

**Anglian Learning
Extraordinary Trust Board
Meeting Minutes**



21 May 2020

Virtual meeting via Google Meet

Trustees Present

Claire Lawton (CL Chair), Jonathan Culpin (JC CEO), David Lamkin (DL), Ken Murphy (KM), John Morgan (JM), June Cannie (MJC), and Sue Speller (SCS), and Richard Cowling (RC)

Others Present

Prue Rayner (PR Director of Primary Education), Charity Main (CM Finance Director), and Sarah Golding (SG Clerk)

Apologies

1.	Acceptance of Apologies for Absence	ACTION
	There were no apologies.	
2.	Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items	
	There were no declarations of interest with regards to agenda items.	
3.	Matters arising not on this agenda	
	There were no matters arising.	
4.	Update and discussion on wider school opening on 1 June 2020	
	<p>5. In the Finance, Operations and Estates Committee meeting the framework was shared detailing the legal and scientific context that has provided guidance to the central team. The other documents referenced in the framework were the risk assessments which primary schools have completed, and secondary schools are in the process of completing. The planning document and Leadership FAQ have also been shared with Trustees. The Leadership FAQ is the operating guidance shared with Headteachers and discussed in recent meetings. (This has now been supplemented by HR FAQs and those for Staff and Parents.)</p> <p>The Leadership FAQ has been updated and shared with Trustees in light of most recent advice from the DfE and issues raised by primary school Headteachers. Some of those changes related to clarification on social distancing practise with younger children. There have also been changes in relation to HR to provide discretion to Headteachers in terms of working with those staff who are living with people who are vulnerable. Whilst the guidance is clear that those staff should return to work, if they are apprehensive the guidance asks Headteachers to</p>	

show sensitivity and in these situations the Director of HR should be contacted to discuss further.

Union guidance has been reviewed and cross referenced by that provided by the Trust. It was noted that individuals from a BAME background are potentially more likely to suffer from infection from transmission of the virus and a separate risk assessment will be created to protect those members of staff.

When the Staff FAQs are sent it will be referenced that union guidance and their checklist has been taken into account.

The Trust risk assessments are being sent to unions and to primary staff to comment, reflect and feed into the risk assessment process for after the half term holiday.

No guidance has been received from the DfE for secondary schools' provision. There is currently no change in secondary school practice and consequently it is unlikely that secondary schools will re-open before 8 June and possibly later than that date.

Primary school Headteachers have been asked if they have any concerns about opening mid-week; some schools are opening on Wednesday 3 June and others on Thursday 4 June and Headteachers are to inform the Executive Leadership Team this week if they have any issues with re-opening. Headteachers are aware that they need to train their staff on the Trust's and school's plans for re-opening that are to be in place.

A staff survey across the Trust will be conducted. Parental communications will be sent this afternoon or tomorrow morning for primary schools. No final decision can be made until the Government have confirmed that their five tests have been met and until the Trust Board next Friday when it will be confirmed that schools can re-open the following week.

A meeting was held with the Chair of Governors yesterday and they were positive and asked questions; and their responsibilities as Governors was made clear. The Chair of Governors felt they were part of a responsible organisation.

Five key questions were posed to Trustees

1. Is the Board satisfied that the current scientific evidence base as presented by HM Government on Tuesday 19 May provides sufficient grounds to open more widely the Trust's schools in the week beginning 1 June 2020?

This takes into account that the Trust can only go on the Government's advice and the information available in the public sphere.

2. Is the Board satisfied at this point in time that if the HM Government's key tests for re-opening schools more widely from 1 June are met and, accordingly, given these tests were set by the Prime Minister, that this provides a strong enough legal basis for the safe return of pupils and staff, if reasonable and appropriate controls are established by the Trust and schools?

The Government has presented a range of evidence and a direction has been received from the DfE and the Prime Minister that schools should re-open. Are we as a Trust Board satisfied that this is the right basis to do so if we put into place reasonable and appropriate controls?

3. Given the above tests and evidence base, and in conjunction with the DfE guidance on infection control in educational premises, and the Government COVID19 Secure Guidance on workplace settings, is the Board satisfied that the Trust has taken all reasonable and practical steps to implement appropriate health and safety measures to minimise as far as possible the risks to pupils, staff and visitors in its schools?

