

MANCHESTER CREATIVE STUDIO LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING #1
Monday 24th November 2014, 4.00pm

Present: Max Larcombe (ML), Nimisha Mistry (NM), Gemma Horridge (GH), Elizabeth Whitehead (EW), Matthew Green (MG), Nicola Barthorpe (NB), James Spencer (JS) Raja Miah (RM)

Apologies: Natalie Gross (NG), Ben Barsky (BB)

Chair: Max Larcombe

Minutes: Kurt Allyster Lee

Welcome & Introduction to the School:

ML welcomed everybody and self-introductions made.

Overview of the Trust & the Role of LGB:

RM shared reasons as to why the MCS LGB was set up. Currently going through legal process to merge Collective Spirit Free School Oldham and Manchester Creative Studio under the Collective Spirit Multi-Academy Trust (CSMAT) to satisfy feedback from the Department for Education on governance. The CSMAT has 3 tiers of responsibilities – Members, Directors and Local Governing Bodies.

The Scheme of delegation explicitly transfers some responsibilities from the Board of Directors to the LGB, in turn delegates power to the sub groups. This is to ensure that power is given at the right level, with the purpose of Directors ensuring oversight and scrutiny. The Board of Directors will only step in if there is deviation from the vision, for example the employer-led feature that needs to remain the focus of MCS alongside project-based learning and live briefs.

The LGB subgroups are where all the key work is done. ML shared his experience of huge Governing bodies made up of 15-20 members that are not active, and how the MCS LGB will be different as a leaner group and set range of responsibilities ensuring genuine work is being done in shaping the school. In short, the directors of the Trust create the bigger picture and vision and it is the job of the LGB to ensure it is delivered.

GH requested that a further breakdown of the scheme of delegation for subgroups should be done. RM said that the roles of subgroups and how they interact with each other would be continuously revisited to meet that. ML is meeting NB weekly to provide support where needed and the Trust is open for change as the scheme of delegation is a work in progress.

Roles & Responsibilities:

ML shared Governor role overview document, everyone has been brought on board to fulfill specific roles. Governors advised to take it away, reflect and feedback the document at the next meeting. RM to work individually with each governor to shape roles before next meeting.



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Elect Vice-Chair of LGB:

ML said the vice-chair of LGB needs to be elected to stand in for the Chair where and when needed. ML to discuss with NG and BB before making a decision. Need to take into consideration that a vice-chair should have different skillsets from ML.

Register of Interests:

ML shared that a register of all current and potential interests will be kept and updated at the first LGB meeting every academic year. ML will collate this register and hand it over to JS to verify. ML said that Governors should exclude themselves from any LGB decisions that involve that specific Governor to maintain transparency and will be clearly minuted if anybody needs to step out.

EW put forward an enquiry regarding staff recruitment and registering interest if prospective staff are from personal networks. RM said it depends on LGB involvement in recruitment and need to make sure there are more people involved in the decision-making process to maintain transparency.

LGB to let ML know of any changes to the Register of Interest, which should be changed ad hoc as required and this information will also be available to external requests such as Ofsted.

ACTION: LGB to email or return a copy of register interest form back to ML, even if there is none.

Gifts & Hospitality, Expenses Policy & Code of Conduct:

JS said that a letter would be sent to all governors to confirm receipt of a copy of all LGB documents for records purposes. All documents are standard policies but it is recommended that Governors read through them.

Establishment & Configuration of Sub Committee:

JS shared that there are three LGB sub-groups - Finance, CPD/Performance/QA, Health/Safety and Safeguarding. The term of reference has been made for each sub-committee to understand how they relate to each other.

GH put forward the question of who sets the agenda for sub-group meetings. RM replied that the Directors set agenda for every meeting, which provides absolute clarity. Every agenda item exists for a reason to support the work of the overall governance.

The LGB approve and agree to the need of subgroups, with MG chairing CPD/Performance/QA, NM chairing Health/Safety and Safeguarding and BB leading on the Finance sub-groups.

