

**HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST  
MINUTES FOR MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 22 September 2022 at 6pm, QEHS Conference Room 1
<b>Present</b>	David Hartland (DH), Sarah Kemp (SK), Veryan Johnston (VJ), Barbara Hignett (BH), Tony Brown (TB), Graeme Atkins (GA, Executive Headteacher)
<b>Also in attendance</b>	Neil Seaton (NS, HoS QE), Liam Watters (LW, HoS HMS), Fiona Snook (FS, Clerk)

**PART 1 (CLASSIFIED NON-CONFIDENTIAL)**

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies:</b> Kim Cowie, Patrick Ferguson	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declaration of pecuniary, business or personal interests</b> FS advised that she will circulate Declarations of Interest forms after the meeting for the annual review.	<b>FS</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Election of Chair</b> David Hartland has stepped down as Chair. GA and DH had taken soundings from the board and Veryan Johnston will take over as Chair. GA thanked DH for his hard work with the trust board since taking up the post.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Election of Vice Chair</b> Sarah Kemp was elected as Vice Chair of the Trust Board. Sarah Kemp chaired this meeting and VJ will chair subsequent meetings.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meeting Part 1</b> The minutes of the following meeting were agreed as a true record with two minor amendments. FS to amend. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 7 July 2022 – Part 1</li> </ul> <b>Matters arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All either completed or on agenda.</li> <li>• VJ noted that she had attended lunch on the second INSET day in September and that this was a positive experience. SK asked if this could be repeated during the year. FS to invite trustees to both INSET day lunches on Friday 21 October and Friday 17 February.</li> <li>• DH asked how the rowing club has operated following the retirement of Pauline and Geoff Higgins. GA reported positively on the new arrangements.</li> <li>• GA advised that the acting Safeguarding link trustee is now Barbara Hignett who will undertake this role until a new trustee for this role is appointed.</li> <li>• The staff survey results have not yet been distributed. FS will circulate these following the meeting.</li> </ul>	<b>FS</b>          <b>FS</b>       <b>FS</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Trustee Recruitment</b> GA advised that there had been a high level of interest in these positions. A collation of expressions of interest was shared in advance of the meeting, to which GA had added possible candidates from the Inspiring Governance website. VJ and GA will meet in the coming weeks to review the potential applicants and cross reference against the skills the board requires. Following this they will produce a shortlist and make recommendations to the board via email. It was discussed that if there are sufficient applicants with the right skills for the board, a third trustee could also potentially be recruited.	<b>VJ/GA</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Chairs/Membership of Committees and meeting dates / link trustees</b> A paper detailing the chairs and members of each committee was circulated in advance of the meeting. VJ will now join one of the Monitoring Committees. She explained that she is happy to join either and this could depend on who the new Trustees are and which monitoring committee they may wish to join. The Chairs of each committee were agreed by	

