



Yvonne Hilditch Chancery MAT [85] 14 October 2020

Directors Meeting Minutes 21/05/2020

▶ Virtual ▶ Thursday, May 21, 2020 ▶ 17:00 ▶ Chair: Ros Caulfield ▶ Clerk: Sue Lambeth

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

Governors Attending: > Elizabeth Martindale, Alison Hattersley, Steven Coles, Ros Caulfield, Justine Twiss, Jenny Whiston, Sarah-Louise Gohr

Governors Apologies: > Nikki Ratcliffe

Non Governors Attending: > Sue Lambeth, Juliet Jones, Carolyn Brown

Non Governors Apologies: >

Agenda Item 1 ▶ Welcome, Apologies and AOB

The meeting was quorate and started at 17.04.

MINUTE

RC welcomed all, in particular Juliet Jones, Head Teacher of Excalibur School, and Carolyn Brown, Head Teacher of The Berkeley Academy, to the meeting, the purpose of which was to reach agreement on the proposal for the re-opening of the Chancery Trust schools.

Apologies had been received from Nikki Ratcliffe.

No items of other business were requested.

Agenda Item 2 ▶ Declarations of Interest

MINUTE

No declarations of pecuniary interest or conflict of interest between an individual and the Board of Directors as a whole in connection with the business to be discussed during the meeting were declared.

Agenda Item 3 ▶ Chairs Action

MINUTE

The Chair advised she had taken no actions on behalf of the Directors of Chancery Multi Academy Trust since the last meeting.

Agenda Item 4 ▶ Part One minutes of the previous meeting

MINUTE

The minutes of the Directors' meeting held on 14th May 2020 were reviewed, agreed to be a true and accurate account and would be signed off by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

Agenda Item 5 ▶ CEO Re-opening of Schools update

MINUTE

The CEO reported that communication was received on 20th May from Cheshire East (CE) with their model for the re-opening of schools. CE strongly encouraged schools to follow the model allowing re-opening from 1st June in a phased approach.

Cheshire East Re-opening Model

June 1st -15th – schools would re-open for vulnerable and key worker children, the induction of staff and the preparation of the site.

From 15th June - Early Years and Reception pupils to return.

From 22nd June - Year 1 pupils to return.

From 29th June - Year 6 to be re-introduced.

The Chancery Trust model had been very similar to the CE model which now provided for a faster re-introduction. Advice from the Regional Schools Commission was to follow the CE model.

The three Headteachers had written a Chancery Trust cover letter, verified by RC, to parents to accompany the CE letter. Speedy communication had been felt vital, and parents were aware of the Directors' decision to be taken on 21st May.

The Chair recommended following CE advice and JJ felt that the CE phased approach model fitted the Excalibur context. CB advised The Berkeley had extra space and staffing available but would follow the CE model.

With regard to feedback from parents, LG reported that one parent from Pikemere School had been dissatisfied with the CE approach. LG had explained that Chancery had been planning for the reopening of schools since the announcement and we would continue to do so. LG also explained that leaders were planning the same approach to CE prior to communication arriving. At Pikemere School 7 pupils from Reception, 2 pupils from Year 1 and 3 pupils from Year 6 were not expected to be returning until September. At Excalibur School no negative feedback to the letter had been received, and parents had indicated that 14 Year 1, 5 Reception and 2 Year 6 pupils would not be returning. However, parents might change their minds over time and planning had been on the basis of all pupils returning. The communication from The Berkeley would inform each of the bubbles of 15 pupils of their school times, their room and who their teacher would be regardless of whether they had currently declined the offer. Directors felt this showed all pupils were very welcome to return.

By following the CE model, there would be no capacity for further children to return to school before the end of the summer term.

Trustees commented that the level of preparation and the depth of thought which had gone into the documentation was to be commended. Every angle and scenario appeared to be covered and heartfelt thanks were given to the three Headteachers for their approach and the documentation provided. The documents were considered to be rigorous and although there was similarity between schools, very much bespoke to the individual schools, in line with the Chancery Trust ethos of schools maintaining their individuality.

LG advised work was taking place to ensure consistency of approach to Human Resources (HR) issues such as midday staffing across all schools and staff attendance due to childcare issues. Advice had been sought from J Cook Solicitors and the recommendation received that any situations should be considered on a case by case basis and as much creativity as possible explored before moving to unpaid leave.

A discussion ensued on the provision of wrap around care and the allocation of pupils to bubbles, with the following points highlighted:

- At The Berkeley a designated table would be provided for each pupil and social distancing must be maintained. Pupils from Nursery to Year 6 had been in the same space since school closure, each with their own designated space and tables compliant with social distancing.
- The Pikemere approach had been to ask parents of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils currently accessing wrap around care whether the provision was still required. If the size of this group of pupils were to increase they would form further bubbles in age groups wherever possible. If parents were to indicate that wrap around care was still required, the pupils would remain in their current bubble. Movement between bubbles would not be possible. LG confirmed that the basis of the plan was the guidance not to mix bubbles and adults.

The Directors considered the impact of the plan for delivering learning on the wellbeing of pupils, and whether the situation would be more complex in mixed age key worker bubbles, where grouping by age would be difficult. Not all Directors felt that this would be the most effective way forwards.

The view was expressed that the three schools had families with different needs but the preferred option was to keep bubbles as unique as possible.

The need for a pastoral approach to re-integration was acknowledged, although a degree of normal routine would also be beneficial.

Discussion ensued on how to build in the provision of Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time for teaching staff. LG confirmed that guidance had been sought from the RSC which had an expectation for pupils to be in school full time. The CEO interpretation was that PPA could not be provided on this basis without mixing staff. The message received from the RSC was to interpret the guidance as was best for the school. Schools would still be open full time for key worker children as currently, but other pupils would attend for four and a half days, with school closing at midday on Fridays.

