

Local Governing Body  
Minutes of the Meeting  
Held on 23rd April 2020

Present: Simon Prior (SPR) – Chair Mary Sanders (MSS) - Chair, Rolf Purvis (RPS) – Head teacher, Lucy Scott (LST) – CEO Jeanette Redding (JRG) – Vice Chair, Lesley Waugh (LWH), Simon Grapes (SGS), Jim Warwick (JWK)

Also present: Mark Eastwood (MED), David Hewett (DHT), Rose Cornelius (RCS), Clare Hargraves (CHS), John Sayer (JSA)

1. **Apologies:** Lynne Martin

### From the Chair

SPR – Thanked all for joining the meeting and wanted to recognise what an accomplishment it has been for remote learning. SPR praised RPS and team for getting the remote learning up and running so quickly.

LST – Feels that the DMA approach to teaching and learning has been excellent and praised

SPR – The anti bullying gold award was a testament to the hard work still continuing to work.

SPR – Proposed an additional meeting in May due to the length of the agenda.

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

- Minutes approved by the LGB.

**Action – SPR to send NGE signed copy**

2. **Merger Update – JWK**

JWK – Explained to the LGB that the proposed merger between CET and MET is currently being discussed by the head teacher board and regional schools commissioner and permission to complete the merger from these bodies is being sought. Head teacher board is meeting virtually on 27<sup>th</sup> April where the merger will be discussed.

JWK – Explained that consultations had taken place with parents, staff and unions.

JWK – He stated that the merger intends to give more shared resources and practices. He explained that the trust had tried to pursue a number of initiatives to grow the trust that had been unsuccessful. The trust felt that the opportunity to merge with a similar size trust with a similar ethos was a rare and compelling opportunity. He stated that most of the feedback of opposition has been due to the timing of the merger rather than the merger itself due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The trust sees this as an excellent opportunity to pursue despite timing.

JWK - Asked the LGB for the community's response to the merger news.

LWH – Stated that the response from other parents to the letter sent out by the trust was very positively received. She stated that there was a concern the merger could dilute the good work that has happened and is happening at DMA, she asked whether the trusts energies be diverted?

LST – Stated that it was interesting that as a group of Heads and CEO's, having met, the feeling is there was great strength in terms of curriculum and safeguarding the curriculum. Subjects such as Art, Latin etc. will be further supported with additional resources from other schools. Other senior staff will be stepping up to allow staff such as LST to have more capacity. LST stated that she felt it had been very positive that the work DMA staff had carried autonomously during this crisis had been of an excellent standard. She also stated that the increase in schools in the trust will provide more opportunities for staff professionally.

JRG – Asked LST how this will affect the development of the sixth form?

LST – Stated that Impington Village College (IVC) offers sports programmes and that DMA offers A levels and as a trust this will provide extra opportunities for post 16 options. She stated that the other schools will enhance the opportunities at Athena College. She also added that CHS and RPS are having conversations with IVC about sports options that could provide additional vocational options.

CHS – Stated that vocational opportunities have expanded already and RPS is looking at additional offers in connection with IVC.

RPS – Stated that there was a really good offer from IVC for year 10 students who currently enjoy football for a half a day a week football academy with an accreditation at the end of the course. RPS has met with BSH head of PE at DMA to look at how this can be moved forward. He stated that there was also an opportunity to look at uniform services courses that students are currently attend CWA to complete.

JR – Asked if there was an opportunity to develop relationships with RAF Marham etc.

RPS – Stated that there could be,

SG – Asked if the IVC offer could affect the ability to deliver A levels?

LST – Stated that it was Common to offer Vocational and A level courses in one setting but this is something that needs further discussions.

SG – Asked if there is any way of having a face to face forum to gather perceptions rather than just sending out literature.

LST – Stated that the original intention was to have physical drop in sessions and when there is a point we are back in school this will be an ideal. She stated that it is quite complicated to deliver a virtual forum at this point but will be something that will be looked at.

SPR – Stated that there was further conversations to be had. He also stated that the 4 Chairs of the LGB will be getting together and having some conversations to reassure the Witchford LGB.

