

Outcome of Governing Body representative's scrutiny visit of the Northolt High School Covid-19 Risk Assessment January 2021

Governing Body Representatives – Mike Hulme (Chair of Governors) – Carole Millard (Safeguarding Lead Governor)

Date of visit – 29/1/2021 – 9.00am to 11.30am

Background

The Governor representative's visit was undertaken as part of the Governing Body's shared responsibility for determining the suitability of the school's updated Covid-19 risk assessment processes. In following advice and guidance, the Governing Body selected the two members (Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Lead Governor) to undertake this duty and both were delegated this responsibility by the Full Governing Body.

Process

Both Governing Body representatives met with the Headteacher (observing appropriate safe social distancing requirements) to undertake the following:

- to conduct a suitable scrutiny of the updated risk assessment documentation.
- to discuss the Headteacher's and school leadership's decisions for the continued actions undertaken.
- to tour the facility to determine that appropriate measures are in place.
- to enable suitable discussion, provide challenge and facilitate support for the process.
- to establish satisfaction with the measures being taken to minimize risk.

The Governors also considered the latest DfE guidance advice information and examined the school's risk assessment template, supplied by Ealing Local Authority, to determine full compliance.

The school's operational risk assessment plan includes the following key task headings which determine, potential hazard, risk assessment control measures and dated actions.

- Students and staff entering school
- Prevention - reducing exposure and the transmission of the Covid-19 virus.
- Recommended usage of face covering
- Hygiene - hand sanitization
- Site cleaning measures
- Social distancing and minimizing physical contact
- Appropriate use of PPE
- Appropriate room ventilation
- Response to and managing cases of infection
- Managing asymptomatic testing processes
- Before and after school activities
- Use of playgrounds and lunch facilities
- Lettings and other use of the school amenities

The Governors discussed the risk assessment documentation at length seeking clarification and determining outcomes with the Headteacher. Where elements of the planning/control measures were still to be completed, Governors were re-assured of further progress on such aspects of the plan. No such components were seen to be a risk to existing controls, and all represented further and future requirements to support prevailing and imminent secured planning.

It was acknowledged that there will be further changes and amendments to this documentation with the understanding that these are uncertain times which will inevitably result in further direction from Central Government in due course. The Governor representatives will undertake such reviews on a termly basis or when otherwise required.

Outcome

The Governors were satisfied with the Headteacher's assessment of each element of the plan being rated as predominantly low risk and acknowledged that this due to a thorough compliance with required and implemented control factors.

We were, once more, clear that the conformity with expectation and operational readiness is down to the hard work of the Headteacher; her Senior Team; the site, cleaning, administrative staff; the teaching staff and the efforts of many other colleagues. We recognize that this has been an enormous extra burden on the school leadership.

The Governors were impressed with the systems adopted for safeguarding the interests of students and staff and that processes to mitigate risk are thorough and compliant with current expectation.

After completion of our visit, both myself and Carole were satisfied that the school is fully able to manage students and staff within the school site and that systems and procedures are in place to fully address any Covid-19 risks.

As the Governing Body of Northolt High School, we recognize that the continued management of decisions for the school's safety during the C-19 lock-down carry a huge responsibility. We are confident that all involved have worked hard and demonstrate excellent leadership to preserve school safely and with good faith. This has been achieved via a thorough attention to detail and a genuine compliance with the current guidance from the DfE, Health Authorities and the Ealing Council.

The Governing Body are committed to continually monitoring and supporting the school in managing the risk assessments to ensure the safety of the students and staff. We will maintain active monitoring via frequent evaluative reports from the Headteacher and through further visits to view, first-hand, the effectiveness of procedures leading to an eventual and complete restoration of full-time provision at our school.

This statement will be shared, as agreed and via email, with the whole Governing Body for their scrutiny, agreement and understanding. It will also be placed within the Governor's section of the School Website.