

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames



CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Chessington School's Governing Body - Covid-19 Update

Held on Wednesday, 10th June 2020 via Video Conference at 5pm

Co-opted Governors	*Karen Carman *Jules Hammond (JHD) (Chair) *Ramesh Kapadia (RKA) *Nicola Macbean (NMN) *Sonia Molnar (SMR) *Han-Ley Tang (HTG)
Headteacher	*Ashraf Ali (AAI)
Staff Governor	*Amy Smith (ASM)
Parent Governors	*Vanessa Sinet (VST)
Local Authority Governor	-
Also in Attendance	<u>Associate Members:</u> *Paul Moralee (PME) *Sarah Wilson (SWN) *Lucinda Ayles - Clerk

*Denotes present

The meeting was quorate (9 out of 11) Governors were present. Attendance = 81%.

Wording in italics indicates Governor Challenge

1.	<p><u>Welcome/Apologies for Absence</u> - The Chair, JHD welcomed everyone to the Meeting. There were only two items on the Agenda to enable scrutiny of Centre-Assessed Grades and Plans to Reopen the School.</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from AES and CWY, who were unable to attend at this time due to working commitments. These were accepted. The Chair recognised that the recent 5pm meeting starts had been difficult for some to join and wished it to be minuted that this was understood and wanted to recognise the tremendous input and support that these Governors, nevertheless, gave to the School.</p> <p>The Governing Body had previously agreed:</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To proceed with Extraordinary Meetings via Video Conferencing, during 'lockdown' arising from the Covid-19 situation. ● Each person attending the video conference would be in a secure area to ensure the meeting could not be overheard by anyone. <p>Governors had submitted a number of questions on the Google Drive prior to the Meeting, which the School had since answered (see Appendix).</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AAI declared he was currently Head of Chessington School as well as CEO of Every Child, Every Day Academy Trust (ECEDAT). ● JHD declared she was both Chair of Governors at Chessington as well as Clerk to ECEDAT. ● PME declared he was both Business Manager at Chessington School as well as Interim Operations and Finance Manager at ECEDAT. ● HTG declared in addition to being a Governor at Chessington School and Vice-Chair of the Finance & Business Committee, he was now also an Associate Trustee of ECEDAT. 	
3.	<p><u>Centre Assessed Grades</u></p> <p>AAI thanked SWN for managing this challenging process, necessitating precision, taking into account a variety of factors as well as facing emotional responses from families, students and staff. SWN gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They had met the dates/timeline as discussed at the previous Meeting; ● There had been complexities to smooth out, for example where some teachers were seen to be too generous and positive in their assessment. It had been crucial to ascertain the 'correct decision' for the whole of the cohort in each subject. They had had to bear in mind that any potential challenge from the Exams Board could result in a lowering of grades for the whole cohort. ● SWN had found staff resilient in terms of engaging in detailed discussions and actioning SWN's requests. ● After the first stage of the process, some grades had been too high and some key headline figures were still a bit high after the next exercise (although a few grades did have to be projected upwards) and so further 'fine tuning' had been required. They were careful to refer to the actual exam results for 2018 and 2019 as well as considering students' prior data. Some deliberations/discussions were to help a new Head of Department, who did not have the hindsight of historical School data. All teaching staff were open to discussing issues fully. ● Some subjects had been easier to predict. Following a question from a Governor, SWN confirmed that they had consulted the former Art teacher on a couple of points. ● SWN explained that the headline data at the top of the sheet on the Drive (Progress 8, A8 etc) was an accurate picture of where the School was expecting to be. The grading of subjects was also a good representation, as it took account of this year's year group who were much improved, compared to last year's Year 11s. ● Referring to a question from the Governors' Question Sheet on the Drive, SWN confirmed that Progress 8 was improved, however as expected, the Higher Prior Attainment (HPAG) group was not where they wanted it to be. The vast majority of Year 11 students were NPAG, which was why the NPAG result was very similar to the overall result. ● SWN moved on to some of the Governors' questions raised on the sheet. The process was for the Exams' Officer to enter the data onto a secure site (currently in process), together with pupils' rankings. No one would know until August when the results were received, whether the 	

School's grades had been agreed or changed. She stressed that they were expecting some changes.