### **3. Closure Update**

#### **a. Year 11 & 13 support**

**Clare Hargraves**

CHS – Stated that for year 11 and 13 there very were different challenges. She stated that there had been transitional resources put on the website for the students to work on to take them onto their further studies. A weekly bulletin had also been sent out to students with information as to what students should be doing with their time and how to prepare themselves for their next steps. This was also to keep them motivated and engaged with their learning. For Year 13 CHS had looked at all the courses students had applied for and provided some relevant resources to look at in preparation for their courses such as books, TED talks etc. Resources can be found on the Athena website in closure resources.

SPR – Asked what the Year 11 uptake for 6<sup>th</sup> Form was looking to be for the next year?

CHS – Stated that guidance meetings that taken place indicated that numbers would be around 80 students in September. This was dependant on grades received meeting entry requirements. She added there was much more enthusiasm for the 6<sup>th</sup> form and students had been better prepared with a better experience in earlier years.

LST – Stated that she was very conscious that Long Road, CWA and Hills Road had not prepared anything to transition students during this period.

CHS – Stated that she had tried to use this as an opportunity to improve reputations of the sixth form and provide positive support while students may be feeling a little lost during uncertain times.

SGS – Asked CHS if there has been concern from Year 10 and 12 students during the this period of uncertainty and how have they been reassured.

CHS – Stated that there had been continuous engagement with students using the DMA tracker system and following up with students that are not engaging. She added that there had been no communication received from parents about students feeling as if they were falling behind.

#### **b. Yr 6 to 7 transition**

CHS – Stated that from an assessment and data perspective we would normally be looking at putting students into ability groups from Day 1. This information on how to set is normally provided from SATS results and CAT tests with information from primaries such as EHCP's to support. She stated that DMA would still get teacher assessments from primaries, however students will sit a CAT test at some point and DMA would still gather the SEN information when possible as well as the NGRT national reading test results.

MED – Stated that In terms of transition days no firm plans made yet due to the uncertainty of when students will return. He added that NPE had started to gather a proforma of information for SEN students. MED will also send out the proforma to primaries for safeguarding information.

SPR – Asked if there was an intention to still have some step up days to provide a soft introduction?

MED – Stated that he was looking to start to set some bridging transition work at some stage for current Year 6 students.

LST – Added that she had the CB4 meeting (feeder primaries for CCC) and that lots of primaries starting to stop setting work altogether due to the stress on parents. She stated that it would be interesting to get feedback from parents and primaries in Norfolk.

**Action :- MED – To reach out to heads on this.**

#### **4. Faculty Updates- Science –**

**Rose Cornelius (RCS)**

RCS – Presented Key Stage 5 data to the LGB and results comparing students receiving A\*-C 2017/18 and 2018/19 to date are as follows . Biology from 30% to 63%, Chem from 40 to 67% and Physics 50% to 38%. She stated however work is being carried out to boost the Physics results from D's to C's.

RCS – Stated that the KS4 focus has been on moving from students receiving grades 3-4's to 5's and high prior attainer's from 6's to 7's.

RCS- Stated that she has been looking at Actions and Impact in the department to improve results (see slides). The more recent focus has been to increase the reading in Science linking articles to lessons.

RCS – Stated that there are adverts out to recruit Second in Science and additional Scientists. There has also been a focus on delivery of practical lessons and strategies to deliver these effectively, working closely with Peter Watts from CCC making sure that students make progress and there is an increased pace in lessons, with a focus on modelling.

RCS – Stated that new staff have been recruited to replace leavers and there would be an improvement on the induction of new staff. She stated that there was now department bulletins weekly and tighter recorded actions embracing ideas from CPD. Post 16 has been a new focus and looking at the students who are selecting those courses. She has also ensured that the correct staff are teaching KS5. There is also an increase in moderation by working with other schools in the area.

SPR – Asked if someone was specifically taking over KS5

RCS – Stated that this is being done by RCS and NPE.