	<p>the Trust Board. GA asked if any present would wish to step down from a committee. TB said he would step down from the HMS Monitoring committee. This vacancy will be filled by VJ or one of the new Trustees.</p> <p>GA advised that the Trust Board meeting on the 26 January coincides with one of the dates of the QE production. The meeting will go ahead on this date but NS will not be able to attend; he will provide notes to GA in advance.</p> <p>BH asked if the dates of the HMS Monitoring Committee could be reconsidered. GA to review with Committee members.</p>	<b>GA</b>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding refresher training</b></p> <p>GA advised that Trustees receive safeguarding training as part of their induction and then undertake an annual top-up. GA advised that NCC are offering training for this. FS will collate availability to arrange this training. If any trustees are unable to attend on this date, there will be online training.</p> <p>FS to check that all trustees have completed the online cyber security training.</p>	<b>FS</b>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Summer test and examination outcomes</b></p> <p><i>HMS</i></p> <p>LW provided the update for HMS. The school were relatively pleased with the KS2 outcomes for last year's Y6 given the upheaval of the previous two years. The maths results were very strong with very little dip from 2019 despite the effects of the pandemic. The English outcomes were broadly positive but LW would like these to be higher above the national average. The school recognise that there is a need to achieve better outcomes in Reading and EGPS (English grammar, punctuation and spelling). A good number of pupils achieved the Greater Depth Standard (GDS) but there is a need for more children to achieve the Expected Standard (EXS) in these aspects. Nine children were one mark off EXS in Reading. These papers were sent for marking review but the grading did not change. The Writing results were strong, and this was encouraging given the disruption over the past two years. Intervention and support have had an impact. Writing was not moderated externally last year but was moderated both internally and within the Partnership and LW had confidence in the validity of the outcomes. Regarding EGPS, the grammar paper (50 marks) was strong whereas the spelling paper (20 marks) was weaker. LW advised that they can already see that spelling is a weakness for the new Y5 and Y6 pupils and swift action is being taken to enhance the teaching in this area. LW is to explore this with first schools.</p> <p>LW has undertaken analysis of the new Y6 and this suggests that these pupils have, in general, a strength in English but more weaknesses in maths, which is the opposite to last year's Y6.</p> <p>DH asked about the national figures for 2022 and if these had gone down due to the disruption over the past two years. LW confirmed that this was the case for all apart from Reading, which went up nationally by one mark.</p> <p>LW advised that there has been a definite improvement in disadvantaged pupil outcomes. He explained that the make-up of these children changes each year and so strategies need to change each year to reflect this, but that the strategies used last year worked well.</p> <p>LW provided an update on the school structure and staffing. Over the last two years there has been much change with Covid disruption and the move into the new school, but LW now sees more stability and there is a more defined structure in place. LW is happy with the current structure and subject leaders. Much CPD is planned and already underway. The newly updated curriculum planning is in place. LW feels that there is a real positive energy in the school.</p>	<b>LW</b>

	<p><i>QE</i></p> <p>NS provided an update on QE but noted that the results for KS4 and KS5 will be discussed in fuller detail at the QE Monitoring Committee.</p> <p>NS advised that KS5 outcomes were very strong, with an average grade of B. The results have held up and are comparable with 2020 centre-assessed grades. There were ten subjects where the average grade was an A. The results also take into account the broader academic range of the cohort, which resulted from the suspension of some of the normal entry requirements during the pandemic.</p> <p>Overall, the KS4 outcomes held, with comparable pass rates to 2019 for the number of students achieving 9-4 in both English and Maths. The intervention teacher appointed in Maths succeeded to achieve mainly grade 4s for the students in that class. NS referred to the Executive Headteacher report, which shows that the gap between national average and QE performance has reduced. NS advised that they are forecasting a lower progress measure than in previous years for the summer 2021 KS4 results and the gap to disadvantaged students is looking wider than previously, reflecting the national picture. Improving the outcomes for disadvantaged students remains one of the main QE priorities.</p> <p>BH asked if, given that KS5 results were much better than expected, the entry criteria could be reviewed for the Sixth Form. NS explained that the entry requirements were retained although individual circumstances are always taken into account. NS noted that next year's Y13 will sit exams and be graded nationally as in 2019 and at this point the data will be more directly comparable. SK asked about the KS4 results in French and if these discouraged students from taking the subject at A Level. NS is concerned about the number of students taking A Level French, German and Spanish.</p> <p>DH asked about vocational results and if any students took T Levels. NS said that no students take T Levels but vocational subjects at both KS4 and KS5 are very strong. GA advised that T Levels are predominantly offered by FE colleges, whereas schools are largely intended by government to provide a more academic pathway as a route to university rather than employment. He noted that the combination of BTECs and A Levels at QE is successful.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Executive headteacher reports</b></p> <p>VJ expressed concern about the drop in attendance and the link to outcomes. LW noted the impact of covid and outlined changes being implemented from September, including appointment of a new attendance officer across both schools who is implementing a much sharper approach with more intervention, including visiting families at home. LW explained that already this has had an impact and that the schools believe that this approach, along with the wider approach towards vulnerable and disadvantaged students, is helping.</p> <p>NS also advised that the evidence shows the correlation between attendance and results. He acknowledged that there was an issue with attendance last year but that the measures in place with the new attendance officer should lead to improvement over time. NS noted that in simple terms, students who come into school and attend lessons do well, either meeting or exceeding their expected targets. Underperforming students have low attendance. SK said that this is an important message to communicate to students.</p> <p>DH noted that the fixed term exclusions at HMS had increased and asked if there was a reason for this. LW explained that there were a small number of pupils with repeated exclusions and alternative provision was explored for some of these pupils. SK noted that a lot of the exclusions related to disadvantaged students. GA explained that the past two to three years had seen a clear increase in numbers struggling with the routines and expectations of school, particularly those with difficult family backgrounds, which is being</p>	