Sub-committee expected to meet some time in the last 2 weeks of November, February & June; LGB will then meet in December, March & July.

Recommendation of Employer Board:

ML suggested to the board that a lead for industry engagement is needed, which might be in the form of an informal sub-committee. It was agreed to explore how to reformat sub-committees to share responsibility of employer engagement.



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NB shared that she would like to establish an industry/curriculum sub-group. Max to speak to NG & BB to explore ways of moving forward with it.

Election of Parent & Staff Governor:

The LGB discussed the best way to recruit for parent and staff Governor roles. It was agreed that the school should send out information to parents, with ML being available to talk to interested candidates. RM suggested hosting open evenings for parents to come and find out more about the roles. All parents will then receive ballots to cast votes on nominees to pick a parent Governor.

The classification of staff eligible for Governor role was discussed. The board agreed that only those that are directly under the school payroll will be eligible to run for staff Governor.

ACTION: ML to compose letter to parents for Governing body roles and to suggest times available for them to drop in at the school to meet ML and have informal chats. Ideally letter should be sent before Christmas with elections taking place around mid-January.

Admissions Policy:

RM shared that the admissions policy is delegated to the school and is included in the responsibilities of the LGB. ML updated board on current policy, which is recruiting 75% within M60 ring road and 25% outside the M60 ring road.

The board agreed to keep the admissions policy as it is but made a point about updating the policy become more current rather than using pre-opening terminologies.

Behaviour Policy:

RM said that the school's behavior policy is subject to interpretation from the relevant subgroup to be put into key actions. The policy has been designed using key terminology suited for MCS and has values rather than set processes.

NB raised a point for the responsible subgroup to consider around how staff & the student body feed into the policy.

EW enquired about fixed-term exclusions and processes. RM said the Trust would be responsible for creating a template of the exclusion process. This will initially consist of a consultation document, to be put forward at the next LGB meeting for approval.

Principal's Report:

NB gave an update on student numbers. Of the 87 predicted students, the school under recruited and currently numbers are at 57. Student demographic is very varied in terms of catchment area. Around 10% were previously home-schooled, with many having low academic points of entry. Of all the students, 48% are eligible for free school meals & 5% are looked after children.

The school is currently running a well-structured live-briefs programme and very varied pastoral provision to support all students. At Key Stage 5, 40% are retaking Mathematics and 34% are retaking English.



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NB shared that all students have been baseline tested and personalised study plans have been created. Updating on Key Stage 4, students have made significant progress, with the majority making good or above expected progress. Focused intervention programmes have been set up for the 11% of students that require it.

NB went on to share student recruitment for September 2015. So far the school has had 115 registers of interest with the interactive media & graphics pathway being most popular. RM suggested documenting the recruitment strategy to include weekly or monthly targets as to gain awareness around balancing the school's budgets. NB to send out current recruitment strategy to LGB, for comments and to fill in any gaps and RM to set targets and key steps.

The school has held 2 Saturday open mornings, with one more set in January. NB said a lot of parents are coming to look round during the week.

ACTION: ML to circulate all school documents to LGB for comments.

Budget Report:

JS shared with the board budget documents and explained how the school budgets work. The finance subgroup will be held accountable for financial scrutiny.

Discussions done around how to deal with inactive Key Stage 5 students and how it would affect the school budget if they were to be taken off roll. NM shared that funding will be given as long as a period of 6 weeks of attendance have passed. NB to gather information to clarify and feedback at next meeting.

RM said that exit interviews should be done to find out why students are not coming into school regularly.

AOB:

NM requested for the Safeguarding policy to be sent to sub-committee before first meeting.

Future LGB Meeting Dates: It was proposed that future LGB meeting dates would be on **Wednesday 4th March 2015, 5pm – 7pm** and **Tuesday 14th July 2015, 5pm – 7pm** at Manchester Creative Studio. Sub-committees will be in charge of arranging sub-group meetings around mid-February.

CLOSED: 6.30PM