

South Bank Multi Academy Trust

Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 29th May 2020

6.00 pm by Video Conference

Present:	Edwin Thomas	Chair of Trustees
	Rob Bennett	
	Michelle Blake	Non-Executive Trustees
	Pat Boyle	
	Jill Hodges	
	Andrea Preston	
	Richard Milner	
Ian Wiggins		
In attendance:	Jo Edwards	Trust Principal
	Michael Gidley	Chief Finance Officer
	Adam Cooper	Deputy Trust Principal
	Sophie Triffitt	Clerk to the Board of Trustees

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO BUSINESS INTEREST FORMS

- 1.1 For the record of the minutes the meeting took place virtually.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed attendees
- 1.3 Absence
There were no apologies.
- 1.4 Declarations of Interest (previously issued)
Trustees were asked to inform the clerk of any updates to their Business Interest Forms.

2 COVID-19 SCHOOL REOPENING

School Risk Assessments (PAPERS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 2.1 The Trust Principal read from recent advice that for due process to have taken place for wider school opening schools should consult with staff and consider risk and actions to mitigate risks. The Trust Principal confirmed the primary schools have consulted with staff and school union reps and the Trust Principal has liaised with regional reps and Risk Assessments have been sent to JNCC union reps. The Risk Assessment flow chart has been followed including consulting LGBs.
- 2.2 The Trust Principal noted that this Risk Assessment is specifically for a pandemic scenario.

- 2.3 The Risk Assessments have been checked with the primary Headteacher group, Health and Safety team at HANDS, Legal and LGBs. Headteachers have provided assurance that governors have approved, agreed, and interrogated the Risk Assessments.
- 2.4 A Trustee noted the recent press article with comment from a union organisation saying schools are 'out of options, out of time and rushing through' and asked if there had been any union feedback on the specifics of the Risk Assessment. The Trust Principal noted that there had been union challenge around the clinically vulnerable but not shielded group. At the regional union meeting this afternoon the unions denied any involvement with the article, did not agree with it and confirmed it was not their stance although they do not necessarily agree with the national decision to reopen schools. The NEU rep said he had not seen anything of it until it was in the paper. The Deputy Trust Principal informed Trustees that the union represented at Knavesmire does not recognise the Risk Assessment and sent the combined union Risk Assessment back as an alternative but confirmed the Risk Assessment covered off a majority, if not all, of the same points.
- 2.5 A Trustee asked why the '*CYP do not interact in a manner where they will have close contact with each other (maintain social distancing). This must be supported by very clear expectations*' question is not checked off on the Knavesmire Risk Assessment. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that he is uncomfortable using the phrase social distancing and the comments address the practice in school. The question would be checked if in reference to the comment wording and not the question wording.
- 2.6 A Trustee asked if the Health and Safety Advisors have responded to schools making every effort to social distance but not being able to guarantee it. The Trust Principal noted that the risk is being managed but can't be removed which is why a steady approach to building up numbers in school is preferred. A Trustee noted that there is recognition in the guidance that social distancing is not always possible with young children.
- 2.7 A Trustee asked if there had been Health and Safety and Legal sign off on the proposed measures. The Trust Principal confirmed that Health and Safety and Legal sign off has been obtained. Every union member in school has been consulted, there has been consultation with regional union level and JNCC union reps have been sent the Risk Assessments but unions are not required to sign off each section of the Risk Assessments.
- 2.8 Trustees were reassured that there was Health and Safety and Legal sign off and unions had been consulted. The CFO confirmed the Risk Assessments have been published on the website.
- 2.9 The Trust Principal confirmed that all Risk Assessments implement the hierarchy of controls, based on SAGE modelling, recommended for helping prevent the spread of covid-19. These are:
- Controlling the transmission of the disease: minimising contact with children and adults who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.
 - Management and control through personal hygiene: cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
 - Ensuring good respiratory hygiene: promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

- Enhanced cleaning regimes: cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.
- Minimising contact and mixing: altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times).

CST Framework (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

H&S – green

- 2.10 A Trustee asked if clouds of spray are being used for cleaning. The CFO explained there is a combination of misting and cleaning and misting will take place when there is time for it to settle.
- 2.11 A Trustee asked if the staff referenced in cleaning relates to teachers. The CFO explained that one school has outsourced cleaning and this company have supported two other schools and Knavesmire cleaning staff have been cleaning. The Deputy Trust Principal added that there are a limited number of cleaners available so teachers and teaching assistants have been cleaning. Knavesmire now have three out of four cleaning staff in, teachers will do wipe downs when required and cleaners will be in at the end of the day for the full clean.
- 2.12 A Trustee asked if the chemicals being used for cleaning have been checked to be proven to work on COVID. The CFO noted that there is a reliance on the specialist knowledge of the expert external cleaning company.
- 2.13 **Action:** CFO to check with the cleaning company if the products work on the COVID virus.

