

**Islington Futures – A Federation of Community Schools  
Minutes of the Federal Chairs’ Committee  
Wednesday 1 April 2020, 8am – virtual meeting**

**Present:**

Jill McLaughlin	Chair of Governing Board, Chair for the Meeting
Caspar Woolley	Vice Chair, Chair of Chairs’ Committee
Jo Dibb	Executive Headteacher
David Harrison	Chair of Finance, Resources & Risk Committee
Pauline Edgar	Chair of Federal Achievement Committee
Will Garner	Chair of Vittoria School and Copenhagen School Committee
Alex Bols	Chair of Beacon High School Committee
Mary Berrisford	Chair of EGA School Committee
Aanya Madhani	Safeguarding Lead Governor
Hilary Furey	Clerk

Agenda Item		Action
1.	<b>Apologies and Consent</b> All members were present.	
2.	<b>Declaration of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b> Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2020 were previously circulated for information. <b>Resolved:</b> To agree the minutes of 29 January 2020.  <b>Matters Arising</b> There were no matters arising from the previous meeting	<b>Clerk</b>
4.	<b>Update on School Closures and Cover, including Safeguarding Report</b> JD had met with the four Headteachers yesterday and told Chairs that last week had been concerned with getting systems up and running and this week had been about consolidation of work within and across different groups and in checking with students. There were more students attending Beacon High than the other three schools, although there was a greater level of disengagement at that school, and JD would meet with the SLT at Beacon High later today. JD said that students, mainly secondary, were feeling pressured by teachers with lots wanting to work at the same time as siblings who were also at home and all staff had been provided with guidance on expectation of students. There had been some issues with live interactive lessons, and JD told governors that the education unions were concerned about live teaching, issues which would need to be ironed out. JD said that Year 11 students in particular were more engaged but that levels of engagement needed to be maintained.	


	<p>In response to a query about safeguarding, JD said that teachers had to be particularly aware of their environment and what might be visible when presenting a 'live' lesson, and consultation with unions was ongoing. There was also concern about staff using their personal mobile phones and needing to observe protocols around not sharing their number with students, so needing to ensure their number was withheld. The Chair queried whether students would respond to a withheld number. JD said she was confident around safeguarding and AM said that lots of safeguarding concerns had been reduced due to the number of students not having peer-related issues or having to travel to and from school and parents seemed happy.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Health and Safety and wellbeing of Staff (at home and in school)</b></p> <p>JD said that Pastoral Managers had a school mobile, and that these had also been issued to Amardeep Panesar and Denise McCarney, but that capacity at the ICT support had been reduced so little help was currently available to address issues. JD was not prepared to put pupil contact details on memory sticks. Students would each be contacted once per week by Pastoral Managers or Form Tutors.</p> <p>PE queried how Year 11 students were coping with anxiety around GCSE exams and assessment. JD said that they were initially very anxious and she had received a number of emails on this point. However, a school email had been sent to advise Year 11 students that the work they were being asked to do at home would also be taken into consideration as well as other marks for work previously completed. JD was more concerned for staff who would have to use norm referencing to provide average grades and which could impact some schools more than others, and where other events may need to be taken into consideration. Predicted grades would be submitted in early May and JD told governors that Eton School had launched its online learning which was helpful to keep Year 11 students on track pre-college.</p> <p>With reference to primaries, JD said that Jo Moore at Vittoria was very good at working with online resources and lessons, and that Copenhagen School was using LGFL for online work, although JD said My Homework was not very good as it was not interactive. Some pupils had borrowed school laptops today and JD was confident that students and staff were being monitored. In response to a query, JD said that she and AS had sent links to online activities to the two primary Headteachers to share on the school websites, but also added that they did not want all children to spend all day online, particularly where they had siblings who also needed to complete work online. WG said that Vittoria had sent out a daily timetable which included opportunities to get exercise, do artwork and also to work via My Homework, although screen time was concerning as work was coming through Google Hangouts. Governors agreed that it was positive, however, that small groups of pupils were able to use Hangouts for peer interaction and that it was difficult for schools to monitor all online use, but also helpful as pupils needed the ability to be able to monitor their own use. JMc wondered if there was any way to know how many children were able to get out for a walk, particularly if they did not have access to a garden.</p> <p>Responding to a query, JD said she anticipated that the current school closures might continue beyond the end of April, or May, and said she was planning for longer and thinking about how to increase momentum but that she had not received any further guidance on timeframes for closures than that seen by the general public, adding that it would be ideal to get back before the summer term</p>	

