

Norton College

11-19 School & Sixth Form Centre



Meeting of the Local Governing Body

Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 6.30pm by video conference

Present:

Mr Tim Johnson (Headteacher)	Mr Sam Moore
Mrs Karron Young (Chair)	Miss Jan Pettitt
Ms Jill Donaldson Hodges	Mrs Helen Robinson
Mrs Kelly Dunn	Mr Craig Shepherdson
Mr Luke Ives	Mrs Catriona Stewart
Mr Steve Layton	

In attendance: Mrs Barbara Kybett (Governance Advisor - Clerk)

		ACTION								
1.	<p>Welcome, apologies for absence and consents</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. As all governors were present, there were no apologies for absence.</p>									
2.	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>									
3.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting held on 9th December 2020</p> <p>Previously distributed.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>The main and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2020 were considered and approved by the LGB as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>									
4.	<p>Rolling action plan and matters arising</p> <p>Previously distributed.</p> <p>Action Plan from the main minutes of the meeting held 9th December 2020:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Discuss the format of link governor visits</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Send the new leadership team structure and responsibilities to the Clerk for circulation to governors</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Send guidance the role of the staff governor to Miss Pettitt</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Action	Status	1. Discuss the format of link governor visits	Completed	2. Send the new leadership team structure and responsibilities to the Clerk for circulation to governors	Completed	3. Send guidance the role of the staff governor to Miss Pettitt	Completed	
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Action Plan from the confidential minutes of the meeting held 9th December 2020:

Action	Status
1. Provide update regarding the Astro turf and Section 106 funding	Completed

With reference to this last action point, Miss Pettitt reported that there was no Section 106 funding available. Miss Pettitt would therefore arrange a meeting with the SBM to discuss other sources of funding to repair the Astro turf.

Action: Miss Pettitt to meet with SBM re: possible sources of funding for the Astro turf

There were no further outstanding actions for the LGB from the rolling action plan.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

JP

5. **Headteacher's Report**

Previously distributed.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher for producing an extremely comprehensive report and invited him to draw out the main points.

The Headteacher began by reporting that there had been two GDPR referrals since the last meeting; he provided further details and advised that neither referral was of significant concern and both cases were now closed.

The Headteacher presented his report.

School Closure and Lateral Flow Testing

The Headteacher highlighted the implementation of COVID-19 testing for all students on their return to school on 8th March: over 3000 lateral flow tests had been conducted with only a tiny minority being positive. The Headteacher noted that the school had received consent to test over 95% of students which was above the national average. He commented that the testing process had not been straightforward and paid tribute to the work of Becky Blackburn who had successfully organised and implemented the process. The Headteacher was pleased to report that there had been very little challenge, either from parents or students, to the testing process or to the wearing of face coverings, which was now mandatory in school. There had been no outbreaks of COVID-19 in school since all students had returned.

A governor asked how the testing process was now taking place. The Headteacher explained that staff were self-testing twice weekly on a voluntary basis and students were also asked to self-test at home. Both staff and students were provided with testing kits and logged the results on the NHS portal. Positive tests were reported to school. There was further discussion on this and it was noted that there was no data available on how many students were regularly undertaking testing at home, as the onus was on families to test students. The Headteacher confirmed that students would be provided with sufficient tests to cover the Easter holidays.

In response to a governor's question, the Headteacher explained that it had been impractical to keep students separate whilst they were awaiting their first test in school and that this element of the testing procedure was within the government's guidance.

Remote Learning Provision

The Headteacher drew governors' attention to the results of surveys on remote learning which had been completed by students, parents and staff. The feedback on the provision from students and parents had been overwhelmingly positive. The Headteacher advised that the small number of negative responses tended to be from more independent learners who had not enjoyed the move to live lessons, where the provision was not differentiated and there was less opportunity for independent study. The Headteacher explained that he had deliberately conducted the staff survey just before the February half term break when staff were likely to be most tired and, as expected, the feedback was less positive.

The Headteacher summarised that, as a result of the much improved online provision, students had returned to school far better equipped than after the last lockdown to continue with their learning.

Year 11 Predicted Grades and Summer 2021 Year 11 and Year 13 Grading

The Headteacher referred to the Year 11 predicted grades in his report, noting that these had been made at the end of the autumn term. In terms of centre assessed grades for this year, there would be three main areas of evidence:

- mock exam results from the autumn term
- formative assessment from work completed in lessons in the summer term
- tests under exam conditions to be completed in weeks 5 and 6 of the next half term using past papers from exam boards.

