



Colne Valley Local Schools Board (LSB)

Date: Tuesday 2 March 2021	Time: 5.30pm
Virtual details: Meeting held by MS Teams	
Clerk: Elizabeth Murphy	
Quorum: One half of the numbers of the LSB rounded up which must not be less than three	

LSB Members	Other attendees:
Cathy Shergold (CSH) (Chair)	
Emma Flin, (EFL) Head of St Andrew’s Primary, Great Yeldham	
Julie Sarti (JSA) Head of Colne Engaine Primary	
Danielle O’Connell (DOC) Head of Belchamp St Paul Primary	
Kirsty Stuart (KST) Head of Ridgewell Primary	
Claire Kearney (CKE) Head of Schools and William Martin	
Godfrey Evans (GEV) (Vice Chair)	
Nigel Benwell (NBE)	
Richard Hopkins (RHO)	

Meeting Summary for Vine Trust Board

<p>Key issues discussed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of the Community Boards working with and feeding into the LSBs and the fact that roles and responsibilities remained unclear Update on the Trust’s Governance Working Party Schools re-opening and transition plans for pupils and staff Staff were very tired after the demands of remote learning and now had to be back in the classrooms Assessment would be informal until children had settled back in school Policy organisation across the trust
<p>Actions/Decisions taken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes from 21 January 2021 meeting approved Nigel Benwell would be asked to support Belchamp St Paul and Ridgewell whilst Community Boards were not in place Sections of the SIP and Diocesan Advisor reports would be shared with the LSB All Heads’ SIPs, SEFs and SIAMS reports were to be shared with governors via Sharepoint Lack of social care support
<p>Items requiring Trustee Approval</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">None</p>
<p>Issues outstanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity between the roles and responsibilities of the Community Boards and the was LSBs required– The Vine Trust Board needed to provide clarity



- Governors questioned whether the LSB would have the right to veto any changes made by schools to model policies but there was nothing in the Scheme of Delegation to advise on this so clarity on accountability was needed – **The Vine Trust Board needed to provide clarity**
- It was unclear who would sign off policies that were models that could be adapted or unique to schools – **The Vine Trust Board needed to provide clarity**

Minutes: Spring 1

No	Agenda Item	Action
1	<p>Welcome and Opening Prayer The meeting opened in prayer.</p> <p>Members were welcomed to the meeting. It was agreed that the meeting could be recorded, which would be deleted once the minutes had been agreed by the Chair.</p> <p>Governors were reminded of the confidential nature of the discussions.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence There were no apologies. Nigel Benwell was absent.</p>	
3	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary and Business Interests No business interests or conflicts of interest were noted nor had any gifts or hospitality been received.</p>	

Business

4	<p>Minutes from the Last Meeting: 21 January 2021 Governors approved the minutes as an accurate record and the minutes would be signed and dated and a copy sent to each of the Headteachers for the public record and also to the CEOs PA and Clerk to the Trustees.</p> <p>ACTION 1</p>	Chair and Clerk
5	<p>Matters Arising None. All the actions had been discharged.</p>	
6	<p>Chair's Update The Chair and JSA had attended the Trust's Governance Working Party and the governance model was still a work in progress. A number of templates for governors to use for meetings would be issued in time. The Community Boards worked at a granular level for schools, although 2 of the Colne Valley schools had yet to have these put in place i.e., Belchamp St Paul and Ridgewell.</p>	



	<p>There were discussions held by the working party about how the SBMs were to be supported as it was not the role of the LSBs to unpick the details and so it was clear that responsibilities and accountability of the various levels still had to be fleshed out. Governors noted that currently in some schools in the Colne LSB the SBM discussed the detail of the finances with the Community Board, the LSB would then receive the information in the new Finance on a Page template due out soon, to allow governors to have a reasonable understanding of what was going on in the schools; financial documents had to be authorised by the trustees. It was important that governors understood this and used a pragmatic approach in the interim. Governors questioned how they would be able to respond to detailed questioning about the finances and other matters by Ofsted should the need arise. The Vice Chair pointed out that in the Scheme of Delegation the key responsibilities for the LSB were to identify concerns and vulnerabilities and the Community Boards could assist in flagging these up. If there was an inspection there was no reason why key personnel could not be invited along to meetings to fill in the details.</p> <p>From governors comments it was clear that some schools in the trust were unaware of the need for Community Boards and questioned how the representatives had been chosen; in the cases of Colne Engaine and Great Yeldham this was from the original members of the LGBs.</p> <p>Governors questioned how Belchamp St Paul and Ridgewell schools could be supported in the interim it was felt that NBE might be able to provide this for the time being as he was familiar with them, and it was agreed that GEV would then liaise with him to ensure understanding of the situation.</p> <p>ACTION 2</p> <p>Governors questioned the other areas that the Community Boards might be involved in. As the LGBs had done so previously it was expected that they would discuss teaching and learning with the Headteachers too to draw out best practice to ensure a quality education was provided, although accountability for this remained with the LSB and the Headteachers. Governors were keen to ensure that the workload of the Headteachers was not increased through duplication of effort having to liaise with both the Community Boards and LSBs. GEV advised that he had submitted some documents to the CEO suggesting how the Community Boards might operate and he had been invited to meet with one of the trustees and then attend one of the sub-committees to discuss this further. The documents would be shared with RHO and CKE.</p> <p>ACTION 3</p> <p>There was a need to ensure that there was a consistent approach for all of the hubs. Governors questioned if clear roles and responsibilities for LSBs and</p>	<p>CSH and GEV</p> <p>GEV</p>
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	Community Boards would be issued as a result and it was confirmed that this was the plan.	
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School Improvement

