



## Norton College

11-19 School & Sixth Form Centre

# Evolution Schools Learning Trust

## Meeting of the Trust Board

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 7.00pm by video conference

**Present:**

Ms Jill Donaldson Hodges (Chair)	Mrs Helen Robinson
Mrs Kelly Dunn	Mr Craig Shepherdson
Mr Luke Ives	Mrs Catriona Stewart
Mrs Caitlin Mackinder	Mrs Karron Young
Mr Sam Moore	

**In attendance:**

Mr Tim Johnson (Headteacher)
Mrs Caroline Edwards (Deputy Headteacher) ( <i>until 8.15pm</i> )
Mrs Barbara Kybett (Governance Advisor - Clerk)

1.	<b>Welcome, apologies for absence and consents</b>  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. As all trustees were present, there were no apologies for absence.	<b>ACTION</b>
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> ( <i>related to this agenda</i> )  There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<b>Minutes of the last meeting of the Trust Board held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021</b> Previously distributed.  <b>Resolved:</b> <b>Trustees considered the main set of minutes from the last meeting held 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 and agreed that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting.</b>  <b>Trustees also agreed that the confidential set of minutes from this meeting were a true and accurate record.</b>  The Chair provided a brief update on further meetings held and planned with the multi academy trust referred to in these minutes. She reported that discussions had been positive but a lengthy process lay ahead before a final decision could be made, and added that there would be no financial support available to fund the external expertise necessary for this process. The cost was likely to be in the region of £25k.	
4.	<b>Action plan and matters arising</b> Previously distributed.	

Action		Status		
1.	Consider strengthening the Code of Conduct to reflect duties of trustees outlined in Ofsted inspection framework and Governance Handbook	This academic year		
2.	Pass on relevant details to the Deputy Headteacher of the charitable organisation providing support to students on managing their emotions	Complete		
3.	Share document outlining successful strategies for disadvantaged students with SLT	Complete		
4.	Read through previous sets of minutes and Headteacher's reports to highlight improvements	Ongoing		
5.	Send a list of sample Ofsted questions to trustees	Complete		
6.	Work together to review and improve Appendix 1 of the Scheme of Delegation	Complete		
7.	Notify trustees of the details of their link member of staff	Complete		
8.	Give further consideration to the disconnect between some link roles and committee membership	Complete		
9.	Investigate an alternative date for the Pay Committee	Complete		
10.	Contact other Trust to make links with safeguarding trustees/governors	Complete		
11.	Complete internet safety training	See note below		
12.	Check with the IT Manager about ways forward for the double authentication changes	Complete		
<p>With reference to Action Point 6, it was agreed that the revised Scheme of Delegation would be considered at the Strategy Meeting in January, and then emailed to trustees for approval.</p> <p>With reference to Action Point 8, the Chair noted that assigning link governors to relevant committees would add complexity at a time when the governance structure was being embedded. She proposed that link reports would be brought to Board meetings if the link governor was not a member of the relevant Committee.</p> <p>With reference to Action Point 10, the Clerk agreed to check with Mr Layton if any trustees were still to complete internet training.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to check with Mr Layton which, if any, trustees were still to complete relevant internet training.</b></p>				
5.	<b>Correspondence received</b>			
	The Chair reported that she continued to receive regular updates from the ESFA and messages from the CYC Governance Service regarding training opportunities. Trustees confirmed that they also received these messages.			Clerk

