



## Newstead Wood School Part A Minutes of Local Governing Body meeting Held at the school on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.30pm

Naureen Khalid (NK)	Appointed Governor, Chair	Present	Apologies
Jonathon Capon (JC)	Appointed Governor		
Ade Fasusi (AF)	Appointed Governor	Present	
Sol Ako-Otchere (SO)	Appointed Governor	Present	
Steve Penny (SP)	Appointed Governor, Vice-Chair	Present	
Eileen Xiaoyu Zhang (EXZ)	Parent Governor	Present	
Jenny Wilkins (JW)	Appointed Governor	Present	

### In attendance:

- Alan Blount (AB) - Headteacher
- Helene Le Roux (HLR) - Deputy Headteacher
- Sarah Sword (SS) - Deputy Headteacher
- Jo Addison (JA) - Octavo Clerk

AGENDA ITEM	MINUTES	ACTION NO:
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from JC who was travelling. The apologies were accepted.</p> <p>The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no new declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Governing Board Business</b></p> <p><u>Board Membership</u> There was nothing to note.</p> <p><u>Governor Training</u> Governors were reminded to undertake training. JW had attended UL online training. There are concerns about the number of children in care and social services being overstretched, so a pilot programme to involve the wider family more is being trialled. Extended family will need more training to support this, and an independent review is underway. The scheme will rely on funding and training of social workers.</p> <p><u>Update from the Chair</u> NK and AB had attended the UL Leadership Conference, key points were reported as:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is still a residual impact on some pupils from Covid on pupils with support to catch up needed.</li> <li>• Flexible working is being considered where possible.</li> <li>• Local Governance still has an important role to play.</li> <li>• The Trust is looking at the opinions of female staff across the Trust and LGBs were also asked to consider this. AB has sought opinions from female staff at Newstead Wood.</li> <li>• Work is being done on the visions and values with senior and middle leaders which will then cascade down for further input from the LGB.</li> <li>• There is a framework of excellence with five strands which fit with the Newstead ethos.</li> <li>• UL have provided an LGB evaluation form which NK will circulate to governors to respond to. Once the responses have been collated a completed form needs to be sent to UL by the end of term. If it would be useful, a Teams meeting could be held to discuss the responses.</li> </ul> <p><u>Reports from Governors</u></p> <p>JW had visited the school on 15.05.23 and would provide a written report to governors. During the visit, the SCR was reviewed.</p> <p>AF had attended the SEND network. There is a focus on providing support for complex needs and there is still a lag from Covid. More students are presenting with anxiety and depression, especially around exam time.</p> <p>There are a higher number of EHCP applications and long waits for outcomes.</p> <p>JC had visited for the Health and Safety Committee meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b></p> <p>The Part A minutes from the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were <b>AGREED</b> to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising from the minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AB has been carrying out meetings with Middle Leaders to talk about ongoing engagement with parents now parent’s evenings are held online. A survey has been sent out to ask what parents would like to see, and it is hoped events can be included in the calendar for next year.</li> <li>• The T3 meeting with UL has been held which included a meeting at lunchtime with female staff as directed by the Trust at all T3 meetings.</li> <li>• Visions and values are on the agenda and the team are feeding into them. Input from parents is also being sought.</li> </ul> <p><i>Q: What sparked the female agenda from the Trust?</i></p> <p>A: The Trust had received some feedback from the Women’s leaders’ network, which led the Trust to dig deeper to ensure there were high levels of female staff satisfaction.</p> <p>Issues such as ‘banter’ in the staffroom are being addressed. There are not thought to be widespread issues, but there were some unexpected responses.</p> <p><i>Q: How can you balance keeping the interaction with parents at events and online parents’ evenings?</i></p> <p>A: Curriculum evenings with a clear purpose are being planned. Welcome evenings for new Year 7 and 12 parents are held, but proactive planning is being</p>	