	<p>so that some normality could be resumed prior to the summer holidays and that both staff and students did not become completely deinstitutionalised. It had been decided at EGA to roll over the curriculum so that students would do 10 of 11 subjects throughout the summer term, with a concentration on the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, picking up new subjects in September. WG agreed that transition phases were always difficult in respect of the change of pace but would be more so if schools did not open until September. JD was also concerned about staff and how they worked in school, suggesting that expectations would need to be reset.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Backfill / cover arrangements</b></p> <p><b>Assigned deputies and communication</b> – with reference to Headteacher cover arrangements, JD said that at EGA both Sarah Beagley and Holly Wilkins were unable to be in school due to their personal health and wellbeing circumstances, although both continued, and Sarah would continue, to work remotely for the time being. In addition, Tina Southall, Ewan Scott and Carley Stephenson would need to work remotely for three months due to underlying health conditions however all were fully involved in planning and supporting. At Beacon High the Headteacher was working in school every day as he felt he needed to be there and both of his Deputy Heads were able to get into school, if necessary. Denise McCarney was going into Vittoria every morning to check on the few pupils that were attending, however Amardeep Panesar was working remotely from Copenhagen and the school was closed. JD said that she, Nathalie and Kathy were all working at EGA. JD felt that she was not at any risk as she was able to manage a safe physical distance in school and was also working with the LA on hubs. JD confirmed that TS was her back-up as Executive Headteacher and that Karen Tumbridge was acting as support SBM for Kim at Beacon High, as her line manager.</p> <p>A governor wanted to know how faculties and departments were communicating. JD said that there were clear communication protocols and that the way of working was very operational, and based on NGA and DFE guidance, with pastoral group meetings around vulnerable students and line management meetings with faculties to discuss and agree lesson changes etc. Primaries were also meeting at least weekly with JD being involved or copied into all information, and whilst it was important to make lessons fun, wellbeing was the priority ahead of curriculum matters. Headteachers were talking about how to maintain the school community and were recording assemblies for when schools return, and were looking to send something out to families about community. A suggestion was made about focusing newsletters towards pupils rather than families and with students contributing. JD said that EGA was still having ‘tutorial time’ and Thought for the Week, but that schools would run out of information for newsletters as there was not much happening.</p> <p><b>School staff - teaching and non-teaching</b> - the Chair wanted to ensure that cover arrangements were in place for the summer term, if schools had not returned by that point, to ensure that JD and AS were not in school at all times and asked how many students were expected to be in school. JD said that 40 students were expected at Beacon High, although not all were attending, Vittoria and Copenhagen both expected 4, and there was a handful at EGA, although it was hard to predict how many might arrive going forwards as it was possible that some parents might not send younger students where they may have other priorities, and secondary students were more able to work on their own. In terms of on-site leadership at primaries, JD said that there was one teacher and</p>	

	<p>a leadership team member on site at Vittoria, with rotas in place and NJ in EGA this week. Support staff were still in school to cover Reception, and a qualified First Aider needed to be in school, as well as kitchen staff. JMc queried whether essential school maintenance works might be carried out over the closure period in safe working conditions. JD said that the Premises Manager at Vittoria and Connor at Copenhagen would be working, and she was chasing up COLPAL in respect of its proposed works during the Easter break.</p> <p>CW wanted to know about staff turnover and how this might be affected. JD said that EGA was interviewing remotely for a Head of Art, and was considering a temporary or fixed term contract, mainly due to being unable to see candidates teaching, and this was similar at Copenhagen. Overall, schools were advised to delay any recruitment unless this had begun in advance of school closures. It was noted that the change organisation proposal for Beacon High would be delayed but that there might be some flexibility in deploying an English and Maths teacher to EGA where they would be needed. In response to a query, JD said that recruiters would have to rely on references so these needed careful consideration.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Headteacher EGA – current situation</b></p> <p>JD said her biggest challenge was in being a full-time Headteacher again and wanted to make sure that her plans did not fall through and had spoken to TS about supporting with primaries. JD said that there was an opportunity to think about how to manage up to December 2020 and then beyond January 2021 when she would work part-time.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Governor backfill and cover arrangements</b></p> <p>It was agreed that Caspar Woolley, as Vice Chair, would provide back up for the Chair, and the Chair would also provide decision-making support for the Chair of the Finance, Resource &amp; Risk Committee.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Governor meetings - what we need to do and what we can do</b></p> <p>MB suggested that it would be helpful for School Committee Chairs to meet with Headteachers to discuss rank ordering and predicted grades for Year 11 students, and the pros and cons and likely outcomes. In response to a query on scrutiny, JD said that Ofqual had given clear guidelines on the approach to what can and cannot be taken into consideration. AB wondered if this could be done by merging classes and teachers to look at this together, and JD said that the Art department at EGA had set up arrangements to review and discuss photographs of students' artwork as they would the actual artwork. PE raised a question about whether summer term school committee meetings should go ahead so that governors could be appraised of what had been done and to understand how data had been compiled. MB felt that committees should meet to consider any difficulties, problems or mitigating circumstances that may arise if results differed from those anticipated. Additionally, MB asked whether students would be able to re-sit exams in November. JD said she had not received any guidance on this particular aspect, and AB said that students should be able to request re-sits if they were unhappy with their grades, however the aim would be to minimise this need when schools re-opened. It was understood that information on calculating predicted outcomes based on prior attainment profiles and teaching ranking within cohorts, etc would be sent to schools this week, and it was noted that there could be some risk for Beacon High pupils. JD agreed to share information on dates with school committees and Chairs once received.</p>	JD