<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Headteacher’s Report</b> Previously distributed.</p> <p>The Headteacher presented his report and invited questions.</p> <p>Before turning to the Headteacher’s report, trustees wished to record their appreciation of school staff’s professionalism in extremely challenging circumstances. They acknowledged the very sad news of the loss of a student to COVID-19. The Headteacher provided a brief update on the reaction in school and action being taken by NYCC to monitor social media and press outlets.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the Headteacher’s report, and the section on Inclusion and Safeguarding, and clarified the comment in the report that she would be scheduling face-to-face safeguarding training for trustees. She explained that Mrs Barber had offered to provide this. Mrs Young commented that safeguarding had been a key area of focus of recent Ofsted inspections, and trustees must be aware of their duties in relation to safeguarding, and be familiar with the updates to the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance. The Deputy Headteacher noted that staff had taken part in a refresher session recently on key aspects of KCSIE and offered to share the resources with trustees.</p> <p><b>Action: CE to share questions on key aspects of KCSIE guidance with the Chair.</b></p> <p>Mrs Robinson reported on her safeguarding link visit which took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. She commented that it had been a very useful experience and that she had been supported by a safeguarding link governor from another setting. The Chair had also been part of the visit. The visit had covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring of the Single Central Record (SCR)</li> <li>• review of the safeguarding audit with Mrs Barber</li> <li>• use of CPOMS</li> <li>• discussions with staff and students.</li> </ul> <p>Mrs Robinson advised that the students she met had confirmed that they felt safe in the school and that staff were more visible during social times. One area for development was students’ awareness of county lines. The Chair thanked Mrs Robinson for her verbal report and noted that a written report would follow. She observed that the Board now had more reassurance of the rigour of the school’s safeguarding processes. The Headteacher commented that trustee visits to monitor safeguarding processes and the SCR in particular were vital, as part of a culture of rigour and challenge.</p> <p><b>Agenda: Safeguarding link visit report</b></p> <p><b>Referring to the table showing numbers of students with SEND, the Chair commented that the numbers in each year group decreased noticeably as students got older.</b> The Headteacher responded that Years 7 and 8 were bigger year groups, so a larger number of students with SEND was to be expected, although numbers in these age groups were also increasing due to earlier identification of needs.</p> <p><b>In response to a trustee’s question, the Deputy Headteacher clarified the colour coding used in the table of attendance data and explained that the school’s focus was on the attendance of disadvantaged students.</b></p>	<p>CE</p> <p>Agenda</p>
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**A trustee noted that the attendance data was complicated by COVID-19 related absences but asked if, overall, the Deputy Headteacher was pleased, or concerned, by the data.** The Deputy Headteacher responded that, not taking COVID-19 related absence into account, overall attendance had improved and new strategies were having an impact, but not as rapidly as she would have liked. Attendance in lower year groups was better than in higher year groups; positive cases of COVID-19 had reduced in the student body which would help.

The Headteacher agreed with the Deputy Headteacher that attendance strategies would take time to impact. He referred to attendance panel meetings for Year 11 students, noting that work towards improving the attendance of students with the poorest records would inevitably mean that there was less capacity to support those with better, but not yet good, attendance. The Deputy Headteacher outlined some of the other positive reinforcement strategies.

Mrs Dunn provided a brief verbal report of her link visit which had taken place earlier in the week. She also agreed that attendance strategies would take time to show results but advised that expectations around attendance were high. **Noting that the trend of persistent absence was rising nationally, as when students fell behind it became more difficult to re-engage them, a trustee asked what was being done to engage students after the disruption caused by the pandemic.** The Deputy Headteacher explained that extra tutoring and interventions were in place for Year 11 students, and the focus with this year group had been on destinations to encourage engagement. In January, Year 10 would be in the spotlight for increased intervention.

**Mrs Stewart commented that, when she had completed her link visit, there had not been clarity around the levels of attendance in the Sixth Form.** The Deputy Headteacher responded that Sixth Form attendance data collection and analysis had improved and that this was sent to Mrs McDonald. However, the Deputy Headteacher acknowledged that the Sixth Form attendance data analysis had been subject to some degree of inconsistency in the past, and that this was being addressed.

**A trustee referred to the behaviour data in the Headteacher's report, which was not showing the improvements hoped for. She questioned whether teaching staff were taking responsibility for managing behaviour in their classes.** The Deputy Headteacher agreed that behaviour this term had been a challenge on occasion but new strategies were now showing impact. In fact, the data highlighted repeat incidents of poor behaviour from the same students against the new boundaries and although more negative points had been recorded, these had been collected by fewer numbers of students. The Deputy Headteacher agreed that the responsibility for reducing low level poor behaviour lay with class teachers and she advised that she would be leading an information session on behaviour management in the New Year.

The Headteacher advised that a school data manager had now been appointed, and the data management system was now fit for purpose. No historic patterns or trends could be identified for comparison, as a result of the lack of data analysis capacity in the past, although it was clear that the gap between mock outcomes and final predictions would require further work to ensure that these predicted grades come to fruition. The Headteacher suggested that the data should be analysed by the Education and Standards Committee. Mrs Young advised that her planned link visit would also focus on Year 11 predictions.