We are informing parents in FAQs and to staff that we are reducing the risk as much as possible. You can never eliminate all risks within a school and Trustees are asked if you agree that we have achieved this.

4. Having been satisfied on Questions 1-3, and subject to the Government's key tests being met as notified on 28 May 2020, does the Board approve re-opening schools more widely in the week beginning 1 June 2020, and that in doing so it is discharging its duties appropriately under the Health and Safety at Work Act, and other relevant legislation?

5. How do Trustees wish to review the decision to open more widely as soon as the decision regarding the key tests is communicated and what is the mechanism for keeping the decision under review, in light of the evolving evidence regarding the nature, rate and incidence of infection, both locally and nationally, and the effective implementation of the Trust's control measures.

To ensure we have a mechanism whereby the Trust remains satisfied that the safety of pupils and staff is being maintained in our schools.

The Chair opened discussion by stating that the legal basis of our opening is clearly defined and established by Government. There is significant debate amongst scientists about what is safe and what is not and with public health it is almost impossible to make a judgement for the whole country at the same time. The Chair has spoken to Public Health England for the East of England specific data which they were unable to provide. On the basis that the 'R number' for the East

of England is reasonable compared to North East or Cumbria this is likely to be the best information we will obtain.

There is to be a mechanism for review and in particular after 3 June to decide where and how we educate Y6 pupils in particular. The Chair asked for questions from Trustees.

Q: *Do Reception and Y1 children have to return to school first or can Y6 pupils return to school before these younger children?*

A: No, the Government guidance is to have all of the year groups (Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y6) return, but if you cannot manage to have all year groups return then the younger year groups should be prioritised.

Q: *Will there be a poster at the entrance of the school in terms of rules for parents e.g. if your child is sick what to do?*

A: All schools are providing parents with clear guidance, and a staff handbook is being shared. The Director of Operations has arranged external signage and primary schools have been provided with a clear key message. Parents are being discouraged from being on the school site and from gathering on the site.

Q: *If the parent is not allowed on the school site, presumably they will be parking near the school. Are we informing communities around the school site that this is likely to happen?*

A: A staggered entry is planned. Each group of children in their social bubble group will arrive at different times, apart from The Meadow School who have different entrances for each bubble group. Bottisham and Howard primary schools are considering how they manage car parking. PR will look into this for the other schools. In the FAQs car parking is mentioned and includes being aware of the impact on the local community.

Q: *We have to accept the Government guidance because to try and second guess this is beyond the remit of this Board.*

A: We are reliant on the information provided by others, we are acting reasonably, and we are not taking responsibility for things which are outside of our control. We have taken on board a range of advice by the Government and we have to assume that the Government's information is robust and based upon best practice.

The Chair confirmed that we need to be careful and vigilant for our pupils and the education for those within Anglian Learning.

Q: *Regarding the responsibility of parents and families do the FAQs to parents make it clear where the demarcation line exists? So, we are not taking on responsibilities that are beyond our competence or our capability to actually manage.*

A: In the parental FAQs it is set out that that Trust does not guarantee social distancing. If parents think that social distancing can be maintained, then this is unrealistic. Ultimately a parent's responsibility is to determine if they would like to return their child to the school. The

PR to speak with all primary schools to confirm how car parking by parents is being managed and how this will be communicated with the local community.

