

STA Board Minutes 30/03/2020

▶ VIRTUAL MEETING ▶ Monday, March 30, 2020 ▶ 4pm ▶ Chair: Sarah Noon ▶ Clerk: Jennifer Barnacle

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

As per Sarah's email, please read all the papers. The executive team will be online and responding to emailed questions between 4.00 - 6.00pm on Monday (30/3).

Governors Attending:	>Sarah Noon, Brian Underwood, Christopher Reynolds, Mary Delahunty, Terry Smith, Phill Bateman, Fr Daley, Mike Cummins
----------------------	--

Governors Apologies:	>Fr Daley
----------------------	-----------

Non Governors Attending:	>Jennifer Barnacle, Martin Fitzwilliam, Tom Shannon, Paula Cooper, Ruth Hurcombe, Neil Lockyer, Antoinette Bouwens, Mike Hobbs, Marcella Gillespie
--------------------------	--

Non Governors Apologies:	>
--------------------------	---

Agenda Item 1 ▶ Welcome and introductions

MINUTE

The meeting was taking place via email exchange due to the coronavirus crisis. Directors emailed in questions and were responded to by a 'live' email exchange. Papers had been circulated and questions were invited. Directors emailed in questions and were responded to by a 'live' email exchange. These minutes reflect those emailed comments and questions and the executive team responses.

Agenda Item 2 ▶ Minutes of last meeting and conflicts of interests and business and pecuniary interests

MINUTE

The minutes were approved. There were no conflicts of interest to declare.

Agenda Item 3 ▶ Coronavirus update

Overview of pupil numbers and staffing

MINUTE

As an entire CMAT, we had an average of 200 children attending in all schools last week.

This ranged from 349 on Monday to 141 on Friday.

One school averaged 10% of total roll attending across the week – Holy Cross Whitwick

All other schools were below 10%

On Monday, 4 schools had an attendance of 10%+ of total roll – Holy Cross (W), St Charles, St Clare's and St Francis

On Tuesday, 1 school had an attendance of 10%+ of total roll – Holy Cross (W)

All schools had less than 10% attendance for the rest of the week

Two schools had no children attending on one or more days – St Charles and St Martin's

All schools had staffing rotations in place by the end of 23 March. These have been implemented to ensure: a safe ratio of staff to pupils; minimum contact/travelling for all staff across the CMAT. It is recognised that some roles within school cannot be done from home (e.g. cleaning, site management), so these members of staff are in school as normal, but are observing appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures.

Are there any plans in place to cover for staff on rota but have to suddenly self-isolate?

There is sufficient capacity in place across the CMAT. If this situation did arise the first port of call would be to adjust the rota *within* the school concerned. Beyond that, we could redeploy from other schools.

Any plans in place for using 'hubs' if staff shortage?

We are looking to move to this model in the north of the CMAT over Easter (hubs at Sacred Heart, Loughborough and Holy Cross, Whitwick); if this works well, it may be continued into next term. There are no plans beyond that at this point, but it will be constantly reviewed.

Could there be a point where provision has to be withdrawn because of shortage of support staff eg caretakers, cleaners, kitchen staff??

Theoretically, yes but, again, we have sufficient depth across a MAT of our size to be able to redeploy if needs be.

Brief outline of what sort of work is being set for pupils? How much of this is expected to be completed, particularly in the secondary schools?

PRIMARY:

Initial packs of work were sent home containing resources and activities for the first one or two weeks. Different schools are providing pupils with different levels of structure.

Some schools are providing daily or weekly timetables which contain suggested activities for each day.

Every school is attempting to provide a balance between the intellectual, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing of the child.

Most schools have a daily reading comprehension and maths activities. Some schools have daily phonics sessions. Some schools have a rota of activities for other subjects including RE, computing and history. Some schools are accessing content directly provided through websites whilst others are posting activities on school websites.