	<p>done to put in evenings for other year groups. There needs to be a balance between workload and holding worthwhile events. There are termly communications from Heads of Year which can tie into dedicated evenings for the most relevant issues for each year group.</p> <p>250 responses were received from parents in response to a questionnaire and these were split between preferring face to face or virtual parents' evenings.</p> <p><i>Q: Are there issues with parents not getting a slot to see a teacher?</i></p> <p>A: If pupils are struggling, this should not come as a surprise at parents' evening, teachers should have communicated with families beforehand and additional time can be arranged outside of parents' evenings if necessary.</p> <p>Staff can be emailed as it is an important part of their job to build relationships with families. It is nice to give positive feedback as well.</p> <p>There are unique challenges in all subject areas, with some teachers responsible for a number of classes in a year group, and others with more exam classes as the subject is not studied in KS3. The system is not always ideal, but there is a best fit approach.</p> <p>The Year 9 to 10 transition evening was very well attended as most parents had not had the opportunity to visit the school due to lockdown. The evening was well run and had a clear purpose.</p> <p>It would be useful to hold an evening for Year 8 to maintain momentum and focus on where they might go on to through their GCSE choices.</p> <p>As long as there is enough notice, parents are likely to come for an academically focussed event, where important pastoral information can also be delivered.</p> <p>During these events, there are often informal conversations which can highlight early concerns before they escalate.</p> <p>A training session from Bromley Y to upskill parents in supporting their children will also be held.</p> <p>Governors felt it would be good to be visible at these events. The dates will be circulated once they have been drawn up.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p><i>The report was circulated in advance of the meeting and questions from Governors invited:</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are the changes in DT staff related to a change in results?</i></p> <p>A: There have been lower marks in DT and an issue with turnover of staff. A retired teacher has come back, and the cover supervisor is also teaching DT until the end of the year. Due to the disruption, there will be no assessment in DT for KS3 this year.</p> <p>The school is fully staffed for September.</p> <p><i>Q: There have been success stories with trainee teachers before, are there any in place for next year?</i></p> <p>A: There are trainees in chemistry, physics and maths, and the school is trying to get an economics trainee although this is not included as a shortage subject.</p> <p><i>Q: Have you looked at retirees for Economics?</i></p> <p>A: There have been challenges in finding the right candidate to fill the role and all possible avenues have been explored. There still options which are being</p>	

considered, and the school would be open to supporting relocation and training needs.

*Q: The buildings fund depreciation has moved to £393k from £284k, why is this?*

A: The contingencies which were taken out by UL earlier in the year have been released back into the budgets now the full impact of the cost of living and pay awards are known. The additional funds will go back into the buildings fund and capital expenditure to refurbish the Sixth Form area has been agreed along with work on pathways, landscaping and a new AV system for the main hall.

*Q: Are the issues with recruiting support staff in line with other schools?*

A: Staff are making the decision to pursue other opportunities where there is more money, or they are closer to home.

NW has now bought into the UL London cluster for IT support and has an apprentice on site. Most of the first line of support is now remote rather than in person. To fully support a digital strategy, it is necessary to have someone in house.

*Q: What is the 'Happy Being Me' project?*

A: The school has been working with Bromley Y on a pilot project as there is an 18-month waiting list for CAMHS. New students are coming in with issues, and the pilot aims to help children help themselves. The number and complexity of concerns increase as students go up through the school. If early help can be put in place, it should have more of an impact.

As girls hit puberty, the issues associated with ASD can increase.

At a meeting of UL school DSLs there was a discussion around the nature of concerns which were found to be reported differently. The cluster are working together to ensure reporting is more uniform and therefore of more value.

*Q: How is attendance for PPG pupils?*

A: It is in line with other pupils. There is lower attendance with SEND pupils and is often linked to anxiety and social anxiety with more emotional based school refusal.

The school has acquired a robot which sits in class and can be accessed by a pupil at home so that they become more comfortable engaging in the school environment. The success of the intervention will be whether or not students come back to school.

*Q: Are there any issues with older siblings caring for younger ones?*

A: There are some in the Sixth Form. The school is changing the way we deal with bursaries and trying to identify those who might have difficulty in paying for childcare. The pastoral team are being encouraged to have conversations with pupils and follow up any concerns.

Governors noted that it was positive to see attendance going up and well above national levels. The school is not complacent about attendance and works with students to ensure this remains high.

Some students would prefer to stay at home and work, but this has been followed up with recommendations that parents are fined when appropriate. The value of all school days is reinforced to pupils and their families.

*Q: How are GCSE and A level students coping with the stress of exams?*

A: They are coping well, although it is early in the exam period. The two sets of mock tests were run under exactly the same conditions as the public exams so

that students were used to the routines and environment. Year 13 had not sat public exams before, and with a high level of access arrangements more support was needed.

The first few days had seen full attendance and students have been well supported to ensure they felt able to sit their exams.

One student is sitting the exams at home due to medical condition. Support from the school and exam board ensured that these could go ahead.

*Q: Is there triaging of support needs before the mocks?*

A: This would come from the teaching staff. Some pupils come forward with concerns which are followed up by teachers. There is a list of access arrangements for exams and strategies are put in place as early as possible. After the mock exams, an increase in needs can be seen.

The SENDCo is completing a masters so will be able to do more testing in house to identify needs.