Pupils and Parents - amber

- 2.14 The CFO felt there was a question over parental confidence as this will not be known until schools open but schools are trying to communicate as much as possible with parents.
- 2.15 A Trustee noted that parents are mixed in their views so felt the assessment was reasonable.
- 2.16 A Trustee asked how many pupils are expected back. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that the first survey a week ago had 20% no, 40% unsure and 40% yes, but the mood is changing and key worker numbers are rising rapidly on a daily basis. Plans have been based on 75% Year 6 attendance and 60% Year 1 attendance. Definite numbers will be asked for when there is confirmation of wider opening.
- 2.17 A Trustee noted that the Risk Assessments are very number dependent and as confidence builds people who have said no may try to drop off their child and Headteachers need to be comfortable taking the decision that notice of attendance is needed as plans were based on known numbers. The Deputy Trust Principal noted that the Carr Junior Headteacher has reviewed the plans a number of times due to increasing demand and are now looking to offer two days in school not four.

Workforce and HR - amber

- 2.18 The CFO reported that a staff questionnaire was sent out and some staff had completed these. Schools have a good idea of staff available and staff working from home who can support home learning.
- 2.19 A Trustee asked if a member of staff is ill and it is clearly not potential COVID is there capacity to keep the bubble in school. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that it may be

that the bubble can't be taught for a number of days but some schools may have capacity to cover without mixing bubbles. The CFO informed Trustees that the Trust had not looked at redeploying staff to reduce the risk of cross contamination across sites. The Deputy Trust Principal reported that the Trust primary schools are being rigorous with the bubbles infrastructure but not all primary schools elsewhere are working in this way.

- 2.20 A Trustee encouraged staff to err on the side of caution and not to push through if poorly.
- 2.21 A Trustee asked if there were any teachers with a school age child who is not sending them to school as a key worker child that would impact them coming to work. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that there is a mixed picture. Carr Junior have a very good rota system, Knavesmire has less flexibility and have tried to work around child care where possible but staff are accepting they will have to use key worker places now. There are issues with preschool care as these settings are not open.
- 2.22 A Trustee noted the YSAB staff declaration form for planning of welfare and that staff wellbeing is a priority and asked what plans the Trust has for addressing this. The CFO explained that there is a form for monitoring staff available for work and a helpline for staff to call independently. The Deputy Trust Principal informed Trustees that Carr Junior worked hard on staff voice for feedback and Knavesmire feedback is that staff are positive about school but all feel very anxious about returning. Enhanced communication is key.
- 2.23 The Trust Principal noted that the primary leaders are under significant pressure but there is a positive team working ethos.

Curriculum and timetabling - green

- 2.24 The Trust Principal was confident there had been a great deal of consideration and a majority of children will still be taught at home. The rating could change if more children return in July.
- 2.25 A Trustee asked if Google Classroom is only being used for Year 6. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that it is different across different schools and year groups. Knavesmire use Google Classroom for Year 6 and Tapestry for Reception but Year 1 don't have an online platform.
- 2.26 A Trustee suggested consideration of scope to support home learning across the Trust if home learning is still needed in September.

Policies and Procedures – amber

- 2.27 The CFO reported that some policies have been updated, the Health and Safety advice is that the Health and Safety Policy has statements that cover a pandemic. Attendance, Behaviour and Exclusions policies are being updated with government guidance. The Trust Principal reported that the DfE published information on behaviour and exclusions. The CFO confirmed that all schools reviewed fire drills and procedures and training will be delivered on the first day back.

Supply chains and contracts – green

- 2.28 The CFO confirmed there are currently no problems with supply chains

Communications – amber

- 2.29 A Trustee asked if given the challenges in the past about Millthorpe uniform this could be an issue. The Trust Principal confirmed that this will be considered on secondary opening. The

Deputy Trust Principal explained that the recommendation is to wash clothes every day so primary schools have not stipulated uniform must be worn.

- 2.30 A Trustee suggested the rating could be green as they are confident the CST requirements had been met.
- 2.31 It was agreed that the remaining items are longer term considerations and would not prevent reopening.
- 2.32 A Trustee recorded thanks to the Trust Principal, CFO and Heads for delivering this work in such a short timeframe.
- 2.33 Trustees were satisfied with the Risk Assessments and CST Framework and agreed the requirements had been met.
- 2.34 The Chair asked if the Risk Assessments minimise risk to an acceptable level and to what extent Trustees can reach a conclusion on whether schools should open.
- 2.35 A Trustee stated that the government have decided it is appropriate for schools to open from the 1st June 2020 and if open it is then parental choice. Trustees are satisfied the Trust have created a working environment for staff that mitigates the risk in line with current guidance, but should be prepared to stop wider reopening if more information comes to light.
- 2.36 A Trustee noted the risk of children not being in education and the safeguarding risk of them not being in school and felt schools should open where it is judged they are able to.
- 2.37 A Trustee asked what decisions the LGBs have taken for their own local context.
- 2.38 The Chair had spoken with Chairs of Governors and the feedback is varied. Carr Junior and Woodthorpe feel the schools need to open for their communities particularly as food bank use is rising. Scarcroft agree the Risk Assessments are acceptable but are concerned about wider impacts of track and trace and the R number and would be happy to wait. Knavesmire feel that the Risk Assessments are robust, but would prefer more time to reassure staff and governors that they will work in practice before reopening more widely. The Deputy Trust Principal noted that Carr Junior only have Year 6 returning at this time but key worker place requests are increasing.
- 2.39 A Trustee asked if they can accommodate the range of views whilst respecting the processes put in place.
- 2.40 A Trustee asked if schools can provide better education for children in school than online. The Deputy Trust Principal felt that the Year 6 children in Knavesmire will get equal education but those in school will have transition support and an end of year experience.
- 2.41 A Trustee noted that the Risk Assessments have been cleared by Health and Safety and Legal, there is parental choice, YSAB engagement and given the information Trustees have thinks on balance schools should open but if anything changes Trustees need to reconsider.
- 2.42 A Trustee noted that parental choice is not always a true choice with work commitments and employers when there are pressures to send children to school because it is open.
- 2.43 The Trust Principal emphasised that the Trust and schools have a duty of care for children when in school. Vulnerable groups attending are increasing across the region and poverty and domestic violence is increasing.

