



6/4/22

MINUTES

Local Governing Board; St Stephens Community Academy Wednesday 30th March 2022 at 5.30pm at St Stephens School

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Joan Heaton (Chair), Maura Furber (Head Teacher), Kathy Walsh, Sophie Hughes, Martin Cornish, Paul Dickens

Apologies: Sue Tierney (Vice)

In attendance: Ann Cullum (Assistant Governance Officer), Claire Paul (Safeguarding - ex officio)

Resignation: MF advised that Melisa Holden has resigned from the school governing board for personal reasons.

2. Declarations of Interest Relevant to this Agenda

None relevant to this agenda.

3. Confirm Minutes of LGB Autumn Meeting (23rd November 2021) and Matters Arising

- Insurance cover for support staff to be taken up with the RSS committee and report back (TM). The Trust is taking out new cover with DfE sponsored organisation that is not-for-profit and therefore cheaper. It is approximately half the price and also covers support staff.
- Working group to cover a brief on capabilities curriculum and visible learning (Wednesday 26th January) *see item 13*
- Monitoring Visits: *see item 13*
 - Safeguarding visit and meet with Claire Paul (PD) – *see item 8*
 - SEND visit with SENDCO and KW (MH), booked for Wednesday 12th January 2022 but didn't take place. *MH now resigned.*
 - Visit with Headteacher to discuss data (current & predicted) and view the PE plan (MC)
- Governor DBS (PD, MH, MC & SH) - all complete.
- Governor passes and lanyards (MF) - all complete.

Decision made to accept minutes as true and accurate record of meeting. Chair will sign copy.

4. Confidential Matters

Staffing matters were discussed and recorded in confidential minutes.

5. Headteacher Report

Head's Report has been shared and read by all governors.

Has the Recovery Fund been utilised effectively? MF explained that the recovery fund, which was intended to employ tutors to help under-achieving children, hasn't been as successful as hoped because tutors have had to cover classes due to staff absences. LSAs are now also covering booster classes. Recovery fund has been used to help children who have been off ill and have missed lessons alongside the groups/individuals who have been identified as needing

pre teach /keep up and personalised learning . The tutor who was working with the Y6 cohort has now left the school. Assessment is on -going due to the impact of staff and pupil absence.

An NHS Mental Health nurse is available to help children, referred by the staff after an initial assessment, with mental health issues (mainly anxiety and stress). The nurse and her assistant will speak to parents and children to assess any issues. The school will refer a child if appropriate and relevant children will have a 6 week program with the MH team. **What onward care is available for appropriate children?** The Mental Health team can escalate the care of the child if required and strategies are shared with staff.

Pupil voice linked to school vision/5 year plan - MF regularly meets with children and asks them what they think the school should be teaching them, what they felt was good, what they think needs improving and etc. **One governor asked MF to explain what a 'floor book' was and its purpose.** MF showed "floor books" to the governors; these are large books where children record a short text and/or photos capturing moments which would not normally be in an exercise book.

St Stephens was a silver UNICEF school but this has now lapsed during lockdown and the school has been assured that it can now apply for gold status. This is on our action plan. MF links assemblies and staff training to UNICEF rights wherever possible. The children link their PSHE learning weekly to UNICEF rights and British Values. Recently the school had a Humanitarian Day highlighting children's problems worldwide, e.g. those in war zones, places with drought, etc. This teaches the children more about the world and the children can share their thoughts re global problems.

It has been difficult to update the SEF due to staffing issues which have impacted strategic progress. MF discussed the key points from the government education white paper (levelling up mission) – where the government pledge that 90% of primary children will achieve the expected KS2 standard in reading, writing and maths by 2030. The current forecast for Year 6 children achieving is 60% this year. This is lower than expected but this cohort has had a disruptive 2 years. Extra funding for 'levelling up' will be available for 55 areas in England and Cornwall is one of the regions eligible for this funding. There is a series of new measures to support the delivery of the government ambitions. Any child who falls behind in Maths or English will receive the support they need to get back on track and schools will be asked to be open for at least 32.5 hours a week by September 2023. **How can the school ensure this pledge is met, especially when considering staff workload and well-being?** This was discussed in detail but no details have been released by the Gov as yet how to realise their ambitions.