- **SWN understood Governors were concerned that historic data would affect the cohort.** She confirmed they had been 'measured' in allowing for improvement in grades. She added that there must be an expectation that schools' results would improve year on year, but the actual percentage allowed was unknown.
- **Further to another Governor question on the sheet,** the re-marks process was not as straightforward as usual and the DfE had yet to finalise the process. AAI stressed that currently the guidance stated the only thing that could be challenged was the process. For example, the Exam Board could only challenge the School's process and not the Centre Assessed Grades that were provided. Again, the final guidance was awaited on the Autumn Series.
- AAI agreed they needed to see the grades in August before making any assumptions as there were a number of factors that could cause grades to be moved either up or down by the Exam Boards.
- AAI stressed that SWN had been very clear with colleagues; there could be no over-stretching/inflation of any predicted grade. SWN had corroborated data against the National Transitional Matrices; there had been acid tests between pupils' predictions and how that had subsequently changed. They had had to be brutal in some cases where it was felt a few grades had been predicted too high. SWN added they had also looked at pupils' grades across subjects, and again, any issues had been investigated (e.g. any unusually high grade that didn't seem in keeping with a student's other grades). Again, adjustments had been made where necessary.
- **A Governor made the following comments and raised the following questions:**
 - **He thanked the School and recognised the process must have been massive, complicated and stressful.**
 - He referred to an AQA document that used different statistical models to look at the results and make changes, and he felt it implied this was difficult to do. AAI responded that he was correct in his interpretation of the AQA model.
 - **The Governor felt the School had been modest in terms of improving grades, which was to be commended and in some subjects there hadn't been any increases at all, which was understandable.**
 - **In his career, he had often marked mock exams harshly with the aim that students would improve their grades and wondered if this had been the case here.**
 - **The same Governor noted that there had been an increase in Art grades and Chemistry and Physics, but asked why the grades for Biology hadn't similarly been increased. He was disappointed PE hadn't increased.**

SWN replied they had specifically worked to combat teachers under or over predicting by looking back at the School's three year trend of predictions. She confirmed that the Science cohort was a very small group and therefore a change to one pupil could easily skew the data. She then highlighted that although in the past BTEC PE grades had been good, PE GCSE contained a large amount of science and was not an easy subject. Furthermore, it was difficult for a student to score highly in the PE GCSE practical exam unless they were County level in their sport.

AAI added that Art had been below National Average in previous years and was now at the National Average. He also added that regarding the point about marking harshly, he emphasised that at the last virtual Governors' meeting, SWN had presented the predictions statistics over all subjects and so this had been a vital tool in being able to make accurate predictions for

	<p>this summer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same Governor wanted to check that the School was keeping all documentation in case the exam boards challenged anything, AAI replied that, yes, all mock papers, the School's predictions and the details of the Centre Assessed Grades would all be kept safely and they were public records. • JHD summarised that the grades were at this moment being submitted and nothing more could be done until August, when the Governing Body would need to drill down to examine the results. SWN stressed that this was not a normal year in terms of analysing the lessons learned due to this being a 'freak' year. Face-to-face classroom teaching within School had continued until 20th March 2020. • AAI explained that he had been discussing with ASM what data they should use moving forward with strategy planning. They were considering amending the '8 to Great', in terms of changing 'Pride' to a 'Covid Recovery' based descriptor. He anticipated the School would use a combined averaging out of the mock grades, predictions, Centre Assessed Grades and actual GCSE results as a basis for reviewing the Strategic Plan. <p>The Chair, JHD wished to thank and congratulate every member of staff, who had achieved so much in really difficult circumstances. If this process had to be repeated in future, the School would be well-prepared.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Plans for Reopening the School</u></p> <p>SAFETY</p> <p>AAI summarised as follows the key points from the Powerpoint Presentation that had been placed on the Drive prior to the Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 10s would be returning for one day a week with effect from 15th June 2020. • One quarter of Year 10s would be in the School at any one time (to comply with the Government requirements). • Year 10 were split into different 'bubbles', which would each attend School one day a week on either Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. • Each bubble would be led by a member of SLT and three teachers would be allocated to each bubble. Maths, English and Science would be taught, alongside some communal recovery and social activities . • Pupils would receive face to face teaching from the stage in the Theatre and social distancing would be enforced. • There would be a range of safety precautions in place and AAI had placed the link to the recent live Year 10 Questions and Answers session with parents on the Governors' Question Sheet on the Drive. • The School would be adopting the Danish Model, which favoured smaller bubbles in specific areas. Pupils would have breaks and lunch at the usual times with social distancing enforced. There would be one-way systems and no risk of pupils having to pass each other in narrow areas. • Pupils would line up in the mornings on the yellow dots, spaced out for adhering to social distancing and would enter, on a staggered basis and would each wash their hands and gather in the Atrium (spaced adhering to the dots two metres apart that were on the floor). • Pupils would be guided into the Theatre and each day; the bubble would have three x 1 hour and 15 minute lessons plus three further sessions of fun, reflection and feedback activities. • Parents were being fully communicated with; they were being surveyed and asked if they were happy for their child to return to 	

School.