- 2.44 The Chair noted that LGBs are in very different places and whilst they would not want to force a school back against the sentiment of the LGB the Trust is the single employer and needs a degree of consistency.
- 2.45 The Trust Principal noted that every group of schools across the city have different reopening dates apart from one trust in the city.
- 2.46 The Woodthorpe plan is to open on 2nd June to Reception, Year 1, Year 6.
- 2.47 The Carr Junior plan is to open on 4th June to Year 6
- 2.48 The Scarcroft plan is to open on 8th June to Year 6 and 15th June to Reception and Year 1.
- 2.49 Knavesmire are not yet able to set a date and would like to review in two weeks.
- 2.50 A Trustee supported the Woodthorpe, Carr Junior and Scarcroft proposal but was uncomfortable with Knavesmire not providing any timetable on reopening when the government has said schools can open and the Risk Assessments are robust.
- 2.51 Trustees agreed they need to make a decision on whether it is reasonable and safe for schools to open and based on the Risk Assessments it is.
- 2.52 A Trustee asked if there is a liability risk for some staff going to work on 2nd when other staff are not. It was confirmed that this is not linked to a protected characteristic so there is no law against this. There is an engagement concern if the Trust are seen to not be treating staff fairly and equally. It was noted that schools are already open and are not putting teachers at risk currently and are taking measures to safeguard children and protect educational outcomes.
- 2.53 A Trustee asked if there are any other schools opening as late as 22nd in the city. The Trust Principal thought there may be two other schools.
- 2.54 A Trustee noted that all pupils eligible across the Trust should have the opportunity for time in school.
- 2.55 Following a thorough discussion, Trustees agreed they have confidence in the Risk Assessments that will help keep staff and children as safe as they can be, it is right for schools to open from 1st June 2020 and schools should be open by an agreed date based on schools' specific circumstances.
- 2.56 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed that all primary schools across the Trust can open to a wider number of children in line with government policy on a timetable that works for the school at a local level but should be open more widely by the 15th June. If there are external factors or a change to the national or local guidance the Trust Board will review this decision.
- 2.57 **Action:** Chair of Trustees to open a dialogue with Knavesmire governors to confirm dates on which the school can plan to reopen for priority year groups.
- 2.58 Trustees agreed that schools should communicate with parents by Monday 1st June a plan giving parents a date to work towards and including that Trustees have reviewed the Risk Assessments and are confident in procedures and have delegated specific arrangements to schools from 1st June.
- 2.59 It was agreed for Trustees to meet on Tuesday 9th June to review the plan for secondary schools.

3 SAFEGUARDING POLICY ADDENDUM (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 3.1 The CFO noted that section 4 will be updated in line with attendance and behaviour guidance.
- 3.2 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed the Safeguarding Policy Addendum subject to section 4 being updated in line with attendance and behaviour guidance.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Interim Trust Principal

- 4.1 The Chair explained that the Knavesmire Chair of Governors wanted to tell the school governors the position was opening up and that Mr Cooper was likely to apply for it.
- 4.2 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed for the Knavesmire Chair of Governors to share the information on the interim Trust Principal plan with governors on a confidential basis.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Meeting Decisions
Agreed that all primary schools across the Trust can open to a wider number of children in line with government policy on a timetable that works for the school at a local level but should be open more widely by the 15 th June. If there are external factors or a change to the national or local guidance the Trust Board will review this decision.
Agreed the Safeguarding Policy Addendum subject to section 4 being updated in line with attendance and behaviour guidance.
Agreed for the Knavesmire Chair of Governors to share the information on the interim Trust Principal plan with governors on a confidential basis.

29th May 2020

Item	By	Action	Date
2.12	CFO	CFO to check with the cleaning company if the products work on the COVID virus.	May 2020
2.57	Chair	Chair of Trustees to open a dialogue with Knavesmire governors to confirm dates on which the school can plan to reopen for priority year groups.	1 June 2020

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Chair of South Bank Multi Academy Trust