	<p>reported as a concern by other schools. LW explained that to reflect this change, HMS now has better in-house provision, which includes intervention, the pupil support workers and RESTORE. However, LW advised that some individuals' behaviour in school still cannot be managed so alternative provision is required. NS advised of similar circumstances and approaches at QE. SK asked how many of the suspensions were for pupils joining part-way through the year. LW said that last year three of the five pupils with persistent behaviour problems were those who had joined partway through.</p> <p>DH asked about the retention of Year 11 into the Sixth Form and SK asked why this might have been lower than expected. GA advised that the reasons for not returning were varied. Some left to undertake specific courses that are not on offer at QE and that a higher number left to go to Newcastle College than previously. NS advised that the low retention of Y11 is a concern and both he and GA noted that it has funding implications. NS noted that historically, the Sixth Form have done a lot of work with the lower school so that they are a more visible presence, but that during the Covid-disrupted years this had not happened to the same degree. NS also advised that owing to the pandemic-related disruption, last year's Y11 were a more disengaged year group than previous cohorts.</p> <p>DH asked if the PAN applies to Sixth Form. GA advised that the admissions policy specifies 15 externals, but that this would not limit our intake if places were available.</p> <p>SK asked if it could be mentioned in the HMS Executive Headteacher report that Spanish has been introduced to the curriculum. GA to add this in.</p>	<b>GA</b>
11.	<p><b>Self-evaluation and school development plans</b>  <i>QE</i>  NS advised that priorities for the high school had been identified following discussions about outcomes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Inclusive curriculum:</b> The curriculum is to be ambitious, well sequenced and inclusive of all Y9-11 students. GA, NS and Anne Lloyd (AHT for Teaching and Learning across the Trust) are reviewing the work undertaken on the KS4 and KS5 planning, having initially had a focus on KS3 across the Trust and wider partnership. A particular focus this year will be on the quality of planning around assessment and how teaching and the curriculum are adapted on the basis of this. Work is also underway to ensure that the Y10 curriculum for next year is right for the students. There is to be a particular focus on reading and retrieval, with additional support for weaker readers to enable them to access the full curriculum.</li> <li>2. <b>Redressing disadvantage:</b> The school seeks to be more effective at meeting the needs of vulnerable and marginalised students who have been most affected by the pandemic. The aim is to close the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.</li> <li>3. <b>Routines, relationships and responses:</b> NS advised that owing to the disruption during the pandemic, a small but not insignificant minority of students have missed establishing good relationships with school and understanding school behaviours and routines. Hattie Curry, Assistant Headteacher for Student Standards and Support, is reviewing and promoting the rules, routines and expectations, and working with staff on successfully embedding these.</li> <li>4. <b>Sixth Form:</b> NS advised that the Sixth Form will strive to maintain the excellent quality of provision. There will be a focus on attendance and on developing a high quality PHSE curriculum. The aim is to meet needs of every student in the Sixth Form, including those who are vulnerable and/or disadvantaged.</li> </ol> <p>BH asked about the retention of Learning Support Assistants. NS advised that the QE SENDCo is concerned about the difficulty of recruitment to LSA roles. SK noted that obtaining a DBS should not be a barrier to recruiting Ukrainian people because these can be obtained through the usual channel.</p>	