Directors asked that consistent measuring parameters be put in place across the trust, covering elements such as the safety and effectiveness for the staff and families. Regular reviews were agreed to be essential, and it might be necessary for Directors to be available in August and up until then. Meetings would be arranged as required to meet changes in circumstances. Directors **agreed** to be available over the forthcoming weeks at on Thursdays at 5 p.m. to meet if required.

Directors agreed unanimously to follow the CE guidance.

LG reported to Directors that the RSC was feeding back to the DfE which would inform government policy. In her contact with the RSC LG had expressed the view that the current plan would not be sustainable and the reality of having all pupils back in school was not possible.

Further work would take place on re-opening to pupils, including planning and preparation, the school recovery plans and risk assessments. PPE resources and intimate care procedures needed to be considered. The Directors **agreed** that the logistics and operational detail would be decided by schools, and any disparity identified and referred back to Directors if necessary.

Work had begun to map out the weeks ahead and identify the overall staffing, cleaners, teaching and support, required. From 1st June Pikemere School would be looking to operate bubbles of staff empty of pupils to establish the new normal way of working for staff, particularly as adult to adult transmission of Covid-19 was advised to be the greatest risk. Information would be shared across the three Head Teachers.

AH left the meeting at 18:00.

The Directors sincerely thanked the three headteachers, and assured them of their full support.

DECISION

Directors agreed unanimously to follow the CE guidance.

Directors agreed to be available over the forthcoming weeks on Thursdays at 5 p.m. to meet if required.

The Directors agreed that the logistics and operational detail would be decided by schools, and any disparity identified and referred back to Directors if necessary.

Q: Are there many staff who may not be able to attend school?

A: Not to date. Pikemere has staff not able to attend due to health issues and staffing is stretched. Discussion around staff covering across the Trust would be considered if necessary, but it was felt that would add to the stress for staff.

Q: What is the position regarding the government requirement for a 14 day quarantine period after travel outside the UK?

A: This is currently unknown and, if implemented, would have an implication for staffing and communication with parents. The situation will be monitored.

Q: What is the position regarding notification to the Health and Safety (HSE) Executive?

A: This is currently unknown.

CHALLENGE

Q: Are schools looking to re-establish wrap around care for all pupils at the moment?

A: Wrap around care is operating at The Berkeley Academy for key worker children with a good amount of uptake for the allocated year groups.

Q: Does the wrap around care at The Berkeley comply with the need for pupils to be in the same bubble?

A: To a degree. Social distancing must be complied with, and it would be unreasonable for teachers to be expected to remain until 6 p.m.

Q: How could mixed age wrap around care groups at Pikemere provide for the education and care of the pupils in them?

A: Currently pupils attending school in every year group are provided with a device to access their bespoke online learning from the website. As pupils return Microsoft Teams will be used to stream the teacher in class; simultaneously to the second bubble in each year group and with a slight delay to those pupils in the year groups not attending. The expectation of teachers is the same for each teacher whether delivering lessons to a class at home or in school. For pupils doing home learning, the videos would continue with teaching provided by class teachers. This is the same at The Berkeley.

Q: How can schools ensure the consistency of delivery of the education provision for all pupils whether at home or in school?

A: At Pikemere School the offer is based on online learning, which, as for children learning at home, does not fill the whole day.

Agenda Item 6 ▶ Next meeting

MINUTE The date of the next scheduled meeting of the Directors was confirmed to be 14th July 2020 at 5.30 p.m.

Agenda Item 7 ▶ Any Other Business

MINUTE There was no further business to discuss.

Agenda Item 8 ▶ Impact Statement

MINUTE What is the impact of this meeting on the pupils across Chancery Trust?

- The comprehensive range and depth of thought within the documentation provided by the CEO and Head Teachers has enabled the Directors to have a clear and thorough insight into the planning and preparation for the reopening of the school to the age groups required by the Government.
- The Directors feel that they have been fully briefed in a timely and comprehensive manner through the provision of all current and appropriate documentation by the CEO and Head Teachers and promptly uploaded by the Clerk to the Governors to the shared governance platform - Trust Governor.
- Input from the three Head Teachers and their informed contributions to the discussion regarding the schedule for reintegrating identified year groups supported the Directors in their consideration of the options available and the decision to adopt the Cheshire East proposed time frame. It was felt that this would provide the three schools with the safest time frame to work towards for both children and staff.
- The importance of the staff having adequate opportunity to become familiar with the new routines and changes of use to the school environments will allow for adequate and effective preparation for reintroducing "bubbles" of children in a more successful and safer manner for both children and staff.
- Following guidance provided by Dr Matt Butler, Consultant for the COVID Assessment Unit at Addenbrooks Hospital in Cambridge, through the Coronacast of 8th May, the Directors were able to engage in informed discussions around the challenges raised by the need to provide wrap around care for key groups of children and the bubble scenario for the identified returning age groups of children. The differing needs of the three schools has led the Directors to consider different arrangements for each of the schools but that these would be reviewed as more information became available.

- As a result of all of the above, the Directors have, therefore, felt fully informed of how the health, safety and wellbeing of the children and staff of Chancery MAT can be assured as best as is possible in the current situation.
- Directors have offered a weekly informal catch up with the CEO via Zoom in order to remain fully briefed and to support the CEO with the decision making that she is having to engage with.

The Part One meeting closed at 18.08.

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

Directors Meeting 2 Summer 2020 Pt1 *dated:* 21/05/2020
Minutes approved by Yvonne Hilditch