The Headteacher advised that there was still little information forthcoming from the DfE on how schools were to judge students' "current working grade" but assessment materials from exam boards were due to be received before Easter. The Headteacher provided further details on how each type of evidence would be used, including how grades from mock exams would be calculated. He advised that there were also a number of webinars planned by the DfE in the Easter holidays, which he hoped would provide some further clarity. He confirmed that parents would be sent information about the grading process.

A governor questioned whether there would be an emphasis on teaching areas of the curriculum which staff knew would be tested. The Headteacher advised that staff would continue to teach the whole curriculum as planned.

A governor queried whether it was necessary to hold tests in May under exam conditions, given that students had come to terms with the fact the GCSE exams had been cancelled. The Headteacher responded that there were logistical problems arising from holding exams in classrooms, and the exam papers were designed to be completed under timed exam conditions. The Headteacher advised that, as part of external moderation, there would be a mechanism in place to identify if schools were awarding grades which were not in line with their usual pattern of results. There would be further scrutiny of the school if anomalies were identified and it was therefore crucial that school's process for awarding grades was rigorous. The Headteacher acknowledged that students and parents would have concerns, and advised that he would try to address these in communications with them.

A governor asked why results days for Year 11 and Year 13 had been brought forward. The Headteacher assumed that this was to allow more time for appeals although he did not expect there to be a significant number. He highlighted that there was still no official leaving date for either year group although all evidence for centre assessed grades would be in place by the May half term holiday.

Noting that DfE webinars had been organised for the Easter holidays, the Chair acknowledged the significant demands on school leaders' time and workload resulting from the DfE's guidance to schools, which was often not clear or timely.

Safeguarding

Inclusion

SEND

The Headteacher advised that the security gates at the entrance to the school were now in place, and the school site was now secure as a result. There had been no significant child protection referrals since the last meeting and there were no major changes to the SEND register. The Headteacher reported that, from September, there would be a dedicated SEND area in school and he gave some further details about the location and staffing.

Governors agreed that the contextual information included in the Headteacher's report was useful and would enable them to identify and monitor trends.

Attendance (Term 1 2020/21)

The Headteacher observed that this had been difficult to monitor, given the impact of COVID-19 related absences. He cautioned that the data was still not good but attendance was slowly improving, particularly in Years 7 and 8, as a result of the strategies which were now in place. Attendance would be one of a number of priorities for the new deputy headteacher.

Behaviour for Term 1 2020/21

The Headteacher considered that there were positive indicators in the data, which provided evidence that low level disruption was being dealt with before it could escalate.

A governor queried whether the increase in the number of Charter Break 1 (CB1) sanctions was due to an increase in poor behaviour or to staff more rigorously implementing the behaviour policy. The Headteacher could not absolutely confirm the reason, as he was not in post in the autumn term of 2019 from which the comparative data was drawn, but there was evidence that staff were addressing behaviour much more quickly. Miss Pettitt commented that staff and students now understood the behaviour system and it was therefore being used with much more consistency.

Sixth Form Update

The Headteacher advised that he was considering ways to make the Sixth Form more viable, as the small class sizes were not sustainable. As a first step, it had been necessary to reduce the offer but over the long term, further changes were needed. The Headteacher believed that a shared offer with Malton School was still a possibility but this would not be the whole solution to the problem, and was not without challenges, notably in the timetabling of shared courses.

The Headteacher outlined some of his ideas for attracting students to the Sixth Form. He stressed his commitment to retaining the Sixth Form, not least as it was an advantage when recruiting new staff.

Noting that there were 57 students entering the Sixth Form in 2021, from a Year 11 cohort of 133, a governor asked where the other students were applying. The Headteacher responded that most had applied to Sixth Form colleges in York and Scarborough which could offer more courses. The Headteacher explained that his target was a retention figure of at least 60% from Year 11 and observed that the school could do much more to promote its own Sixth Form offer. **In response to a governor's question, he thought that Malton School's retention rate was broadly similar.**

A governor expressed appreciation of the Headteacher's focus on the Sixth Form which she felt was an important part of the school.

In response to a governor's question, the Headteacher advised that the viability of A Level courses varied from year to year, not least as numbers were so small, and the take up was not predictable. This year, applications for Maths and Science A Levels were high but this had not always been the case. The Headteacher described how Year 12 and Year 13 classes could be combined for A Level subjects, which would improve the viability. He explained that this was not disadvantageous, as A Level courses were modular in format.