<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Finance Update - impact on school budgets now</b></p> <p><b>Budgets sign off for next year</b> - JMc said that budgets needed to be reviewed by the F,R&amp;R Committee and approved by the Governing Board and that both meetings should go ahead. David Harrison, Chair of F,R&amp;R Committee, agreed to host and arrange the finance meeting on Tuesday 5 May 2020 at 6.00pm. JMc asked AB to represent Beacon High and WG to represent both Vittoria and Copenhagen at the meeting, in compliance with having a representative on this committee.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that DH would host the F,R&amp;R committee meeting on 5 May 2020 and that AB and WG would represent their respective school committees.</p> <p><b>Loss of income / change of costs</b> - it was agreed that budgets would be hit by the current situation and JD confirmed that the change organisation would not go ahead at Beacon High, and was waiting to find out if the suggested 3% teachers' pay grant would go ahead for the new academic year. JD said that the FSM voucher scheme was due to start via schools but guidance received yesterday said that it would not be available during holidays. JD said that schools were trying to support families with food in school kitchens and was considering a Go Fund Me page across the Federation. JD said that only Beacon High would remain over the Easter holiday period.</p> <p><b>Zero-hour staff</b> - JD said that two members of agency staff who were currently employed at Vittoria would be needed for September so she had not considered that they should not be paid during the period of school closure. Peripatetic music teachers at EGA and BH were not currently working. JD was not sure whether some exam fees may be refunded but it was accepted that school budgets would be out of kilter. JMc wondered if agency staff could be furloughed. They were not employed by the school, and JD would find out if they were continuing to be paid via their agency. In reply to JMc's question, JD said that there were no school staff that were not working, in fact everybody was working very hard on setting work and some having to manage their own children. PE asked if support staff were still being paid and DH suggested that support staff could be rotated and furloughed, as appropriate, so that they could access funds. AB said that universities were doing something similar with estates and catering staff on a 3-week rotation period and discussing whether the 80% of salary paid by Government might be topped up or bonuses given to those staff who were often the lowest paid. WG said he had spoken to DMc about furloughing Teaching Assistants as they were not able to work remotely. JD said she had not considered it but would look into it. JMc suggested that the impact on different groups of staff might be looked at.</p> <p>Overall, JD told Chairs that everyone was doing good work and adapting to the online learning app and that she was receiving daily feedback. The biggest challenge going forward concerned longer-term implications. Replying to a question, JD said that Year 6 SATs would not go ahead but that no information had yet been received on assessment.</p> <p>JMc said she would email parent governors as they were a good source of feedback and the Clerk was asked to check which governors were not yet registered on GovernorHub.</p> <p>JMc said that the Governing Board could only commend and applaud staff in all areas, and noted thanks to SLT members who have stepped up to do whatever</p>	<p>F,R&amp;R</p> <p>DH</p> <p>JD</p> <p>Clerk</p>
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	they can over the last few weeks. JD said that staff were pleased to receive the Chair's message and agreed to feedback TS's information from the DSL Forum.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Executive Headteacher Recruitment</b> CW thanked JD for her offer to extend her stay at the Federation, and wondered how Chairs should consider reinvigorating the transition stage. It was suggested that work needed to begin immediately after the Easter break on ensuring resilience of the Deputy Headteacher structure at EGA, and JMc said that the Governing Board needed to approve schools' SLT to ensure support and resilience. The next Chairs' meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22 April 2020 at 8.00am.	All
<b>11.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> Wednesday 22 April 2020, 8.00am-9.30am. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.15am.	

<b>Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting</b>	
<b>Chair's signature</b>	
<b>Chair's name</b>	CASPAR WOOLLEY
<b>Date</b>	18 November 2020