	<p><i>HMS</i></p> <p>LW advised that priorities for HMS had been identified as follows.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Inclusive curriculum:</b> There was much work last year on the KS2 and KS3 curriculum. The focus now is on the implementation and embedding. The curriculum must be inclusive for all learners' needs. The CPD curriculum is also planned with the quality of teaching as a key objective. There is a focus on routines, established expectations and a well-planned curriculum.</li> <li>2. <b>Redressing disadvantage:</b> Similar to the high school, HMS are also looking to redress the disadvantage for vulnerable students. There is a list of all students who fall into this 'keep-in-view' category, including the reason for their inclusion on this list.</li> <li>3. <b>Teaching and learning:</b> The teaching and learning focus is on assessment and feedback, to ensure there are no gaps and inconsistencies in the approach to assessment. LW has relaunched the feedback approach with staff, which has been very well received. Within this, subjects can shape how they feed back in their own subject. LW is also reviewing how assessment is woven through the curriculum and how the feedback information from this is used.</li> <li>4. <b>Reading:</b> There is a reading strategy for the whole school. LW advised that he has heavily invested in training staff in early phonics: there is a much bigger need for this now in KS2 and even KS3 when this was previously largely for KS1. HMS staff are visiting some of the Partnership first schools to observe the delivery of early phonics lessons. LW also advised that there is much more targeted support for those pupils who struggle with reading.</li> <li>5. <b>Pastoral focus:</b> There is a significant focus on attendance – amendments to the attendance process outlined earlier – as well as social, emotional and mental health. Emotion coaching has been introduced. This is a national initiative and all staff have been trained in this. The impact of this is already visible.</li> <li>6. <b>Diversity:</b> LW is keen for pupils to recognise context in which we live and to prepare the students for life in a diverse community. Work on this is ongoing.</li> </ol> <p>SK asked how the monitoring committees will know how these priorities are being put into action and whether they are effective and being achieved. GA advised that they will be reviewed at monitoring committee meetings and can be considered during the trustee school visits.</p>	<b>GA</b>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>School visit schedule</b></p> <p>GA noted that the proposed date for a visit to the school by trustees is the 4 November. GA emphasised that this visit should be shaped by trustees who can put forward specific areas on which to focus or visit; GA explained that the overarching intent is for the board to be informed and to see what is going on in school in practice. SK and DH would like to visit departments and speak to both staff and students. TB suggested that visits could include pupil panels and staff panels. GA to produce an outline plan based on trustee feedback for the visit on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Further visits to be arranged thereafter.</p>	<b>GA</b>
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Return to school updates</b></p> <p>NS advised that the beginning of term has gone well in the high school, particularly in contrast with the disruption of recent years with the pandemic and the delayed move into the new school building. The Sixth Form welcome induction has gone well and they have attended the Freshers' Fair. Extracurricular clubs for all year groups have been promoted and are beginning.</p> <p>LW said that the new Y5 had a good transition, and that HMS have also successfully welcomed circa 40 new children across years 6, 7 and 8. The extracurricular programme is now running and has had a very good uptake. Academic support and intervention are in place for the pupils who need it. There are eleven new staff, which reflects the growth in pupil numbers as well as turnover. The atmosphere feels very positive. Welcome Evenings</p>	