Not all headteacher's are monitoring the activities that are being provided to homes. All agree that this is a next step in provision and have plans which are being introduced this week or after the Easter holiday.

All schools identify communication with home (pupils and parents) as an area they wish to improve.

SECONDARY:

All four secondaries are setting work using online portals which students are already familiar with:

A really impressive range of work has been set by our schools. As well as hard copies of work given to students at the point of closure, St Paul's and English Martyrs' are using Show My Homework predominantly, but they are also using online learning tools such as Heggarty Maths (on both tools staff can see work completed by students). Teachers' can monitor work on Show My Homework. English Martyrs' have a helpline phone option for support with work at home. De Lisle and St Martin's both have password protected sections of their websites with uploaded work regularly and expectations that students also upload the work they have done.

You can see some examples of communication home re learning below:

<https://www.delisle.org.uk/214/in-the-news/post/137/school-closure-information-for-parents> (select home learning)

<https://www.englishmartyrs.org/post/national-school-closure-from-friday-20th-march-2020>

The online parent survey will help to further plan for home learning and we will be asking each school after Easter to look at which students are completing lots of work and to consider how we can more effectively reach out to those students with low levels of engagement. This will also allow us to look at patterns of engagement with learning online/ at home.

We have also developed safeguarding protocols and started to put resources together to be shared with schools for potential 'live' online teaching, starting with Year 12 students after Easter.

What plans are in place to ensure payroll continues to run smoothly if/when staff have to self-isolate?

There is an internal cover plan in place within the central payroll team.

If most/all of the team were ill or in isolation, PS could make the payment for us based on the latest information within PS People.

If both of these measures fail, we could simply instruct the bank to make the same payments to the same people as we made the previous month. The downside to this is that there could be some payments not made (certainly any overtime for example), and it is conceivable that if someone is left that *could* get paid again which we need to be recouped; but overall, the vast majority of staff would be paid correctly. We would then have to resolve any issues arising.

Re online parent survey to further plan for home learning - will students also be given the opportunity to give their views on how it is all going?

At this point we are simply seeking to get parents' feedback to ensure that what we are setting is manageable for them at home (especially if working from home). We will follow up with pupils, but this will be later down the line.

Some feedback has already been received from parents and this has been very positive with parents feeling well supported.

□

With reduced pupil numbers do you think that we will be able to cover the absences with existing staff?

Currently with pupil numbers being low and the numbers of staff that are reporting in for duty, there is no need to employ any other staff at this time

I know that you have received very positive messages of thanks from Headteachers regarding the support that has been provided by yourself and the central team. Are there any area/issues that have caused more concern to headteachers than others, and have you been able to address/support effectively?

Our main role within the Exec has been to try to synthesise the large amounts of information coming out each day into something that is digestible and relevant for the Heads. Some of their areas of concern have seemed trivial (e.g. 'should the pupils wear uniform if they have to come in?'), but in fact the Heads have found great reassurance in challenging times just by knowing "what everyone else is doing". One area of concern was their desire to have firm plans in place for the Easter holiday period which we responded to as quickly as we could, critically listening to what they saw as the best way forward. Members of the Exec team are in daily contact with the Heads to ensure that we can respond as quickly as we can to their queries and support them.

Agenda Item 4 ► Chaplaincy

What is the role of an Apprentice Chaplain and what could be the potential cost for this?

The apprentice Chaplain role is a new one which we are rolling out across the Diocese in collaboration with NDCYS. The aim is for us to appoint a young leader who can work under the supervision of an existing, experienced Lay Chaplain in order to learn how to effectively do the job without being the whole school responsibilities of a Lay Chaplain. They will be also receive mentoring from LLC and will complete the Chaplaincy Degree pathway with NDCYS and Derby University.

MINUTE

Hopefully this will result in us 'home growing' our chaplaincy provision from within, with enthusiastic and energetic young people who will be degree qualified. These apprentices will hopefully then move into Lay Chaplaincy positions in schools within the trust.