## 5. KS3 curriculum

**Richard Auffrett**

RAT – Stated that for KS3 there has been significant progress made on the KS3 curriculum. The aim of KS3 is for students to meet the subject mission statements and develop interests regardless of their starting points. Teachers now have space to develop quality teaching and learning and adapting resources for the specific students. All students should experience the same experience and aspirations regardless of where they start their KS3 education and that every student is able to meet those mission statements.

RAT- Stated that there was a reduction from 12% to 8% gap between PP students and all other students. He added that there is still a focus on HPA and there was much more clarity of what students should be doing in Year 7. There is also a focus on students being able to articulate the curriculum and the value of that curriculum. Leaders have been looking closely at the balance of timings of practical subjects against whole school needs. DMA have been continually working on recruitment and the offer available, for example recruiting a music teacher and additional Art teachers. Challenges for next year will be not having SAT data to know where students start and loss of time students are currently experiencing.

JR – Asked RAT that given that students will miss part of the summer term will there be flexibility in setting students.

RAT – Stated that whilst there may be gaps the focus for Year 6 at this point would have been consolidating knowledge for SATs. There may also be gaps in staffing with shielding potentially still being in place. There may be setting later than the usual day 1.

SPR – Stated that the additional LGB meeting in May could provide more information and that it is nice to be able to see that DMA have been able to add back in Music to the curriculum.

## 6. Careers

**David Hewett**

DHT – Stated that Jo Dickerson (JDS) is a careers lead for DMA and Sue Downing provides independent careers advice. He stated that highlights this year includes national careers week. For year 11 there are only 2 students without successful applications for Post 16 and this was difficult to quantify the previous year. There is now a yearlong approach to post 18 presentation.

DHT – Stated that there has also been more effective use of Sue Downing carrying out, for example, group sessions and attending parents evenings. Looking at the previous year there was above regional average for students in full time education 92.5%.

DHT Stated that in September 2020 all schools need to meet Gatsby benchmarks and using encompass tool to measure how the school is meeting the benchmarks. We will not meet 100% of benchmark 6 which is offering of work experience placements, as these tended to not be aspirational work experience placements but there will be a more structured guided approach to students experiencing work placements, so that students experience more aspirational workplaces.

DHT – Stated that DMA continues to develop the idea of a journey for each student in terms of careers. DMA will be introducing a careers logo that will be used when careers elements, for example in PSHE, so that students clearly know when they are learning about careers. NHT runs the insight programme which exposes students to top universities and opportunities out there. There is also a bigger focus on careers in the PSHE programme and through assemblies. In year 9 there is a joint experience between JDS and NHT where disadvantaged students meet former alumni to raise aspirations. Areas for improvement are developing the PSHE programme next year, breaking the west Norfolk bubble which raises the perceived ceiling for students and raising aspirations. There is also a focus on increasing cultural capital and providing experiences such as trips with a careers focus.

MSS – Asked DHT whether he intends to work with Witchford in terms of approaches to careers and differences in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire approaches.

DHT – Stated that he works with Carrie from CCC and the NCC approach to careers is very strong. There is also likely to be a change in leadership in careers in September but the approach could be shared with other schools.

MSS – Asked DHT whether it was common for schools to stop work experience.

DHT – Yes

RPS – Stated that having had conversations with previous Year 11 this showed that students were heavily influenced by where they carried out their work experience and that these were not often in aspirational roles.

## **7. Attendance data:-**

**Mark Eastwood**

MED – Presented a powerpoint on attendance. He stated that DMA was not going to have to report on attendance on this academic year. DMA will be asked to report on average number of missed days per student and persistent absence. Overall absence 0.6% lower in half term 3 compared to the same point last year. Attendance was however hit after Christmas by prolific sickness bug. SEN absence is 3.3% better this year compared to last. PP 1.1% better this year than last and almost at national average. Persistent absence (PA) is down by 5%. National average is however increasing in line with Norfolk average. PA SEN improved by 4% and PP there was a 7.3% improvement. Recent university study on improving attendance stated that 0.3% improvement is a good improvement so 0.6% is excellent.