	<p>have taken place for each year group. SK asked if there was sufficient outdoor space after the move from the old building. LW said that it works well and having the hockey area is a great benefit.</p> <p>Across the Trust, 22 Ukrainian students had been welcomed to the schools, with additional EAL support recruited, to support the children and to advise staff on effective teaching strategies.</p>	
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>Trust updates</b></p> <p>GA advised that the new year has started positively with the revised staffing structure. Subject leadership in each school is working better for each school, whilst retaining cross-trust coherence.</p> <p>GA provided a recruitment update. The admin team is now more stable. Some staff have returned after having left. Catering recruitment has been a challenge but the staffing in this area is being monitored. LSA recruitment remains a challenge.</p> <p>GA provided a financial update. Following a period of strong finances, there is now more of a challenge to the budget associated with the recent national pay awards for teaching and support staff and general inflation. GA referred to energy costs and advised the board that the Government has produced a measure to protect schools until March. We have a fixed contract until the end of March, the cost of which will be capped under the government's scheme. We await a further update in January when the Government will announce any measures post-March.</p> <p>Building updates: GA noted that the new bus park is in operation and is working well. Landscaping work continues and the rugby pitch has been seeded. The site is now looking good, although snagging continues. This was due to be finished over the summer holidays but is not completed, seemingly due to issues with sub-contractors, and the team are still on site. GA awaits a revised date.</p> <p>DH asked if there was a resolution to who will remedy the path that was washed away. GA explained that discussions relating to this are ongoing with NCC. DH asked if the fencing on the hockey bridge had yet been replaced. GA explained that a contractor had been booked to undertake this work but did not arrive. However, additional fencing is intended for other parts of the site and hockey bridge fencing will be considered as part of that. DH also enquired about solar panels and GA confirmed that these are in place. DH asked about who will fix broken walls and GA explained that NCC have committed to fixing these. DH noted that the pavement and Whetstone Bridge Road are improved.</p> <p>GA advised that NCC have committed to funding the improvements to the woodland garden. The Hexham Youth Initiative have visited and are supporting the high school eco group who have been working on this at lunchtimes.</p> <p>GA referred to the work of the Hexham Partnership, particularly around curriculum planning, with excellent chairing by LW. This work will continue this year.</p> <p>GA advised that he had been approached from a CEO of a trust in Cumbria to ask if QE might help to support the maths department of a school within their Trust. Ruth Platts, Assistant Headteacher and former Curriculum Leader of Maths, will visit to provide support. GA noted that the school in question has a very strong History department so their History CL will visit QE to reciprocate.</p> <p>GA referred back to the Ofsted presentation to the board in the last academic year, and noted for the board's reference that a Section 8 inspection is now referred to as an ungraded inspection.</p>	

	<p>GA referred to the HLT Educational Offer distributed in advance of the meeting. This stemmed from a desire to articulate consciously what our schools are about, as a well-considered and comprehensive intent rather than what otherwise might be the case, i.e. a less clearly defined sense of purpose and priority in the more general territory of what schools do.</p> <p>The intended audience for the document as it stands is staff who work for the Trust, to enable a common awareness of this intent, so that everyone can understand their role and contribution within it. Given the staff audience, the language is quite technical in places. However, the intention in due course is to adapt the text to be more suitable for parents/carers and students.</p> <p>It will be a live document in the sense that it will be revised and updated as our intentions and approaches develop over time, but as it stands it is a fair reflection of provision at both schools and what we want to achieve.</p> <p>A short discussion followed on the content. It was noted that the Trust's SIP had commented favourably on it as well as advising on some small adjustments.</p> <p>FS to share the document with members.</p>	FS
15.	<p><b>Scheme of delegation</b></p> <p>GA referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting that proposed addressing an inconsistency that had been identified. The suggested amendment in this paper was approved by trustees.</p>	
16.	<p><b>Child protection policy</b></p> <p>GA advised that this is reviewed annually to check it adheres to Keeping Children Safe in Education. FS will share the updated version shortly, with changes highlighted in red. GA asked if trustees send any comments on this to FS. If there are no amendments, this policy will be approved and taken forward for the next year.</p>	FS
17.	<p><b>Stakeholder engagement</b></p> <p>GA provided an update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community open evening on the 14 July was a great success, with good staff and student support. Over 300 visitors came to the school.</li> <li>• Parent information evenings have taken place.</li> <li>• A Post 16 evening has taken place.</li> <li>• The PTA committee is active at HMS and a QE PTFA is currently being set up.</li> <li>• The Sixth Form freshers' fair was a success with many stalls from external providers.</li> <li>• The Rotarians are looking to engage – GA to share updates in due course.</li> <li>• GA supported the Hexham Library Summer Reading Challenge.</li> <li>• There will be a Neighbourhood group meeting before half term.</li> </ul> <p>SK asked about the dates of forthcoming productions and concerts. FS to send dates.</p>	FS
18.	<p><b>Urgent business with agreement of Chair</b></p> <p>NS advised that A Level Economics will not be reintroduced owing to the vulnerability of staffing. However, he advised that History teacher Bethany Smith has offered to introduce A Level Politics. NS will add this to the proposal and in the autumn trustees will receive an email containing the Sixth Form offer to approve – this will be shared prior to the QE Monitoring Committee.</p>	NS

**Close and confirm date of next meeting:** The date of the next meeting is Thursday 24 November 2022. Part 1 begins at 6pm.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Chair*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**