- **Children would be wearing PE kit instead of uniform to ensure they were comfortable.**
- **Pupils would have to bring their own lunch and a large bottle of water as no water would be provided.**
- **Any first aid required would be administered with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and for this purpose there would be PPE grab bags placed at strategic places around the School.**
- **There were posters and signage giving reminders about keeping one's distance.**
- **The Risk Assessment** (that had been placed on the Drive before the meeting) had been signed off by the Trade Union and was to be adopted as a Trust document.
- **Year 10 was a very small year group and AAI felt they would be much safer back at School than at a supermarket.**
- **Everyone at School had worked exceptionally hard and were excited to welcome the Year 10s back. There would be more children of key workers/vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the School at any one time than Year 10s.** The former category would be kept separate in the upstairs classrooms.
- **A Governor asked if the School's budget would have to be fine-tuned to take account of School expenditure as a result of Covid-19.** AAI and PME replied it was likely that any excess expenditure would be balanced out by savings incurred over the Covid-19 period.
- **Another Governor asked if the School had communicated to parents that the actual number of people infected with Coronavirus was actually very low and furthermore, children were a low risk.** AAI replied that, yes, they had communicated this and had demonstrated how safety would be ensured, by issuing a video of him walking around the School illustrating the safety measures. Year 10 pupils would be asked if they felt safe when they returned on 15th June and their responses would be recorded on video, which could be used for further communication.
- SWN advised that out of a year group of approximately 70 Year 10s, around 50 parents had responded to a recent survey and only 8 had responded they were unlikely to send their child back to School. SWN said these parents would be telephoned, not to challenge them but instead with the purpose of reassuring them.
- A Governors queried the wording in the Risk Assessment in the section talking about egress. The wording currently said that 'Staff with symptoms of Covid-19 may not enter the School'. AAI replied that the wording needed to be changed to indicate that staff with symptoms of Covid-19 would **not** come into School and at that point in the Meeting, he updated the wording on the Risk Assessment on the Governors' Drive.

LEARNING IN THE BUBBLE

SWN explained the following:

- **The Maths, English and Science taught would be a recap of topics already learned and not new material,** to enable the students to get back into normal routines of learning.
- **Bubbles would be grouped according to ability in Maths and Science.** There would be stretching and challenging for the higher groups in School on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and plenty of support for the lower ability groups. The Maths, English and Science teachers were working as a team.
- **All teaching in School would be teacher lead;** with children writing in exercise books. There would be no laptops or Chromebooks.
- **Teachers were hoping to include Science experiments in the second or third week back,** providing this could be done safely and within the

Government guidelines.

- **Children would be missing out on teaching on other subjects and so the School was considering plans for children to have 'personalised' timetables** to enable them to have 'catch up' teaching on other subjects after the first week or two back at School.

RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

ASM outlined recovery activities for Year 10s in School:

- **ASM had attended on-line courses and researched the effects on children's wellbeing related to lockdown.** Their losses had been routine, structure, friendships, opportunities and freedom had all been affected.
- **There would be 15 minute sessions during the School day, away from academic teaching, which would be based on activities based on the sense of safety, calm, resilience, belonging promoting hope and with an emphasis on social communication.** AAI had added the link to a document explaining these activities further.
- **The first week back at School there would be videos, expectations would be set about how to learn at home away from 'the bubble' and a sense of safety promoted.** They would focus on pupils' positive achievements and also reflect on the successes of the School as well as of the community. There would be activities such as quizzes and baby photos and interesting facts about teachers for pupils to guess, designed to re-build relationships with their teachers.
- **There would also be Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to regulate their emotions as well as a session on how to interpret statistics from the media and how to identify Fake News.** Pupils would also write letters to next year's new Year 7s, having first thought about how they must be feeling about starting at Chessington.
- **ASM said that she would be at School every day the Year 10s were in** to ensure she could signpost and deal with any safeguarding issues that might occur. It was anticipated that some cases might be identified. A Skodal link had, so far, been sent to pupils weekly and would be sent again to Year 10s when they first entered the School to find out how they were feeling.
- **A course ASM had attended had identified it was important to not talk negatively about emotions during lockdown,** but instead focus on hope and coping. Although some children would be badly affected, others would have had a positive experience and flourished during lockdown, enjoying spending time with their parents/families.
- **A Governor asked whether the School was aware whether any children had lost grandparents, for example, as a result of Covid-19.** ASM replied she had attended an Emotional Regulation course as well as a grief and loss course. The latter was more expensive but included unlimited downloads and so the pastoral team, SLT, SEN and TAs had been asked to complete it. AAI had then asked if other staff would like to work through the three Grief and Loss videos and 15 staff had done this, which was most of the staff. ASM stressed the videos also focused on strategies for dealing with loss of friendships and freedom etc. As children had not been in school, she had referred three children who had experienced bereavement over this time to the 'Goodbye Project'. She was also aware that a few others whose grandparents had been ill with Covid-19 and had survived. These pupils might still have suffered trauma.
- **PME added that they had gone through the whole School with a 'fine toothcomb' with regard to Health and Safety** and there was to be a 'dummy clean' the next day, which would be timed after the cleaners had been instructed fully on the deep clean required. If the timings didn't work out, there would be time to repeat this exercise before the Year 10s returned on Monday, 15th.

