



TEES VALLEY EDUCATION – MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

(Company No: 09630999)

LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE – DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY

1.15pm Tuesday 4th December 2020

Virtual Meeting

TEES VALLEY EDUCATION – MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(Company No: 09630999)
LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE – DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY
1.15pm Tuesday 4th December 2020
AT THE ACADEMY

ATTENDEES:

Head Teacher - Jennifer Duncan (Chair)
Community Representative – Anne Kelly
Chair - Carol White
Staff Representative - Sian Lamb

OTHER ATTENDEES: Clerks – Carole Tonner, Mae Thomas

1. Apologies

Gemma Harrison - New parent representative

2. Welcome

3. Minutes of LAC meeting 30/06/2020 for approval and matters arising

CW – can we confirm that the Site Supervisor for Discovery will come across to the new build

JD – Confirmed that the Site Supervisor would be coming across to the new build

Previous minutes were approved and agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.

4. Temporary accommodation update

The current temporary accommodation provides space for 50 of the 60 children currently on role. The remaining 10 are situated in the Sure Start classroom

An additional 12 children will arrive Sept 2021 which gives a total of 72 children in temporary accommodation.

Some pupils will therefore have spent a considerable amount of their time in Discovery in temporary accommodation by the time the new building is completed.

The trust is funding the development of a Kitchen on the Brambles site. This project also includes provision of additional classroom space that the DfE will fund up to £100K. This space will provide the additional accommodation Discovery requires for 2021/22 and will revert to Brambles once Discovery has moved into its new building. The trust is managing this project.

5. Permanent accommodation update

CW – acknowledged a huge amount of time has been spent on the design, plans were shared with staff to gather their opinions. All design plans are now complete. Interserve (ICL) submitted planning application to Middlesbrough Council Sept 2020. This should have been considered on 4th December but the Highways Authority was unable to get their views in on time which has now caused a delay. The plans should now be considered Jan 8th 2021,.

Once planning permission is approved, we may need to wait a further six weeks in case a judicial review is lodged. However, the DfE thinks this will be unlikely and is currently discussing with the LA the potential to access the site in January/February to start to undertake early works to prepare the site.

CW reported that some concerns have been raised by local residents about the potential for more traffic and difficulties with parking on the road next to the site. The DfE is currently considering how this might be addressed. It is also likely that a planning condition will be the need to designate the current informal right of way along the side of the site as a designated footpath. This should not cause any major issues.

CW – acknowledged she had confirmation from Keith Herbert that the delay with planning shouldn't impact on the current proposed end date by May 31st 2022.

ICL have been allocated a special licence to start final surveys to determine how many nesting birds may be onsite. These nests are not to be disrupted.

CW confirmed once the surveys are complete, subject to planning and/or agreement with the LA, work can start to flatten the site in preparation for the build around Jan/April 2021 time

CW confirmed that it is currently proposed to secure the site with a retaining wall that will be built near the former hydroponic centre.

AK asked about the possibility of a housing estate being built on the remaining land. CW confirmed that the LA believes this coming to fruition will be fairly remote.

CW encouraged Friends of Nature World to continue to lobby the LA to secure a clear long term lease so that they can apply for more development grants from charitable organisations

AK was able to confirm that this is in progress.

CW was able to relay that the local authority highly values the work undertaken by Friends of Nature World.

AK asked, if the LA approves a housing development on the site next to the proposed school site, how will access to this site be secured.

CW confirmed that DFE have categorically said no access via the Academy entrance, JD was also able to confirm this. Both agreed that difficulties with access to this site made the possibility of a housing development even less likely.

JD confirmed that the artist impressions of the new Academy have been placed on the website.

AK shared with the group that she has been keeping a close eye on the development of the new Mo Mowlam school in Redcar which is being built by the same contractors.

Ak spoke about keeping as much of the greenery as possible around the boundaries.

CW assured AK that there are plans to plant up the boundaries and the front side of the Academy, she said this maybe a project to work in partnership with Friends of Nature World.

CW announced that she will be stepping down at the end of this academic year as chair as the temporary build is well established now. A new chair will be appointed over the 2nd half of the spring term to take up post in September 2021.

CW asked about what enrichment activities we were planning to offer, taking into consideration the restrictions with regards to COVID.

JD is in discussions with AK for future planning and SL the new staff representative will also gather any suggestions for enrichment programmes

6. Headteacher report

JD explained to the group the needs of children in academy (SLD, ASD, SLCN, PD, HI, SEMH, Other).

CW asked out of the 60 children how many are purely SLD.

JD confirmed that none of the 60 have only a diagnosis of SLD they have many other complex needs, she confirmed that all 60 have at least 2 diagnosed needs.

JD confirmed we have no profound but we do have 5 with severe epilepsy.

JD updated the group with current availability - we have 2 places in year 1 and 1 place in year 3.

CW asked the likelihood of these places been filled over the year.

JD we have already received referrals for these places.

JD confirmed that we follow an Integrated Therapeutic Curriculum

JD gave an update on the Academies finances

We have only just received the high needs funding from Middlesbrough Council - they have given both the Autumn and Spring allocation. A lot of expenditure for this year has been front loaded. Therefore, JD is confident of achieving a balanced budget by the end of the academic year.

We have currently purchased several wooden outbuildings to provide much needed sensory, teaching and office space to conform with covid requirements. All are insulated, heated and have electricity.

We have paid for the hall to have the acoustics adjusted to suit the needs of our children

We have had remedial work completed in converting all exit push buttons to key fobbed exits.

Health & Safety walks are regularly completed by JD and ABM with nothing major to report.

CW asked if there has been any training we haven't been able to access due to COVID restrictions

JD the only training unable to complete is physical intervention as this needs to be face-to-face. All other training has taken place online

We have had 7 isolated positive COVID test amongst staff causing many bubbles to be collapsed

CW asked what is the situation today

JD responded with all staff and children are back on site

Overall children's attendance has been 95.4% which is good

CW noted that Discovery have a high proportion of children with EAL has this caused any disruption.

JD no issues to report regarding this

JD reported on Sports/Health and wellbeing – we introduced happy boxes which have helped many of the children. The older children are able to access them as and when needed.

Outdoor areas have been immensely improved through the investment of sports and play equipment which the children utilise everyday.

We are due to take ownership of a Mini bus which will allow many more outdoor visits.

We have planned a virtual visit from Santa's grotto and a virtual Christmas pantomime

7. Focus of the committee for the autumn term/next academic year. What would we like to achieve/see on offer for pupils?

To be discussed further at the next LAC meeting

9 Any other business

No other business.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Next meeting will be planned – TBC