The cost is £14,800 per position.

Is collective worship still forming part of the daily routine in school?

TS is working with Tom Baptist's team at NRCDYS to produce acts of worship. We need to do more to get these out through the schools; they are of high quality, but we need greater coverage. You can see them on the NRCDYS YouTube channel.

There are a number of resources on the chaplaincy website for young people to be able to access and use at home. TS will continue to add to these.

TS is creating video content, some of which is just going onto the chaplaincy website, but most of which is going onto the NDCYS youtube channel. There is daily content on this channel, including a live streamed AOW on a monday morning and a live streamed 'friday night club' which has an element of prayer and some uplifting and fun bits (games, quiz's etc).

There is a weekly guide to what is going to be on the channel, which TS sends out to headteachers and chaplaincy leads each week. Links to the chaplaincy website and the NDCYS youtube channel should be included with work being sent home, along with the guide.

For children without access to the internet/a computer, TS put together a 'prayer pack' before schools closed for schools to print off to give to relevant staff.

Can these NRCDYS resources be used at home as well?

Yes, fully accessible - just an internet connection needed.

Agenda Item 5 ▶ **Safeguarding**

In respect of CPD that has been developed and delivered - what are uptake numbers, any schools not uptaking, feedback from CPD (any areas either you or schools think more training/updating is required)?

MINUTE

The Teaching School is doing a summary of staff numbers. Two Secondary Schools stand out as not taking up training . Feedback and evaluations are very positive. MG has asked teaching school to redesign the question in the evaluation about how far the training helps improve children's achievement to reflect that safeguarding impacts on achievement as children cannot achieve if they are not safe and well. MG is going to further develop DSL materials and this has been an ongoing activity.

Why have two secondary schools not taken the training?

One school has registered their staff with Leicester City – seemingly in error, and these were registered at the end of last academic year. The other has a smaller DSL team, and their training may be still in date. I am working to get all the due dates for refresher DSL and safer recruitment, so a reminder can be sent out.

How are you carrying out your role now schools have 'closed'?

Safeguarding protocols for school closure developed and updated to reflect new measures and government guidance, contact with DSLs via phone and email, speaking to HTs to see if any staff need supervision - to be done on MS Teams. In addition, we are planning both DSL and safer recruitment training online during this period of closure. Finally SCR audits are ongoing and will remain so throughout the period.

Can we have more details about the safeguarding protocols in place including directions for keeping in touch with the most vulnerable pupils who are not currently attending school. Does the checking include their academic work as well as safety? Presumably some pupils in alternate provision (but still responsibility of our schools) would have been due to undertake exams as well. How sure are we that arrangements for continuing their studies are adequate/robust enough?

Safeguarding protocols have been uploaded to TG.

There is only one young person in Alternate Provision at the moment (a very high needs case at one of our City primaries).

Academic monitoring is part of the checking on students although we are early into the process of this at the moment. It is an aspect which will need increasing as time goes on. Where appropriate for very vulnerable this will need to be in conjunction with alternative provision if this is what students would normally access.

Regarding work, the safeguarding expectations focuses on the delivery of Keeping Children Safe in Education. However, schools are regularly checking in with this group of children and part of their conversations may be about their access to the work being set. Looking forward, both primary and secondary schools are looking at ways in which we can provide added work structure at home and improve teacher/ pupil feedback will be a part of this.

Re the safeguarding protocols, there is a document which sets out actions for all schools to take to continue keeping our children safe: Vulnerable children are risk assessed for 3 categories:

Vulnerable children: categories and definitions

RED: most at risk of harm or neglect with few protective factors; children with CP or EHC plans, children for whom the school has serious concerns, around child criminal (including country lines) or sexual exploitation.

AMBER: moderate risk of harm or neglect but with some protective factors, e.g. active CIN plan with social worker or early help involvement.