**Agenda – Education and Standards: Year 11 mock outcomes and predictions**

**Agenda –  
E&S**

	<p>The Chair referred to the colour coded chart of CPD sessions, noting that this was useful information which would feed into link visits. The Headteacher explained that the sessions were led by identified lead practitioners from within the school.</p> <p>The Headteacher referred to the staffing update in his report and highlighted the planned internal appointment of an Associate Assistant Headteacher for Student Conduct who would provide the Deputy Headteacher with support in this area.</p> <p>Trustees thanked the Headteacher for his detailed and informative report.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>This had been covered under Item 6.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Updated SEF and RAP including HPA Provision</b> Previously distributed.</p> <p>The Chair reminded trustees that the RAP was a key document to inform their link visits. It would also be helpful to read the relevant sections in the Ofsted handbook which were in the trustees' Ofsted training packs as these would have helpful background reading to inform link visits. The Headteacher referred to page 4 of the RAP and the seven key priorities which should be the focus for trustees. He emphasised that, in terms of the KPIs, there was still some uncertainty around comparative data due to the disruption caused by the pandemic and by historical weaknesses in processes.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that the RAP was a key document and that familiarity with their link areas of the Plan was vital to being able to triangulate evidence, to formulate questions and challenge, and to hold senior leaders to account. The Headteacher outlined the three stages of school improvement: identifying areas for development, implementing improvement strategies and measuring the impact, and explained that trustees could expect to see evidence of the improvement strategies at this stage, but not necessarily the impact. This, however, should be the focus of trustees' link visits over the course of the year.</p>	
9.	<p><b>SEND Review report from October 2021</b> <b>SEND link visit report</b> Previously distributed.</p> <p>It was noted that the first paper was the outcome of the SEND review undertaken in October, which had highlighted the deployment of TAs, and included an action plan for the SENDCo to address.</p> <p>Mrs Mackinder had visited the school on 2<sup>nd</sup> November and commented that she had been pleased to see the school using guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation around the effective use of TAs; the research had concluded that the most effective deployment of TAs was out of the classroom in small group interventions. Mrs Mackinder noted that this was taking place on a small scale but more could be done. The Deputy Headteacher responded that she had discussed deployment of TAs with the SENDCo but she was not yet at a stage where this change could be implemented. There was further discussion on this and Mrs Mackinder underlined that research on the effective deployment of TAs was taken from a broad evidence base.</p>	

	<p>The Headteacher added that the number of interventions taking place during form time had been doubled and space within the school was being reorganised to facilitate this. He advised that he had no concerns around the provision for students with EHCPs but there was a need to ensure that they developed more independence. As a result, TAs could then be used more effectively with other students. There was also a need to support class teachers to differentiate appropriately for SEND students in their class.</p> <p>Referring to her SEND link visit report, Mrs Mackinder highlighted the comments from staff that the increased focus in the school on SEND had been useful, in a supportive way. She had identified a need to revisit the SEND register with a view to streamlining it, firstly by removing students who no longer needed special provision. Mrs Mackinder advised that the workload of the SENDCo had also been raised as an issue.</p> <p>Trustees thanked Mrs Mackinder for her comprehensive report.</p> <p><i>(Caroline Edwards left the meeting at 8.15pm)</i></p>	
10.	<p><b>Ofsted preparation including Trustee training</b></p> <p>The Chair encouraged trustees to access relevant Ofsted training and referred to the pack of information which she had circulated for information.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Draft minutes of the Education and Standards Committee meeting held 12th October 2021</b> Previously distributed.</p> <p>Trustees received the draft minutes of this meeting.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Minutes of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings held 20th October 2021 and 17th November 2021 (draft)</b> Previously distributed.</p> <p>Trustees received the minutes of these meetings.</p> <p>Mr Ives highlighted the risks identified by the FAR Committee under Item 5 of the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November, which the Board should be aware of.</p> <p>It was agreed that Committee minutes should be circulated to all trustees for information once a draft had been finalised.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Brief verbal reports of the Headteacher's Performance Management process and Pay Committee meeting</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that she had conducted the Headteacher's performance management with Mrs Dunn and Mrs Young, supported by Kate Lounds as the external advisor, whose input had been invaluable. The Chair advised that the process had been positive.</p>	