There was further discussion on the optimal size for an A Level class, which according to the Education Endowment Foundation was between 12 and 15 pupils. Governors also considered the perceived advantages to students of travelling to York College for post 16 study.

Student Numbers

The Headteacher highlighted the healthy numbers for next year's Year 7, noting that this would improve the budget. He reported that, of those families offered a place at the school, there had been no appeals from parents to change their allocation; this was a positive indicator.

IDSR

The Headteacher drew governors' attention to this important document. It was agreed that Sam Stones (Assistant Headteacher – Curriculum and Assessment) would run a CPD session for governors in the summer term which would focus on the data reported in the IDSR.

Action: Chair to contact AHT to progress a CPD session for governors around the IDSR in the summer term.

KY

Governors noted the previously distributed report prepared by the CYC Inclusion Advisor. **A governor commented that it was encouraging to see the strengths which had been identified but highlighted the number of recommendations. She queried how these would be addressed.** The Headteacher explained that some of the recommendations had already been identified in the RAP; the others would be a priority for the new deputy headteacher.

The Headteacher advised that the safeguarding audit being prepared by Julie Barber had been delayed as she had been away from work due to a bereavement. As the audit needed to be approved by governors before submission, it was agreed that Chair would approve it on behalf of the LGB.

	<p>Resolved: Governors delegated authority to the Chair of Governors to approve the safeguarding audit.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Headteacher for his report.</p>	
6.	<p>Chair's Business</p> <p><u>Skills Audit</u> Previously distributed.</p> <p>Governors noted the skills audit matrix; the Chair asked that all governors complete the audit which would then feed into the forthcoming external review of governance.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to remind governors who had not yet completed the skills audit.</p> <p><u>Governor Review</u> The Chair reminded governors that a date for the external review had been circulated. Ms Donaldson Hodges explained that the reviewer would email questions before she interviewed governors in groups.</p>	
7.	<p>Governance Matters</p> <p><u>Reports of Visits or Training, booked or undertaken</u></p> <p>The following training was reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Dunn and Mr Moore had attended the virtual training session "Welcome to Governance in a MAT" on 27th January 2021 • Mrs Stewart had attended the virtual training session "Health and Safety Responsibilities in Schools and Academies" on 8th February 2021 • Mrs Dunn, Ms Donaldson Hodges and Mrs Young had attended the virtual training session "Holding Leaders to Account for Performance (Secondary)" on 25th February 2021 • Mrs Dunn had attended the virtual training session "Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction" on 11th March 2021 <p>Ms Donaldson Hodges encouraged governors to look at the CYC Governor Training offer and asked them to complete the online safeguarding and Prevent training by the end of the May half term holiday, and then to send their certificates to Julie Barber.</p> <p>Action: all governors to complete online safeguarding and Prevent training and return their certificates to Julie Barber before 7th June.</p> <p>Action: Ms Donaldson Hodges to send governors the links to the online training.</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Trust Board had met on Friday 19th March. The Board had received two applications to join the LGB, although there was currently only one Trust appointed vacancy. The Chair provided details about the individuals who had applied. It was agreed that the Chair should follow up the applications in chronological order.</p> <p>Action: Chair to contact the first applicant to discuss the Trust appointed vacancy.</p>	<p>All gobs</p> <p>JDH</p> <p>KY</p>

	<p>The Chair reported that the Trust Board had re-appointed Mrs Stewart and Ms Donaldson Hodges for a further four years, as their terms of office expired this term. She advised that Mr Shepherdson's term of office as an elected parent governor was due to expire on 1st April 2021 and the Headteacher would therefore initiate another parent governor election after Easter. Once the full complement of parent and Trust appointed governors was in place, a further staff governor could be elected.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher to initiate a parent governor election after the Easter holidays.</p>	TJ
8.	<p>Deputy Headteacher Appointment Ratification</p> <p>The Chair reported that, following a recruitment process which had been completed earlier in the day, an offer of employment had been made to the successful candidate which would be subject to the usual checks. She advised that almost half of the LGB had been involved in the recruitment process, which had been supported by NYHR. The Headteacher reported that there had been sixteen applications of which four had been shortlisted; three candidates had been interviewed, as one had withdrawn at short notice. Two candidates were taken through to the formal interview stage on Day 2. The Chair assured governors that the process had been rigorous, and followed according to safer recruitment guidance. Following a robust discussion, the recruitment panel formally recommended Ms Caroline Edwards, currently Assistant Headteacher at a secondary school in Hull, to be appointed as deputy headteacher. Ms Edwards had been delighted to accept the offer of the post.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Caroline Edwards to the deputy headteacher post at Norton College, subject to the required employment checks, to being in post on 1st September 2021 on the first point of the advertised salary range.</p>	
9.	<p>Policy Review All previously distributed.</p> <p><u>Information Policy</u> Resolved: Governors unanimously approved the Information Policy.</p> <p><u>Protection of Biometric Information Policy</u> Resolved: Governors unanimously approved the Protection of Biometric Information Policy.</p> <p><u>SEND Policy</u> Resolved: Governors unanimously approved the SEND Policy.</p> <p><u>Relationships and Sex Education Policy</u> It was noted that a parent consultation had taken place as part of the development of the policy. Miss Pettitt confirmed that the policy would be updated and should be reviewed by governors annually. It was agreed that staff names should be replaced by job titles in the policy. Governors thanked Miss Pettitt for her work on the policy.</p>	