7	<p>Update of Impact of Covid-19 All Headteachers confirmed that the pupils were excited to be coming back to school. It was their perception and experience that remote learning had allowed the children to progress, they had not stood still.</p>	
8	<p>Headteachers' Reports The reports were noted.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether any issues were foreseen with the children returning, based on the experiences of the autumn term. Some parents and pupils were anxious and reassurance had been provided by explaining how children would be settled back into school. When questioned it was explained that the concerns of a few surrounded being back in groups again and being separated from parents after so long away from school. Governors questioned whether there were any concerns with regard to staff. There was concern that staff would be able to cope with the bubble systems again as they were very tired following the demands of remote learning and would now be with the children constantly throughout each day. Governors questioned whether there were any other issues. There was a need to ensure that families maintained the social distancing rules during drop-off and pick-up as before. There was also a need to re-establish boundaries for the children to remind them of expected behaviour. CKE had produced documents about pastoral care and managing wellbeing and this was on her school's website and it was agreed that these would be shared with all.</p> <p>ACTION 4</p>	JSA
9	<p>Assessment Data Governors asked if there had been any changes in progress or attainment since the last meeting. All Heads advised there had been minimal change. Whilst the trust had provided a draft document to measure the children on return in an informal way, mental health and wellbeing was the immediate priority upon fully re-opening. A data drop was needed before Easter but not on formal testing and there would therefore be no formal accountability as a result. Governors questioned how the children would be assessed and the gaps in learning identified; this would be using the usual methods used in school at any time not just post Covid-19.</p>	



	<p>Governors questioned whether Heads were expecting an increase in referrals based on their experiences of the autumn term. Whilst this was unclear it was hoped that the regular contact maintained with the vulnerable families would avoid this. Many of the vulnerable children were also in school so were being monitored well in the circumstances. Some schools had experienced a few more issues but the strong pastoral team had managed the situations well. School services had dwindled due to staff being called on to help with the national vaccination programme etc and it was clear that services were under severe pressure; there were concerns about what support was likely to be available long term.</p> <p>The report template was discussed and it was agreed that information would be added to show the latest date that training had taken place for Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safer Recruitment and JSA agreed to update the template accordingly.</p> <p>ACTION 7</p> <p>Governors questioned whether the 3 referrals to social care at Belchamp St Paul had been problematic. Difficulties with both Suffolk and Essex county councils had been experienced. The referrals related to the same child and the school had worked hard with the families and the situation had improved and a return to school was planned.</p>	Heads and JSA
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Final Business

12	<p>Approve Local Policies / adopt Trust Policies</p> <p>Due to the difficulties in getting clarity on having a policy review cycle JSA had agreed with the CEO to develop a system for this. There were 3 categories that were to be suggested i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vine Trust policies Vine Trust financial policies Vine mandatory policies to be noted (i.e. to be read to fully understand but could also ask questions about) and implemented. <p>These policies would be signed off by the Chair to the Trustees and it was hoped that these would be on a platform so everyone could access them.</p> <p>Another category was Vine model policies which could be customised to schools, although if the substance of the policy was to change the LSB would need to review this before it was implemented. It was expected that most of these would largely remain unchanged. Governors questioned whether the LSB would have the right to veto the changes but there was nothing in the</p>	
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	<p>Scheme of Delegation to advise on this so clarity on accountability was needed. This question was highlighted for the trustees to note in the summary at the top of the minutes.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether there might be policies that might be required that were unique to the school. This was possible and it was thought that the Community Boards might review them and suggest any changes before they were submitted to the LSBs, however it was unclear who had responsibility for ultimately approving and signing off these, and the policies that could be adapted to schools, and so this needed clarification. This question was highlighted for the trustees to note in the summary at the top of the minutes.</p> <p>When questioned it was confirmed that that some of the model policies were provided by Juniper Education.</p>	
13	<p>Communication to/from the Vine Trust Board</p> <p>Questions had been raised under item 12, and therefore in the Executive Summary above, which required answers.</p>	
14	<p>Date and Time of Future Meetings</p> <p>Meetings were to be held by MS Teams for the time being at 5.30pm on:</p> <p>20 April</p> <p>22 June (possibly meet face to face)</p>	
	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>The meeting closed with a prayer.</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.10pm

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