14.	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p><u>Governance Improvement Plan</u> Previously distributed.</p> <p>The Chair remarked that the plan had been updated and would be for every Board meeting. It now also contained measurable KPIs at the end of each section and she proposed that each Committee look at their relevant sections and amend as appropriate.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the second stage of the external review of governance had now been completed although the report was still in draft. She summarised the findings, which were very positive and constructive, and agreed to circulate the final report.</p> <p><b>Action: Chair to circulate final report from external review of governance.</b></p> <p>Mrs Young thanked trustees for agreeing to commission an external review of governance as this had been a catalyst for change and she thanked the Headteacher and the SLT for their time in engaging with it.</p> <p>The Chair read out the two recommendations from the report and thanked all those who had taken part.</p> <p>The Chair reported on the visit of a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to the school which had been very valuable. She advised that the SRMA had made some recommendations which should be shared with trustees. Mr Ives proposed that an extra FAR Committee be arranged for January to look at the recommendations. The Headteacher agreed that the meeting had been useful as the SRMA had added a sharper focus to improvements in budget management.</p> <p>A trustee noted that a discussion around students travelling in from the coast was still overdue. The Chair confirmed that this would be added to the agenda for the FAR meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p><b>Agenda – FAR Committee: data and discussion around students travelling from the coast.</b></p> <p><u>Training Update</u> Previously distributed.</p> <p>Trustees were reminded to email details about training completed to the Clerk. Trustees were reminded to read KCSIE Part 1 and to email the Clerk and the Chair once this had been done.</p> <p><b>Action: all trustees to read KCSIE Part 1 if they have not already done so this academic year and to confirm with the Chair and the Clerk.</b></p>	<p>JDH</p> <p>Agenda – FAR</p> <p>All</p>
15.	<p><b>Link Visit Reports</b></p> <p><u>Careers</u> Previously distributed.</p>	

	<p>Mr Moore commented that he had been reassured to see evidence of rapid improvement in this area. He was pleased to see the plans being put in place for students in terms of careers visits; the main concern now was the impact of COVID-19 on these plans.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u> Mrs Robinson had provided a verbal report and a written report of her link visit would follow.</p> <p><u>Verbal reports from Quality of Education and Leadership and Management</u> The Chair reported that she had undertaken a link visit for Leadership and Management during which the Headteacher had provided her with an update on the curriculum. The Chair had also held discussions with staff and was pleased to find that they were clear about the purpose of the SEF and the RAP and the connection to their performance management. It was very pleasing to see that much of the evidence around progress within this section had already been seen through papers and documentation at trustee meetings.</p> <p>Mrs Young advised that she had re-scheduled her link visit for that week.</p>	
16.	<p><b>Determination of matters to be regarded as confidential</b></p> <p>There were no items recorded as a confidential minute.</p>	
17.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>It was noted that the Pay Committee had met twice and had agreed the Headteacher's recommendations for pay progression. It was agreed that the headline data on pay progressions should be presented to the FAR Committee.</p> <p><b>Agenda – FAR Committee: headline data on pay progressions for 2021.</b></p> <p>The Chair agreed to send staff a message of appreciation on behalf of the Board, before the end of term. The Chair thanked trustees for their support during the year and trustees recorded their thanks to the Headteacher.</p> <p><b>Action: send message to staff on behalf of the Board.</b></p>	<p><b>Agenda – FAR</b></p> <p><b>JDH</b></p>
18.	<p><b>Dates and times of future meetings – all at 6.30pm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 6th April 2022</li> <li>• Wednesday 13th July 2022</li> </ul>	

Meeting ended at 8.55pm

Signed: Jill Donaldson Hodges

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Ms Jill Donaldson Hodges (Chair)

## ACTION PLAN FROM THE MEETING OF THE ESLT BOARD held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### To be added to the rolling action plan

Action	Item	Person(s)	Timescale	
1.	Consider strengthening the Code of Conduct to reflect duties of trustees outlined in Ofsted inspection framework and Governance Handbook	4	JDH/Clerk	Ongoing
2.	Read through previous sets of minutes and Headteacher's reports to highlight improvements	4	Chair	Ongoing
3.	Check with Mr Layton which, if any, trustees are still to complete relevant internet training	4	Clerk	ASAP
4.	Share questions on key aspects of KCSIE guidance with the Chair	6	CE	ASAP
5.	Circulate final report from external review of governance	14	JDH	When ready
6.	All trustees to read KCSIE Part 1 if they have not already done so this academic year and to confirm with the Chair and the Clerk	14	All trustees	ASAP
7.	Send message to staff on behalf of the Board	17	JDH	ASAP

### ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:

#### Trust Board

- Presentation from Head of English on new curriculum
- Five year strategy for the Sixth Form
- Scheme of Delegation – Appendix 1
- Governance improvement plan – impact of actions
- Safeguarding link visit report

#### Education and Standards Committee

- Year 11 mock outcomes and predictions
- Governance Improvement Plan

#### Finance, Audit and Risk

- Five year strategy for the Sixth Form
- Data and discussion around students travelling from the coast
- Headline data on pay progressions for 2021
- Governance Improvement Plan