9. School bids update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Harefield Academy NCC Towcester Primaries 	<p>JC reported verbally about the school bids</p> <p>The Harefield Academy - A bid has been put forward to the governing board and EMAT have been invited to present the bid on Thursday 17th September and so an update will be provided following this. AS, SM, KC and AD will be assisting in this decision.</p> <p>NCC Towcester Primaries – The Central Team are in the process of finalising the bid, the process is significantly reduced in comparison to the previous bids. EMAT will share the bid with KC, AS, AD and SM around 11th September ahead of submission on the 18th September. This will allow the Trustees to review and feedback on the bid before submission. JC confirmed due to the positive relationship with the local authority the team are optimistic for this bid.</p>	
<p>10. AOB</p>	<p>No Other Business</p>	
<p>11. Dates of next meetings</p>	<p>Dates of Trust Board Next Meetings (until July 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friday 18th September 2020 at 10am - Members AGM Friday 25th September 2020 at 10am Friday 11th December 2020 at 10am Friday 23rd April 2021 at 10am Friday 16th July 2021 at 10am 	<p>KC to set up meeting with AM and DH prior to the next Trust Board</p>

Meeting closed at 12.02pm

Signed by Kevin Crompton, Chair of Trustees

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Date.....

FINAL

East Midlands Academy Trust

Action Log of the Trust Board meeting held on 27th August 2020. Meeting conducted virtually.

Item	Action	Owner
1.	CN ensure all schools have ownership and monitoring columns on their risk assessments	CN
2.	JC confirm with Jo Trevenna that 1:1 GCSE discussions are taking place at NIA	JC
3.	PW to provide one-page summary of all school risk assessments for the Trust Board/FHRE committee	PW
4.	PW to amend and re-send staff pay awards to include executive pay amounts	PW
5.	KC to follow up technical details with HR on the policies	KC
6.	KC to set up meeting with AM and DH prior to the next Trust Board	KC