BLUE: school has concerns about escalating or unmet needs; they have been red or amber concerns in the past and need monitoring; could include learners who are LAC or with SEN/D or young carers.

For each group of children there are specific actions as specified in the protocols.

Agenda Item 6 ► Business Services

LGBs are not mentioned anywhere in the H & S policy. Do the LGBs have a role to monitor the implementation of the policy?

The diocese took Health & Safety away from the LGB's responsibilities when schools joined the Trust. The Trust H&S policy is last year's policy with small amendments. The School's policy Part 1 and Part 2 are the same as the Trust policy. Part 3 shows the local arrangements. Implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Trust through audits and the use of the 'Every' online portal which is overseen by the Business Services Director and her Assistant.

MINUTE

What is the latest situation re the 3 boiler replacements? I appreciate we can't get heating engineers out for the next few months, but it would be good to know who we are going to use asap so that we can place the orders and make sure they can fit them as soon as our schools reopen.

As requested by the diocese we asked a heating engineer to help us with formulating the tender. This process took longer than anticipated with Dale Morgan (BSAP) visiting the schools on several occasions. The tenders went out at the end of February with a return date last Friday. We received two quotes and are checking with the other contractors today if they have maybe sent their proposal in the post. We will discuss the quotes with Dale and choose a contractor soon.

How do Directors actually *monitor* compliance?

1. Health & Safety audit outcomes.

2. Via an assessment of the information held on the new 'Every' online platform which will be reported on by the Business Services Director.
3. Standardised compliance checks (asbestos surveys, fire risk assessments and water hygiene checks) are all now provided throughout the CMAT, and will be reported on by the Business Services Director.

Do we need 3 received tenders for work before we can accept a price?

We need to have made a 'good attempt' to get three quotes; we are trying to secure the third at the moment for the boilers. In some cases, we stay with one supplier in order to minimise differences across the provision (eg windows).

Who carried out the CCTV survey on the drains? I have experience that it is an advantage having the CCTV survey carried out by the company that repairs/replaces the drains.

Drain survey has been carried out by Drain Scan. Danaher and Walsh are going to do work (they were a lot cheaper than other contractors).

One of the windows projects made reference to asbestos, but there was no comment about whether it was part of the window structure, or whether it had been dealt with or was included in the quotations. Further detail would be helpful.

Asbestos is located in window sills. The removal is included in the quotations but on a daily rate. This was discussed with the Diocese who agreed.

The project relating to St Paul's and vinyl asbestos tiles - will the glue residue also be removed if it has asbestos in it?

The vinyl in the dining area has been removed last academic year. Tiles and glue residue removed in line with asbestos guidance.

Both Health and Safety policies were approved subject to amending the first word in the second bullet point to Accept rather than acknowledge.

The diocesan estates committee approved the following projects at their meeting in February (to be paid for by SCA): Holy Cross Leicester – Replacement windows De Lisle – Science Block Roof replacement St Winefride's – Window replacement St Francis' – Boiler replacement De Lisle – Drain replacement. The Board formally approved these projects

Last academic year all schools received 'a little extra' funding from the chancellor to be used for capital projects. This academic year no such funding will be available. This will increase the dependence on DFC funding for capital projects