6. Improvement Plan & Attainment/Progress

The Improvement Plan has been shared with governors. Key points from it were discussed e.g. handwriting and gaps in maths knowledge have been identified. SEND pupils have separate maths teaching, delivered by HLTA or a Tutor. Uplift is expected in maths. Curriculum assessment – long term plans are in place. Subject leaders have identified what children really need. **How are the children's needs assessed?** On- going formative assessments, observing, listening to, working with children and identifying barriers to learning. Children identifying what their next steps are with adult support. Summative assessments termly, feed into gaps analysis and grouping of children for interventions and in class targeted support. This term each key stage team has had a day out of the classroom to assess how well the foundation curriculum is working and to review priorities in content, knowledge and skills. Vision and community cohesion/ school culture is a priority when looking at where the school is going but this has been slightly hampered by Covid. Expectations continue to remain high

Pastoral family support has been in high demand due to rising costs, parents out of work, mental health issues and anxiety. Some families are still keeping children at home due to fear of them catching covid. **What measures are in place to contact these children/parents and tempt them back to school?** MF is spending a lot of time trying to convince parents that children need to attend school and also explaining why to parents and children. Communication is key via telephone calls and face to face e.g. visiting the home. **How have the children suffered by not attending school?** Some children returning to school are socially and emotionally immature due to the length of time away and their resilience has dropped. **How is this being addressed?** A lot of support is in place for children and staff. MF feels that there is a “wartime spirit” in the school with everyone pulling together and helping each other. Staff who are off sick with covid have still been sending in daily planning, remote learning, completing data drops and mid-term reports whenever possible. Despite the difficulties posed by covid, every curriculum area continues to be offered.

7. **Cyber Security**

MF handed out a Trust Action Plan document explaining cyber security and explained that the Trust is dealing with this as a whole. **Will there be any problem with cyber security as the school has never had cyber security? Is there a training opportunity?** Cyber security audit complete which was quite positive and action plan in place to achieve the accreditation process, the new suite of cyber/IT related policies are being produced and there is a requirement for cyber security training for all directors, governors and staff in future. Governors will be informed re future training..360 internet safety audit also to be completed. Once done the action plans will be sent to governors.

8. **Safeguarding / Health & Safety**

Also see item 13. CP explained S175, the government annual safeguarding audit, which all schools are required to return. Safeguarding 175 audit to be completed next week by safeguarding lead and deputy .This report covers all aspects of safeguarding. The audit produces an action plan which is sent to Cornwall County Council who select points that require improvement. The new form requires a 4 year rolling audit. Cornwall County Council select which schools to visit first. There are 111 questions on the form, which covers child protection, school’s Child Protection, Safeguarding policy and safer recruitment, safer working practices, Single Central Record, DBS, record keeping, etc. Evidence may be required. School sends the assessment to Cornwall County Council every 2 years. In the alternate years there is a peer-to-peer review with another school. Trust has asked for all schools to attend Central Office on a set day to complete these forms. Compliance certificate is then required by CCC by 30th June. This will include gradings for every section, which will give the Trust the opportunity to assess the grading and ensure there is parity. Action points on the form will be discussed at every school meeting. CP is confident that record keeping is good at school and within the Trust. SCR is well maintained.

KCSiE have introduced a method if a safeguarding allegation is made against an adult associated with the school this needs to be initially referred to LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will help and advise the school through the process. **How are concerns graded?** There is a LADO threshold which will highlight the level of concern about the case. Low level concerns regarding children (even if minor) need to be recorded. The same applies to concerns relating to adults. A minor isolated allegation may not seem important but it needs to be recorded in case this escalates. Staff training has not been possible yet due to so many staff absences but will need to be carried out. CP handed out forms relating to the LADO threshold criteria where any concerns need to be noted.

CP explained Confide. Anyone with concerns regarding adults working with children should approach MF or CP who will record this. Staff should view Confide as a safety net, particularly in cases of total innocence, personality clash, etc. CP will report back to the governors at a later date to advise how Confide is going.

9. Review Vision & Ethos

This has been linked to the plan which was shared with governors and is also linked to the Capabilities Curriculum. The values /capabilities forms part of “the sail” in the Trust logo. These are all values the school adheres to. **What impact does this have? How is this implemented?** It creates a comprehensive and coherent school policy that leads to shared expectations and practice. The learning powers (resilience, resourcefulness, reciprocity and reflectiveness) link into the Visible Learning ‘learning pit’ which focuses on facing a challenge, problem solving strategies, deep learning, and successful learning. There are 3 basic rules shared in the culture handout. All of these are aimed to be positive.

10. Pre-School/EYFS Statutory Framework

Will this be affected by staff absences? Obviously there will be changes/ adaptations with staffing. EYFS statutory framework is up & running, curriculum has been created which is bespoke to the school’s children whilst following the framework. Children and staff are enjoying working with the framework. Recent moderation was good. The curriculum plan works fluently with the Pre-school. The curriculum and vision is designed to enable the transition into school to be seamless.

Challenging behaviour has been an issue in YF an extra member of staff has made a difference. This will end after Easter. **Will the behavioural problems increase when one staff member leaves?** It is hoped that strategies are being embedded and systems are being trialled already to enable this to work smoothly.