- **A Governor asked if any staff had been bereaved during this period.** AAI confirmed that one or two had been impacted in some way, and whilst on-line counselling was available, in the first instance, individuals contacted line managers and a constant dialogue was maintained, whilst giving full consideration to the School's Occupational Health duties. ASM continued that four members of staff were continuing to receive counselling and had said that this had really helped them during this difficult period. ASM was trying to obtain continued funding for this for this counselling service next year.
- **The same Governor asked if any member of staff was under a 'shielding letter' and therefore was unable to come in to School.** AAI and PME replied that there was no one with a 'cast iron' reason for not coming into the School, although one or two colleagues had had to self-isolate for a period of time over the last few weeks. AAI added that not all staff were required to be in School every day, but they were in touch with everyone on a regular basis.
- **The same Governor wanted to check if there was positivity from the staff.** AAI said yes, that was true. Most staff were only in one or two days a week at present. He also highlighted that SWN had had to carry out complex timetabling to ensure that Piglets was open on the days that staff with children at Piglets were due to be in School. Governors thanked AAI for being so flexible with staff.
- **AAI thanked JHD and PME for their hard work on the Risk Assessment,** which had reassured both staff and parents.
- **The Chair, JHD checked that there were no further questions.** AAI explained that at the end of Monday, 15th, he would meet with the staff in the bubble (socially distancing) to look back on the day in terms of 'what went well'/'even better if' and a communication would follow to parents for further reassurance.
- **A Governor asked what positives had arisen over the past few weeks.** AAI responded that people's good spirits and the community spirit had been positives. The 'crash course' in Google had improved everyone's technology skills and the on-line resources were 'brilliant'. Additionally, some cost savings had been made over the lockdown period. It was also a positive that it had been proved that Governors' meetings could be held on-line successfully, in future wherever necessary.
- **The same Governor said that her daughter was starting at Chessington in September and she was very impressed with on-line resources introducing the teachers etc. and asked if this could continue in future years.** AAI thanked ASM for her hard work on this and said he anticipated using both face-to-face and on-line induction material in future. He also mentioned that perhaps the live Q&A sessions for parents had resulted in better parental engagement than when parents were asked, in normal circumstances, to come into School. The Governor agreed and felt it was powerful that future Year 7s and their parents would be able to re-watch the videos to recap, check their understanding and be reassured about the transition to Chessington School.
- **A Governor had also noticed the cohesion where Chessington Year 11s were to transition to either Grey Court or Hollyfield School and she felt that this was also very positive..**

The Chair summed up and ***Governors approved the Risk Assessment unanimously and were happy with the extra Health & Safety measures that had been taken that would enable Year 10s to return to School safely on 15th June 2020.***

AAI confirmed that in addition to an addendum to the Safeguarding Policy, ASM

	<p>had also drafted an addendum to the Behaviour for Learning Policy that would be sent out to all Year 10 parents. Students were required to follow the existing policy plus the additional requirements set out in the Addendum. It was agreed that ASM would send the Behaviour for Learning Addendum to LAS, who would then place it on the Drive in the Section for the documents for this meeting. This action was completed.</p>	
	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>JHD thanked everyone for attending via video link and thanked the School for their hard work and dedication during such difficult times.</p> <p>The Chair and AAI thanked everyone for attending and confirmed that the next Governors' meeting would be held by video-conferencing on Wednesday, 8th July.</p> <p>The Chair closed the meeting at 6.05pm</p>	

Signed:.....
Chair of Governors

Date:.....