<p>ACTION</p> <p>DECISION</p>	<p>significantly. The Board agreed that DFC money not spent can be carried over to the next financial year.</p> <p>Amend the first word in the second bullet point of the Health and Safety Policy to be 'Accept' rather than Acknowledge.AB</p> <p>Approved H&S policies , subject to word amendment above.</p> <p>Approval of projects specified above being paid by SCA.</p> <p>The Board agreed that DFC money not spent can be carried over to the next financial year.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 6</p>	<p>▶ Standards and Performance</p>
<p>MINUTE</p>	<p>Re: Ofsted inspections -Have Actions Plans been drawn up for schools to address areas of weakness? If so, are these on TG?</p> <p>We are (were) in the process of monitoring these with the schools. They are, at best, currently in draft form and not yet on TG.</p> <p>What are your main areas of focus at this time?</p> <p>Primary</p> <p>Ensuring that all Heads are checking that work being set for pupils is age appropriate and provides challenge, especially in RE, English and Maths.</p> <p>Ensuring children read as much as possible.</p> <p>Ensuring that safe, regular and personal contact can be made with individual children</p> <p>Secondaries</p> <p>Being ready for the calculated assessment process is top priority. We have agreed the outline of our approach and have a key group cross CMAT ready to work on this. We have to consider process, moderation, confidentiality etc. We have been able to share lots of information from ASCL, NEU etc. and use this to support our plans. Within each school the SLT are now setting up MS teams so that when the process is published nationally (we hope mid this week) we can respond and support staff.</p> <p>Schools are setting curriculum online for all students and a big focus on trying to keep students motivated, particularly for year 11 and 13. It was a huge shock for this group of students when exams were cancelled.</p> <p>We are sharing all the information we get between the schools re specific qualifications (BTEC verification etc)</p> <p>We are now getting systems set up for sharing work cross CMAT between teams</p>

We are getting ready to do some online live teaching (intend to start with year 12) using Zoom.

You mention that you are hoping to get some online live teaching going with Year 12 students, would there be any benefit in doing some of this with Year 10?

If things are successful after a few days with Year 12 (planned for after Easter) hopefully schools can begin to use with year 10 as well.

We will have to keep in mind the advice coming from ASCL/ NEU etc as well because for some staff trying to use a platform you have never used before, in your own home (possibly with your own children to look after) will be challenging. However, we know our staff have been working together, overcoming challenges and embracing technology so hopefully this will be another tool they find useful.

Zoom is the most likely option. It is already widely used for online live teaching and has good features (you can mute all participants etc.)

Agenda Item 8

▶ Finance

Finance

MINUTE

1. Do you foresee further cuts/savings will need to be made as a result of the low interest rates?

2019/20 assumed £10,000 interest. As at end of Feb 2020, we had received £14,293 and so I had updated our in-year assumption to increase the budget. The extra would have helped cover the Ed Psychology costs that we have been using reserves for. So the fact that interest has now reduced to virtually zero will not make things any worse than originally thought for this year – rather the gains we might have expected will now not be made.

For 2020/21, we have assumed £4,000 interest. If rates remain at 0.1%, we may only get circa £3,000. Hopefully rates will start to increase when the COVID-19 period ends. We could look at locking some money away for a 3-6 month period although the interest benefits are not great compared to the risk of having our cash locked away.

2. Are we actually using agency staff currently to cover for staff illness?.

We are not using any agency staff for COVID-19 related illness. Where agency staff were in place (covering other sickness absences/vacancies) and we have a contractual obligation, we will continue to pay our contractual obligations. Where there is no contractual obligation, a case by case judgement will be made whether to continue to support the agency financially. The

Government have encouraged all public sector organisations to continue to support businesses even where there is no contractual obligation where we are likely to need the supplier to be available as soon as schools re-open.

For supply agencies, we will only continue to pay if we do need their services / need the individual when the schools re-open.

Where we do agree, there are some strings attached:

- The supplier is not allowed to also claim support from other Government schemes
- The supplier must remove their element of profit from invoices
- The supplier must continue to pay their subcontractors/employees too

The supplier must agree to an open book arrangement where we can request details of their finances

If the Board decided to accept a proposal to use a fundraising consultant, the proposal would have to go to the Diocesan Board for final approval. Given the current situation it was agreed that this should be discussed later in the year.