Meetings are held with all of the students to ensure they are happy with their access arrangements.

*Q: What is the longest exam?*

A: With the extra time allowed it can be up to three hours which is tiring. Students who need to use word processors are in one room and use ear defenders, those with extra time allowance are in a different room and there is lots of time allowed between the morning and afternoon exam sessions. If there are clashes, time is allowed for rest and food. The mock exams are used to ensure students use their extra time appropriately.

*Q: Is there an increase in support needed for PPG pupils?*

A: The number coming into Year 7 has not increased despite the efforts of the school and more thought will be given on how to engage them with grammar schools. It is not particular to Newstead but is common to all grammar schools. Opportunities to do outreach work and partnerships with primary schools are explored.

*Q: Are there more families applying for PPG support?*

A: The school has worked hard to identify everyone who might need support, but some communities feel a stigma from asking. Newstead is quite wide ranging in comparison to other Kent schools.

*Q: How do the exam predictions compare with other years?*

A: KS5 predictions are down on previous years but the results are very difficult to compare as the students have not sat exams before and the grade boundaries are very different.

KS4 are in a very strong position.

There are some subjects which are pulling down the overall results and some weaker students who came in with inflated TAGs.

The value added for Year 13 is likely to be lower in comparison to other years.

There are also some new staff who are being cautious and potentially undermarking.

The Year 11 results have been more consistent, and Year 12 have benefitted from an extra hour of teaching.

The trajectory of boys is not as linear as it is for the girls.

	<p><i>Q: There are more pupils in Year 11 who are in grade 6 or below, will this impact on their ability to get into the Sixth form?</i></p> <p>A: Students need 4 x grade 6 and 4 x grade 7 to get into the Sixth form, but it may affect their choice of subjects at A level. There is one PPG student who may not get what is required, but everything has been done to support them. The Sixth form offer is very academic, which might not suit all current Year 11 pupils.</p> <p><u>Behaviour</u> There have been no exclusions.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u> There is a focus on working with Bromley Y and looking at early intervention and how pupils can help themselves.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>The budget was noted by governors. There is an overall deficit at Trust level, but the school budget is expected to be approved.</p> <p><i>Q: The carry forward surpluses have been growing, how likely is this to continue?</i></p> <p>A: The Trust have set inflationary figures with 5% on salaries and 2% GAG surplus a minimum requirement. The Trust will amend the forecasts if the position changes.</p> <p>The school has not been asked to rework the budget which has been submitted so far.</p> <p><i>Q: Are there any particular budgetary concerns?</i></p> <p>A: Not at present. Staffing is the biggest issue and to attract the best calibre, higher salaries may be required.</p> <p><i>Q: Will you be able to make the projected savings in non-staff costs?</i></p> <p>A: The school has had to cut down on building works to make the savings but does have reserves to draw on if necessary.</p> <p>Pupil numbers are healthy, and the Sixth form is now full and able to sustain itself.</p> <p>There are 8 additional pupils in KS4 following a successful appeal which pointed out that 160 pupils did not equally divide into 6 forms. As a result, the PAN was increased to 168.</p> <p>There are a few students who leave mid-year, but the places can only be filled by students whose abilities are in line with the current in year admissions criteria.</p> <p><i>Q: Has CV received support from the Trust?</i></p> <p>A: The system has changed slightly as there are budget reviews every other month rather than every month now the finances are more stable.</p> <p><b>Governors RECOMMENDED the budget for approval by United Learning Trustees.</b></p> <p><i>Q: Is there any update on the tennis centre?</i></p> <p>A: A one-year extension has just been signed to next April, but the sale is expected to proceed this year.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Health and Safety Committee Report</b></p> <p>The committee had met, but in the absence of JC, the report was postponed until the next meeting.</p>	

8.	<b>Management of Risk document</b> There were no changes to the document	
9.	<b>Policy Documentation</b> There were no policies for review.	
10.	<b>Confidential matters</b> <i>There were no confidential matters.</i>	
11.	<b>Any other business</b> One Stage 3 complaint panel hearing had been held, the outcome of which was awaited.  NK had attended the Iftar event and commended everyone on their work to make the event such a success.	
12.	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as <b>Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b> at 6.30pm.  The meeting closed at 8.00pm	

## **Action Points**

Outstanding Actions and Actions arising from Newstead Wood Local Governing Body

<b>No:</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	JA to add an item to the agenda for the next Education meeting to look at the report on the school vision and values.	JA	May	An update was given, but further work is to be done. Action open
2	AB to circulate Health and Safety report to governors	AB	ASAP	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_