RPS – Stated that a recent visit from a HMI looked at our attendance and he stated that 0.6% in a year was very significant.

JW – Asked if there were trends in year groups.

MED – Answered that for Year 7 there was 96%, Year 11 is also good but the other three year groups show similar levels of attendance.

## **8. Remote learning and engagement:-**

**Mark Eastwood**

MED – Stated that he was working with DHT on remote learning, as of 18<sup>th</sup> March not open for students to attend there were initially 30 families who stated that their children would be attending however over the course of the weekend prior many families made alternative arrangements. From the Tuesday after closing there were no students attending but we are able to open at very short notice and there is a plan in place in supporting students should they need to attend the academy. In terms of vulnerable students, NPE talks to EHCP students and MED speaks to families and social workers who agreed students were best placed at home. There is a tracker in place to track engagement with students. Support staff will be calling students. Welfare was tracked from the start and engagement from the second week.

DHT – Stated that the notes section in the tracker helps provide specific reasons where engagement is poor and identify issues. Tailored approach to each student dependant on specific issues families are facing. The central tracker helps all staff to quickly see the issues that specific students are facing. Response from parents has been very positive.

RPS – The senior team including Lucy carry out learning walks normally and this week SLT have joined in some of the virtual lessons to see the quality of lessons. Lessons have been high quality and engaging.

SGS – Very unprecedented times and to get 75% engagement is very positive and a great achievement.

LWH – Stated that she observed a Romeo and Juliet lesson which was superbly facilitated.

SPR – Encouraged LGB to look at work being carried out on website. He asked how engagement is in Year 10?

DHT – Only 22% of Year 10s not engaged in the first week. 78% in the first week. Year 10 has been prioritised and core subjects have been prioritised in terms of Skype lessons. Powerpoints have been adapted to make more interactive including voice overs.

MED – Stated that RCS has been looking at staff wellbeing.

RCS – Stated that she has been trying to increase staff moral including virtual staff room and Edmodo groups on interests. Weekly wellbeing emails are also being sent and Free CPD options have been publicised.

MED – States that in terms of student wellbeing, DMA dispatch is being sent out twice weekly with different activities and welfare calls had taken place and that it was important for students to see faces and hear voices of the teachers.

SPR – Praised the dispatch and the increased use of Facebook.

## **9. Safeguarding:-**

**Mark Eastwood**

MED – Stated that currently there are no children at Child Protection level but there is 1 family at assessment stage. There are 5 students at Child in need level and 7 children supported by FSP's. He stated that leaders were continuing to develop the culture of safeguarding at DMA including half termly training, newsletters and assemblies and a thorough induction for new staff. He states that the NCC self-audit of procedure is due shortly.

MED:- Stated that in terms of safeguarding during the closure there has been an addition to the policy reinforcing that staff still have a responsibility for the safeguarding of students, the safeguarding team have also made their details available to staff so they are readily contactable. Last June MED started the process of gaining All Together accreditation including gathering students survey results and forming an action plan, including additional training, the recruitment of an anti-bullying champion, improving the bullying log and improving restorative approaches. This was the re-audited and resurveyed and DMA was awarded the Gold level award.

SPR – Thanked and praised MED for the work to gain the Gold Level award.

JRG – Also echoed praise for outstanding achievement for the award.

SGS – Asked MED why the self-audit from NCC was so onerous and how this could be feedback to NCC about the difficulties in completing.

MED – Stated that although onerous this was only completed once yearly

LST – Confirmed that this self-audit was not completed in Cambridgeshire.

## **10. Health and Safety**

SPR- Asked if there were any urgent Health and Safety issues. None were reported by the LGB.

## **11. AOB**

SPR – Stated that an additional meeting would take place in May to keep the LGB updated and cover items not covered in the agenda.

**SIGNED BY CHAIR OF GOVERNORS**

**SIGNED**

*Simon Prior*

*DMA LGB, Chair of Governors*\_\_\_\_\_

**SIMON PRIOR**

**DATE** 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020\_\_\_\_\_