For information, we did ask Oaks Consultancy on some information regarding the faith 'ethos' concerns and they

"We have experience of working with Faith organisations, and indeed all of our clients have a social purpose and ethos that we have to work within. During the initial consultancy phase we would spend time working with senior members of the team to establish boundaries, commercial appetite and ethical considerations. By doing this scoping, we'd expect all subsequent conversations with funders or businesses to be with those who are aligned to the Trust and its Catholic ethos. If we were unsure about any of the approaches we were hoping to make, then we would run these past your prior to a conversation happening."

We also asked them about their pricing model and whether they consider a % payment by result. Oaks have said:

"This is not something we traditionally offer for a couple of reasons: firstly we work very transparently and openly with funders on behalf of our clients. Some traditional charitable funders do not allow professional fees to be included as part of the grant award, so some bid writing companies will hide it dishonestly within the project budget. We would not want to do this, and would always prefer for 100% of the funding to go to the beneficiaries. Secondly, as a SME this would put pressure on our long term cashflow. Our approach means you have dedicated skilled staff member/s who are able to develop a long term relationship and become embedded within your organisation to help generate additional revenue. A commission based approach makes it much more difficult to provide this level of consistency and quality."

Are internal audit visits to schools still going ahead?

All visits have been postponed until further notice. As soon as the current situation changes, visits will be re-arranged.

How are budget meetings are taking place at the present time?

We have been successfully using Microsoft Teams to conduct budget meetings. The few that have been conducted this way appear to be working well, and indeed have some benefits as we can easily share screens, go through staffing and other costs. In fact, even when the current COVID-19 period ends, we are likely to continue to offer meetings to take place using Microsoft Teams as it will help save travel time etc for schools/central staff.

Are the finance team managing to carry out all of their duties from home, or is there a backlog of things building up at Cossington that will need to be dealt with at a later time?

PS Financials and the other finance tools we use are all cloud based and so not being in the office is not a huge problem, and to an extent we are 'business as normal'. All phones have been diverted to mobile phones. It is more inconvenient though as the team won't have access to the printer/scanner, and don't have access to the post.

The team are all successfully set up at home and have been working as normal paying invoices and BACS payments are being made as usual. In line with Government advice, we are trying to pay suppliers earlier than normal to help with cash flow. The team are using Microsoft Teams to regularly communicate with each other and the Finance Managers, and is working well.

The Board approved the Supplementary Funding Agreement Deed of Variation and authorised the Chair and Company Secretary to sign it.

DECISION

Delay a decision on fundraising consultants until later in the year.
The Board approved the Supplementary Funding Agreement Deed of Variation and authorised the Chair and Company Secretary to sign it.

Agenda Item 9

▶ HR

MINUTE

The following policies were approved , subject to terminology/definitions being aligned.

- CMAT Appeals Procedure
- CMAT Capability Policy
- CMAT Support Staff Performance Review Policy
- CMAT Teachers Pay policy
- CMAT Teachers Performance Review Policy

These policies will be effective from September 2020.

How are we monitoring the well being of our staff now that many of them are working from home?

This is predominantly at local level at the moment (i.e. the Heads, other senior leaders, department heads etc). The Exec Team are in regular contact with the Heads to ensure that their welfare is supported. In addition to this, NL will be sending a video message to all staff before the end of this week, and TS is going to be producing a weekly, liturgical reflection for staff (in addition to the one being sent out for the pupils). We also sent out a help sheet today to all colleagues .

ACTION

Amend policies to ensure terminology aligned. MR/PC

DECISION

The following policies were approved , subject to terminology/definitions being aligned.

- CMAT Appeals Procedure
- CMAT Capability Policy
- CMAT Support Staff Performance Review Policy
- CMAT Teachers Pay policy
- CMAT Teachers Performance Review Policy

**Agenda Item
10**

 **Next Meeting**

MINUTE

The Board expressed their immense gratitude to Neil and The Team for the work they have been doing over the past two/three weeks to ensure we provide the best we can for all the pupils, staff and parents in our schools. Our headteachers are on the front line, but they are backed and supported by a tremendously professional and forward thinking central team.

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