25 children are registered for admission in 2022; St Stephens is the first choice school for 16 of them. **Is this an opportunity to impress the families who hadn’t selected St Stephens as first choice?** MF explained that more children often arrive after the start of the academic year so there could be a cohort of 30. Families and children can be transient due to domestic situations. MF to consider advertising

11. Stakeholder Engagement

Pupil Voice and parental views survey hasn’t been carried out yet due to staff and children absences.

Action: Carry out parental survey & pupil voice (possibly amalgamated with mental health questionnaire?)(MF) MF will check with CEO if it is possible to amalgamate.

SH will visit school to discuss this with children. See item 13.

12. Set Term Dates

Dates for 2022-2023 were agreed.

13. Governor Monitoring & Training

Working group to discuss capabilities curriculum and visible learning - JH and MC met on 26th January. MC said it was very informative and in-depth, particularly the visible learning. SH will seek the children’s opinion on this during her visit.

Monitoring visits:

- Safeguarding visit and meet with Claire Paul. *PD hoping to arrange this with CP later this term.*

- SEND visit with SENDCO and Kathy Walsh (MH). School needs a SEND governor. MF asked if SH would consider this and briefly explained the role. SH will meet with KW to consider this. JH would also be interested. **Could SH and JH job-share?** Yes there can be 2 governors with lead for SEND.
- Visit with Headteacher to discuss data; current and predicted & view the PE plan. MC said this was very in-depth, although the iTrack data is questionable due to the after-effects of covid (e.g. tiredness). MF said assessments (formative and summative) help to build a picture of the whole child but are only a part of what makes an impact on teachers' professional judgement, giving a realistic picture of the children. **Is covid an excuse or a reality?** Everything is still happening in the school: after school clubs, wellbeing & physical health (led by Olympic high-jumper) but dealing with covid is a reality. We still have high expectations that every child will achieve the very best they can.

Chair's meeting with CEO

JH met CEO on 17th March. Planning and learning is a high priority. **How does the school assess this?** MF is currently working on the necessary documentation. Staffing is also a big issue, including the recent resignations. **How can the school have more success with recruitment or whether the Trust can take a dynamic approach and advertise at universities, etc. for staffing?** This was discussed. Early learning is top priority including helping the children to read.

MF has filled out a timetable so that the children can visit the Woodlands Skill Centre. Children do have a good opportunity for adventure activities at St Stephens and school plan is to follow the same curriculum. **What about toilet facilities at Woodlands? What about funding for transport?** MF said there is a small amount left in the PE budget or enrichment money which could currently be used. Enrichment money has been used on disadvantaged children to access school residentials and transport to swimming plus the Indian dance day which is forthcoming. **What is the Trust doing about transport so that pupils can take advantage of Trust-wide facilities like Woodlands, swimming and other activities?** It will cost around £500 for KS2 children to go swimming for a week as the coaches are so expensive. Year 5s were unable to go swimming this year as there isn't enough money left in the budget and the Y6 were the priority.

Premises – a bid has been submitted for secure fencing, open/close gates and secure lighting. MF has met with police regarding security. Fire inspection has been completed; all doors are being replaced with fire doors and the school being made fire safe after Easter.

MF will send out details of the new Code of Conduct. JH had noted that the Trust Improvement Officer is happy with the position the school is in.

Agree monitoring and working group for next term

- **Safeguarding visit and meet with Claire Paul (PD).** *Carried forward*
- **SEND visit with SENDCO and Kathy Walsh (SH & JH).**
- **Review impact of PPG plan and discuss PPG plan for next academic year (MC)**
- **Conduct Pupil Voice, including asking children about their learning (SH)**
- **Conduct an EYFS visit (ST)** *If well enough to do so*

Governor Training

EYFS Training 17th Jan (PD, JH, ST)

Safeguarding Training completed by MC

On-line cyber security training, also online Governors' training (JH)

14. Any Other Business

Are the Trust prepared for the increase in energy costs? How can the school ensure there is money available to pay the bills? Currently the funding available to schools is based on the number of children at schools, the trust does not receive additional income to cover energy costs. It is unknown whether there will be any other funding available from government but if not, choices/priorities will need to be made.

15. DONM

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 5.30pm at SSCA.

Meeting closed at 8:40pm.

A Cullum

ADMAT Assistant Governance Officer

Distribution List:

J. Heaton – Co-opted Governor (Chair)

M. Furber – Head Teacher

K. Walsh – Staff Governor

S. Tierney – Co-opted Governor

P. Dickens – Co-opted Governor

S. Hughes – Co-opted Governor

M. Cornish – Parent Governor

W. Hermon – Executive Head/CEO

S. Tavener – Chair, Trust Board