	<p>Resolved: Subject to the replacement of names with job titles, governors unanimously approved the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.</p> <p>Governors noted that it would be helpful to have the following when reviewing policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an indication of any changes which had been made to the policy; a suggestion was made that changes and reviews could be listed in a table on the first page of each policy • whether a policy could be reviewed less frequently than annually • the source of each policy, for example, NYHR. <p>Governors also agreed that the use of job titles rather than names should be standard in policies. The Headteacher agreed to adopt governors’ recommendations as part of his ongoing review of policies.</p> <p><u>Disciplinary Policy and Procedure</u> The Headteacher advised that the policy had been approved by NYHR and had been amended to better suit the process.</p> <p>Resolved: Governors unanimously approved the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.</p> <p><u>Grievance Policy and Procedure</u> Resolved: Governors unanimously approved the Grievance Policy and Procedure.</p> <p><u>Whistleblowing Policy</u> A governor commented that there should be an added option in the policy for a whistleblower to approach Veritau so that their anonymity could be retained. This would not be possible if concerns had to be addressed first to the Chair of Governors. There was further discussion on this and it was generally considered that the process in the policy was fit for purpose.</p> <p>Resolved: Governors approved the Whistleblowing Policy, with one governor voting against.</p> <p><u>Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy</u> Resolved: Subject to the replacement of names with job titles and the removal of the reference to Parent Comms in Section 2.5, governors unanimously approved the CEIAG Policy.</p> <p><u>Staff Code of Conduct for information</u> The Staff Code of Conduct had been included for information.</p> <p>Governors wished to record their thanks to the Headteacher and the SLT for their work on updating statutory policies.</p>	
10.	<p>Link Governor Reports Previously distributed.</p> <p><u>SEF and RAP progress evidence from link visits</u> Ms Donaldson Hodges referred to her previously distributed link visit report, and invited governors to use the format for their own link meetings, and then feedback any suggested changes.</p>	

	The Chair thanked Ms Donaldson Hodges and the Headteacher for taking the time to meet. She expressed confidence that progress was being made towards the priorities in the RAP and encouraged governors to fully engage with monitoring visits in the summer term. Ms Donaldson Hodges commented that she had found the SEF and RAP documents helpful as reference points in her meeting with the Headteacher.	
11.	Determination of matters to be regarded as confidential There were no items recorded as a confidential minute.	
12.	Any other business <i>Action: the Chair agreed to email school staff to convey governors' appreciation of their efforts this term.</i>	
13.	Date and time of next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday, 15th July 2021 at 6.30pm 	

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

Signed: Karron Young

Date: 15th July 2021

Karron Young (Chair)

ACTION PLAN FROM THE LGB MEETING held on 24th March 2021
To be added to the rolling action plan

Action	Item	Person(s)	Timescale
1. Meet with SBM re: possible sources of funding for the Astroturf	4	Jan Pettitt	Before next meeting
2. Progress a CPD session for governors around the IDSR	5	Karron Young	Summer term
3. Remind governors who have not yet completed the skills audit	6	Clerk	ASAP
4. Complete online safeguarding and Prevent training and return certificates to Julie Barber	7	All governors	7 th June 2021
5. Send governors the links to online safeguarding and Prevent training	7	Jill Donaldson Hodges	ASAP
6. Contact the first applicant to discuss the Trust appointed vacancy	7	Karron Young	ASAP
7. Initiate a parent governor election	7	Tim Johnson	Summer term
8. Email school staff to convey governors' appreciation of their efforts this term	12	Karron Young	ASAP

Items for future agendas:

- SEF (Education)
- Use of school facilities for fundraising activities (LGB – post-COVID-19)

APPROVED