

Invited:

Lynda Cooper - Chair
Vic Pooler – Academy Head Hennock
Olivia Gentile – Staff Governor Hennock
Kyle Brook – Parent Governor Hennock
Dan Turner – Academy Head Bearnese
Kelly Yeo – Staff Governor Bearnese
Ewa Ziubryniewicz – Parent Governor Bearnese
Peter Reed – Community Governor
Jo Carter – Governor [secondment]
Becky Ames - Clerk

Apologies - Ewa Ziubryniewicz, Kelly Yeo

Welcome

Lynda Cooper (LC) welcomed all to the meeting, and introduced Kyle Brook (KB) and Peter Reed (PR) to the Board.

Declaration of Business Interests

There were no declarations of Business Interests.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of 15.12.2020 – LC made it clear that the last minutes took the form of reports from the AHs and were not minutes of a full local board meeting. Vic Pooler (VP) requested the last paragraph be removed due to relevance. Minutes were approved by all.

1. COVID-19

Brief reports from Academy Heads on what has happened since lockdown began 05.01.2021.

Dan Turner (DT)

DT advised the Board that they took an extra inset day to prepare for the schools providing home learning. DT has recreated the online learning platform for Bearnese using Teams and a communication device called DoJo. All staff have had training since last September on using Teams to ensure the school was prepared for another lockdown. The school is open for vulnerable and key worker children and has been split into 3 bubbles to help support social distancing. The children in school are provided with the same lessons as the children at home to ensure they are all working at the same level. The SENCo is working with the staff to ensure that EHCP children's needs are met.

Engagement from the children is monitored weekly, and is looking good at around 60%, with high engagement online. The next thing that Bearnese is working on will be ensuring the children are completing work set from the online lessons. DT explained to the Board that levels of engagement may be reduced due to some families being provided with paper packs of work. This largely replaces online learning. **CHALLENGE** LC asked DT when OneNote will be fully rolled out. DT said some children and staff need further training in using OneNote but hopefully in a week or two this will be ready to go. Jo Carter (JC) queried how happy parents were using OneNote, as in Parent Forums at Cheriton Bishop she had heard others discuss issues. DT said training can be offered to help with this.

CHALLENGE JC challenged DT on whether progress in learning is being made, as the curriculum has not stopped in this lockdown, is there a risk children are just 'treading water'? DT said all teachers are offering a full and broad curriculum to children.

JC informed the Board that data visits have been pushed back to the summer term in order to get an accurate picture of progress made within school.

CHALLENGE Kyle Brook (KB) asked whether the schools are providing any social interaction to children who may be isolated with no siblings. DT responded explaining children are being offered time in Break Out rooms in Teams. DT is looking into other social platforms for the children to use but advised this is a part of Phase 3. LC advised that Phases were put into place since the last lockdown by the Link Academy, and were effectively an action plan to ensure quality blended online learning (divided into Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3). Phase 3 is where everyone's usage of Teams and online learning platforms is enhanced so further social interaction is currently being looked into. **CHALLENGE** JC asked whether the Teams chat function had been shut down for safeguarding issues. VP replied that you can chat on the channel which can be seen, so it is safe and can be monitored.

CHALLENGE KB asked whether a virtual coffee morning meeting could be arranged at a later date for the children. This would provide a safe environment for the children to talk amongst themselves as he feels this is important.

Vic Pooler (VP)

Hennock has between 24-32 children in school each day; they have a lot of key worker parents. The approach at Hennock has been slightly different to that at other schools; they have been using Teams and OneNote through school since the last lockdown. They felt the school benefitted hugely from this. VP felt that children were well prepared for online learning with this lockdown, mainly due to the experience they had gained using Teams and OneNote through the last school year. Hennock teachers have been setting between 2-3hours work a day with a themed approach to help parents with siblings share the learning, rather than having lots of different topics. When children return to school VP will be looking at the academic programmes to ensure that children haven't missed out on any areas of the curriculum. Staff meetings have continued in order to ensure staff are happy with how teaching is going and how the school is running. Hennock recently sent out a parent survey to grasp how parents were finding home learning. The school received some really good feedback. Any feedback that could be put into practice within school/online learning has been. VP praised the staff for how they are working; Teachers and Teaching Assistants are doing a fantastic job.

Children with no IT facilities have been provided with equipment to ensure they are able to learn from home.

70% of the school are currently engaging each week which VP is really pleased with.

VP mentioned they are also starting to look in to implementing Phase 3 but have been focusing on delivering quality first teaching to begin with.

CHALLENGE LC questioned VP about whether modern foreign language had been added to the curriculum. This came up with OFSTED in another school; will Hennock/Bearnes be looking to introduce teaching a language? VP has said this will happen when the children return to school in the summer; this isn't a main focus for now. DT agreed Bearnes is doing something similar.

JC asked how in depth were the responses of VP's survey. VP said she received high quality feedback, especially as a lot of the families have children in school so parents were able to provide verbal responses also.

CHALLENGE JC asked about staff well-being, with teachers having to be in class and teach online, are they coping? DT said staff at Bearnes had chosen to be in school and were recording/live lessons at the same time as it actually reduced workload.

2. Procedural matters

2.1. Safeguarding

DT – Continues to monitor issues both for children in school and at home. Everything is still being logged and recorded. TAF meetings, child protection meetings and education welfare officers (External Agencies) are still working, providing feedback and visits.

Families are being contacted weekly by DT or Becky Hawling (BH) the SENCo. DT has said a bonus of the use of Teams is that online engagement can be monitored and gives a good insight into children at home, which has been really helpful.

