

HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST

Minutes for Meeting of Board of Trustees

7pm, Wednesday 13 May 2020

Via Zoom

In attendance: Simon Kitchman (SKi), Graeme Atkins (GA), Veryan Johnston (VJ), Barbara Hignett (BH), Kate Chaplin (KC), David Hartland (DH), Tony Brown (TB), Jonathon Holmes (JH), Sarah Kemp (SKe)

Also attending: Charlotte Gaines (CG, Clerk to Trust Board)

Part 1 Classified Non-Confidential

1) Apologies

No apologies for non-attendance were received.

2) Declaration of pecuniary, business or personal interests

No declarations of pecuniary, business or personal interest were made in addition to those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

3) Minutes of meetings - approval and matters arising

Trustees agreed that the Minutes of the following meetings, be held over until the next face to face meeting:

- Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 12 February 2020 – Part 1

4) Executive Headteachers verbal report

GA provided a verbal update about work being undertaken at both schools during the closure period.

a) On site attendance and remote working

GA noted that the closure and support for key worker and vulnerable students has taken place in 3 phases, before Easter; Easter holidays and after Easter. Either side of Easter numbers of students attending have been higher than the Easter holiday at around 30 at HMS and 13 at QEHS. Numbers at QEHS have dropped since Easter. Numbers attending on the bank holidays were low.

Staffing levels have been kept low with two teachers from QEHS, four from HMS, SEN support, first aider, admin and a member of SLT from each school attending on a rota basis.

Students are all taught in IT rooms on the HMS site with HMS students being taught in the Orchard block and QEHS students in the Beaumont building.

GA noted that feedback from parents has been good.

b) Disadvantaged and vulnerable students

GA advised that he is delighted with the work of the Pastoral staff at both schools who have taken on the responsibilities and gone beyond the requirements. Regular contact is being

made with students. The number of vulnerable students who are attending school are low but GA reported he is satisfied that the arrangements are appropriate for those that have remained at home.

Disadvantaged students have experienced more difficulties getting online access to learning. Hard copies of work are being provided if needed. Numbers are quite high, 40 at QEHS and 31 at HMS. GA advised that the government has launched a scheme to provide connectivity and hardware for Year 10 DP students. Ten students fall into this category and equipment is being sourced.

c) Student wellbeing

General wellbeing information has been provided via guidance in school newsletters; websites and practical resources. Specific advice has been given via the pastoral team who have been contacting those who may have an issue. Clinics are provided for parents who welcome the contact from school. Every HMS student has been contacted. Feedback has been positive and there is a sense of appreciation.

In terms of provision and quality, remote working is broadly good. Staff are working well at both schools, with the focus on subject areas collaborating, supported by the use of 'all staff' e-mails. A survey of parents received 367 QE and 204 HMS responses. The anecdotal feedback contained no negative communication. The schools have done a good job and parents appear happy. Where small numbers of staff need to step up more, there will be appropriate follow up.

A lot of other work is ongoing, including by Curriculum Leaders on predicted grades; timetabling and decant. JM met with key staff today.

Although the ambition was to engage Year 11 and Year 13 in ongoing learning, student engagement had proved difficult. Year 11 will be provided with more bridging work in the next half term. Communication has gone to year 11 students regarding their Sixth Form courses for next year. Fine tuning will be done with actual grades.

Engagement in Years 9 and 10 has been variable. Issues have been fed to parents. Difference in family circumstances will result in variation but work is ongoing to address issues. Next half term will be an opportunity to refocus minds.

Timetable rollover at QEHS will be held but staff will be able to build ahead where appropriate in subjects such as Business, PE, Art and practical work.

BH asked about particular students who were not engaging. GA advised that disaffected students were not engaging and that some other students who would engage at school were not doing so at home.

DH asked if there were some students coming into school with no break during school holidays. GA advised that there was a chance that a small number of students had done this.

DH asked what the process for estimating predicted grades entailed. GA advised that KAI and REP led on the process, giving clear guidance to Curriculum Leaders regarding historical data, recent assessment round, with an opportunity to sense check and revisit before submission. Curriculum Leaders have held one-to-one meetings with staff. It is reassuring that the data coming through are credible but the process is time consuming. There is good interaction with NCC for students on EOTAS or attending Alternative Education with a robust process in place. There is no evidence available for private candidates but work is ongoing to ensure the same confidence about the grade.

There is parental interest but the government is clear there is to be no interaction until results days. After results days, questions may be asked.

SKe noted she is aware of some students, not at either of the Trust's schools, who are struggling with mental health as a result of the situation. GA advised that pastoral staff had been in contact with Year 11 student,s offering support and guidance. Clinics are also an opportunity to get in touch.

KC suggested that school should not let the sense of culmination and celebration, normally seen at the Year 11 prom, slip away. GA noted that there is a detailed list of responsibilities and decision making. The calendar is one of these and work is ongoing to determine what can happen in lieu of the Prom.

d) Implications of phased return

GA advised that engagement has taken place with NAHSH, Hexham Partnership Headteachers, Northumberland County Council and more widely. ASCL has also given a local, regional and national interpretation. Focus has been on practical realities for students and staff. Helpful guidance is available regarding whether those who are Clinically Vulnerable and Clinically Extremely Vulnerable should go into school. An analysis of staff has taken place.

One of the unions has advised members not to engage with school leaders although others have been constructive.

Regular communication has taken place with parents and this has been appreciated.

SLT are sending their thoughts on the best way forward including how to manage the students on site, transport, congregation on arrival, social distancing, dining. More detail will be available by the end of the week but opening will start on a modest scale and be built on. engagement needs to take place with parents to address anxieties on safety. GA outlined possible approaches to the return to school noting that a consensus is being sought across Middle schools in the Hexham Partnership.

GA highlighter the government's intention for year 6 to return due to transition. He noted that much of the Year 8 to 9 transition has already taken place, with only transfer day remaining.

Work is still to be done to support the return of Year 10 and 12, including thinking around provision around remote learning.

Ski noted that it is still early days and there is a need to rely on the professional judgement of the SLT to take plans forward.

5) Urgent business with agreement of the Chair

None.

Close and confirm date of next meeting

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded.

The next Part 1 meeting will take place on Wednesday 10 June 2020.

Trustees moved onto Part 2 of the agenda.