<p>Trust would like children to return to school in terms of balancing out this risk against the educational risk, but this is a parental decision.</p> <p>Q: <i>Have we received an update from our insurer about what our coverage or our liability position is?</i></p> <p>A: Our insurer responded and stressed the need to act as ‘reasonably’ as possible in our application of health and safety. Anybody making a claim against us would have to prove that we had not acted reasonably, and they were clear about our risk assessments. This was in regard to our public liability and our own liability.</p> <p>It was agreed that there is ample evidence that all reasonable efforts have been taken.</p> <p>Q: <i>What are the plans to update the Trust Board about how things have gone for the first and second week?</i></p> <p>A: We could hold a meeting in the second week to review where we are and to confirm our quality assurance processes. JC could send Trustees a brief summary at the end of the first week of the primaries returning. To note that if staff have any concerns regarding the reopening, in addition to speaking to their Headteacher, or instead of following the process detailed in the Whistleblowing Policy, we are creating a separate email address for staff to use.</p> <p>At the Extraordinary Trust Board held during the second week of June the approach and implications for secondary schools can be discussed.</p> <p>Q: <i>Whilst it is not our responsibility for outside of school activities, however, we do carry some responsibility regarding the community, if on 1 June the Government advise that 5 people can meet at a social distance what would we do if people are not following this social distancing measures?</i></p> <p>A: We have a moral duty regarding the local community, and we would communicate to parents by providing a reminder of how to gather outside the front of the school. If this became difficult, we could ask for support from police, e.g. PSCOs and this may be the case for parking as well. We are firmly against staff being asked to police this themselves beyond the school gates, as staff need to concentrate on pupils once they cross the threshold into the school and to maintain their own health and safety</p> <p>Q: <i>What is the process for closing a school again in the event there is an outbreak and where does the chain of command lie?</i></p> <p>A: If a child has symptoms they are to be isolated in a room with a window within the school, with the door closed and they are to continue to be supervised. Their parents are to be contacted and informed that their child is showing Covid-19 symptoms and the child is to leave immediately with the parent. We shall also request that siblings are also withdrawn. The guidance is that the child is then to be tested and if a child or member of staff is confirmed with Covid-19 the</p>	<p>JC will send Trustees a brief summary at the end of the first week of the primaries returning.</p> <p>An Extraordinary Trust Board meeting is to be held during the second week of June</p>
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	<p>child and the bubble group they are in and the member of staff should be in self-isolation for 14 days. We would notify Public Health England who would advise further action and if they felt that there were a number of children being tested positive then their response may include closing the school. We have an escalation process in place that for all cases of a child showing Covid-19 symptoms; the Director of Operations is to be informed in order to monitor the situation and to ensure that the school is acting in accordance with the guidance. This approach may change when the track and trace process is in place.</p> <p>If a child has Covid-19 symptoms they are to be isolated for 7 days but the rest of the bubble group do not have to isolate until the child is tested and confirmed as Covid-19 positive.</p> <p>Q: <i>Could Headteachers update their website and community newsletters to inform the wider community about the schools re-opening and to reassure that all is well?</i></p> <p>A: We will take this forward. Some schools have sent an article to local community newsletters. We have asked each school to submit an article about their activities over the last few weeks for our Trust Newsletter. It is important to demonstrate to the wider community all that is being achieved by the schools, and how schools are supporting vulnerable children, as well as reassure the local community going forward.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all for their useful and important questions and noted that Trustees have been satisfied with the answers and are clear on when the Trust Board will meet again to discuss further.</p> <p>The Chair thanked, on behalf of the Trust Board yet again, JC and his senior team for making this possible and especially when the schools need attention is so many other ways which cannot be neglected. Special thanks to PR for all the work completed with Howard CPS and to DC, PR and JC for all they have done generally and to CM for holding everything together financially.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Trust Board to now vote on whether the Board is in agreement that the wider opening will happen from 3 June following two days of staff preparation and orientation on 1 and 2 June?</p> <p>The Board agreed the following resolution:</p> <p>The Board gives approval to the wider opening of Anglian Learning schools to staff from 1 June and pupils from 3 June.</p> <p>The Chair concluded the meeting by noting that the Board looks forward to hearing the decision from the Government on 28 May.</p>	<p>JC to request that schools communicate re-opening plans to the local community.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Date and time and venue of next meeting</p>	
	<p>The next Extraordinary Trust Board will be held on 29 May at 11 am via Google Meet.</p>	

Action Log			
ITEM	ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5	PR to speak with all primary schools to confirm how car parking by parents is being managed and how this will be communicated with the local community.		Director of Primary Education
5	JC is to send Trustees a brief summary at the end of the first week of the primaries returning.		CEO
5	An Extraordinary Trust Board meeting is to be held during the second week of June.		Chair of Trustees
5	JC to request that schools communicate re-opening plans to the local community.		CEO

NOT YET AGREED