VP - Continues to monitor issues both for children in school and at home, but currently does not have any safeguarding concerns. Families at risk are being contacted weekly by VP. Again VP agreed that the use of Teams has the benefit of ensuring online engagement and children at home can both be monitored, which has been really helpful.

2.2. SEND

DT – All EHCP families are being contacted weekly, staff are aware of who all SEN children are and know to ensure that conversations are being recorded to monitor any issues. EHCPs are still being completed by DT or BH. DT feels he has a good view on EHCP children.

VP – Current EHCP children are being contacted weekly and VP feels their needs are being met well. TAs are contacting children to offer extra support with home learning if it is needed.

JC mentioned the SEND focus visit will happen slightly later this term when children return to school. LC explained to the Board that the last focus visit looked more into implementing blended learning due to the circumstances of lockdown, this does then mean that other Focus Areas will move on to the summer term.

2.3. Sports Premium grant, Pupil Premium grants

LC asked DT and VP whether there has been any spending from these funding areas; the schools will need to report in July what they have spent the money on. VP reported that as a Trust it has been discussed whether some of last year's Sports Premium will be spent on technology for the schools.

The management of Pupil Premium Grants has now been taken over by Becky Humphries across all 15 schools. BH has ensured that every school has been given the correct amount of funding each which both LC and JC were really impressed with. DT advised each AH then has to sign off each bit of funding so that they are aware of their own Pupil Premium grants. VP is really pleased with the service BH is providing, as it ensures that all pupils' needs are met.

2.4. Health & Safety/Risk Assessments

VP has been looking into replacing some of the fencing at Hennock, progress is being made and VP is hoping to meet with the Premises and Trust Business Manager to put plans in place.

Both DT & VP reported that the Trust Risk Register is completed and continually monitored. Lateral Flow testing was added to this within the Covid 19 section. Lateral Flow testing was introduced to all Trust schools this term.

3. Personnel

3.1. Staffing: staff wellbeing and workload (if not covered above)

DT constantly keeps an eye on staff well-being at Bearnas; he feels that staff are still communicating well amongst themselves despite having the Bubbles in place. He appreciates the work from VP in training staff with IT to ensure they aren't overwhelmed and Sue Howard (HR Officer) has been looking after staff mental health and well-being. LC asked whether DT is ok. He confirmed he is and all staff look out for one another at Bearnas. DT makes the effort to visit all classrooms each day; ensuring social distancing measures are followed.

OG has said that staff at Hennock are communicating well on the whole, a few staff members have had moments but these staff members have been well supported. All staff are topic planning together, giving them a great opportunity to communicate with each other. VP has said in the holidays staff have been told to take a good break and to relax.

JC made it clear that all staff at Bearnas and Hennock can approach her or LC if they ever have any worries or concerns that cannot be addressed in school. They have the ability to escalate issues via the Standards & Curriculum Board and want staff to feel well supported.

3.2. Parents: parent forum meetings, PTA, areas for concern/complaints

LC updated the Board on the recent Local Board Working Group, including a reflection on the role of Local Governors to act as representatives of the wider school community. LC felt that this was something that could be improved for both schools and raised the issue of how parents can be encouraged to communicate with the school/Governors.

VP and DT feel that they have actually opened up more areas in which parents can communicate with the school by using Teams, more frequent phone calls and the use of surveys. LC asked KB as a parent how did he feel? KB said he feels good and he thinks the school have been doing a really good job. **CHALLENGE** KB asked whether a parent meeting outside of school could be looked in to in the long run, he understands that this is a marathon not a sprint with the Phase 1, 2, 3 but feels that parents could do with an opportunity to chat. VP asked whether this needs to be teacher led or parent led. LC suggested that the Governors could help run/monitor these meetings and perhaps school leaders/AHs could dip in every other term. KB said that this should be largely school focussed in conversation; there is an online platform called Yammer where parents can chat online which, he is happy to look into. VP said that this could help parents interact especially new parents with Reception children.

JC stressed the importance of meetings being school led and feels this could be really constructive to encourage positive communication.

LC asked whether DT could contact any parents at Bearnas that may want to help run some of these parent forums.

PR said that we may just need to be mindful when setting these up that parents aren't bombarded with too much information/emails as this runs the risk of parents disengaging.

ACTION LC to look into parent meetings when schools return; KB to advise on Yammer as a social media platform.

PTA – LC asked whether Bearnas has been able to set up a PTA, DT advised not as of yet but he would still like to encourage a PTA at Bearnas.

Hennock School has a brilliant PTA who have recently raised money to purchase laptops.

Both schools have been really fortunate and have had IT technology donated by local businesses which they are really grateful for. JC suggested perhaps a small article could go into village magazines to thank the local community.

ACTION AHs to make sure appropriate thanks are passed to local businesses who donated items.

4. Strategic Governance

4.1. Focused visits last term (addressed above)

4.2. Focused visits next term (addressed above)

4.3. Update from S&C, Moorland Schools Meeting

LC shared details from the last S&C meeting, and said that the Board had provided them with formal feedback at this meeting which was really helpful. Appendix 1 was shared with the Board.

LC advised the Board that we will be merging with the Moorland Board next September. In the meantime we are mixing our meetings. The last meeting on 15.12.2020 involving the Moorland and N&T Board was successful, and the next meeting on 21.04.2021 will be with the same as this.

4.4. Governor training – both KB and PR have signed up for Governor Training.

Dates of future Local Board meetings

21.04.2021 – Moorland Hub

30.06.2021

Close 5.40pm