



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

St Stephens Community Academy

Roydon Road
Launceston
Cornwall PL15 8HL
Tel: 01566 782303

Email: governance@andaras.org

Head Teacher – Maura Furber
Chair of Governors – Joan Heaton

15/3/23

MINUTES

Spring Term Meeting 2023

Local Governing Board: St Stephen's Community Academy
Wednesday 1st March 2023 / 5.30pm at the School

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: : Joan Heaton (Chair), Paul Dickens (Vice Chair), Maura Furber (Head Teacher), Kathy Walsh, Bonnie Soanes

Not Present: Sophie Hughes (no apologies received)

In Attendance: Ann Cullum (Local Governance Officer), Margaret Savage (Trust Director).

MS introduced herself, stating that she is looking forward to supporting the school, especially the Chair as part of the Trust Board governance support initiative (part of priority 5 on the Trust Improvement Report). She had her own Education Consultancy business and has been involved with working in and supporting schools in different capacities. The other governors also introduced themselves to MS.

Governors' Resignations

ST (Vice Chair) resigned as governor on 25/11/22. It was agreed that PD would take over as Vice Chair.

MC resigned as governor on 11/2/23.

The Chair expressed her sadness at the resignations and thanked the resigning governors for their time and commitment.

2. Declarations of Interest Relevant to this Agenda

None relevant to this meeting.

Pecuniary Interest form is still required from SH. No response to correspondence.

3. Confirm Minutes of LGB Autumn Meeting (23rd November 2022) and Matters Arising

Has the expected work on the school fencing started? Not yet. The fencing repairs are still outstanding. Various companies are coming in to put in quotes for the different aspects of the fire safety works, e.g. doors, fire alarm system, gas works and security fencing (including emergency lighting and gates). The work on the doors is going to tender which could take a while. **Is it a safeguarding issue that the school gates don't shut and that the fencing is not secure / too low in places?** The interior doors have been made as safe as possible and no one can enter the school as it is secure and all visitors must sign in electronically, but the school grounds could be subject to vandalism.

Monitoring/Visits — *as listed in item 14*

Governor Training — *as listed in 14*

The decision was made to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record and the Chair signed a copy.

4. Confidential Matters

The Head briefly updated the governors on some staffing matters, including absences.

5. Headteacher Report

The Head's report has been read by all. JH expressed concern that in SH's absence governors need to make a SEN visit as the school's SEN needs are high. **JH and PD agreed to do this and will arrange a visit.** MF assured the governors that SEN needs are well covered in the school. There are 31 children currently on SEN support but counting the children on high alert this is 51% of the pupils. **Are the learning gaps in certain subjects being covered?** Yes, MF has monitored these; the staff have produced clear plans of intervention and keep up/catch up support. The children across the school are making progress -noted through book looks and pupil voice, pupil progress meetings. MF is very pleased with progress in Phonics. Closing the gaps will always be a concern, especially with children who are regularly absent, but additional wellbeing and social skills support is in place for these children with supplementary provisions, e.g. Lego, gardening, fun-fit and coding. The children have targeted lessons with a tutor. **How are the children progressing with English, especially Reading and Writing?** This was very difficult during covid but the children enjoy being engaged again and Writing and Reading are now improving. The school has bought The Literacy Tree, which the children and staff are finding exciting and inspiring using practical hooks to engage them. The sequences also enable them to write several genres within a unit. The school has also bought into Reading Rocks, which delivers new or pre published books half-termly. These are more inclusive and diverse which the children and staff are really enjoying reading and meeting new texts. The school continued to focus on vocabulary acquisition after covid and this has really helped the pupils, giving them a greater understanding of transferable vocabulary. Enrichment is a key priority for the children to develop their conceptual understanding to support writing. **Do the children use the Library effectively?** Yes, the Library is very well used and the children enjoy learning through reading. MF noted that Phonics provision is one of the school's strengths and helps the children in other subjects. Neil Swait (Academy Improvement Officer) recommends other schools (not in the Trust) to visit to see the provision. MF mentioned that the children are happy to talk and will say what they like and what they want- hence the change in writing provision and new books purchased. **Is the Woodlands school project proving popular?** Yes, the children enjoy visiting Woodlands / Wild Tribe and engaging with nature. As the school grounds are extensive, they are also doing activities on site. **Is Launceston swimming pool being used again?** Swimming sessions have been applied for year 6 but this hasn't been confirmed yet.

6. Improvement Plan & Attainment/Progress

The Improvement Plan has been made available to all. MF raised key points. MF met with the CEO who is happy with the Improvement Plan and satisfied that everything is on track. MF and JH met to discuss the Improvement Plan. They agreed that the first priority was learning standards. The Literary Tree has created enthusiasm which links into other subjects as well, so the children have a broader knowledge. The next data drop is the end of the Spring term so exact data isn't available yet but progress is being made. Targeting cohorts and deep dives are taking place. Evaluating personal development and staff CPD is encouraged and linked to school priorities. There is a wealth of expertise which is key for the whole school team. The second priority is SEND pupils. MF is also doing incremental coaching with one teacher to help with learning behaviours and management in the classroom. **Is this proving effective?** Yes, MF visits the class once a week and focuses on particular children that week to see what can be put in place to help them, also time to review best practice or what else could be trialled/ adapted. **Can this coaching be extended to include other staff?** Yes, this is only a trial but it will be offered to other teachers. Debbie Bartlett has undertaken a SEND visit and has shared her report with the staff. The curriculum is built on developing key skills. There are many clubs offered to children which is helping all the children, especially the PPG children. Different clubs are trialled to see which the children enjoy and which benefit them most. A Chess Club has

recently been started and initial feedback is very positive. These clubs are offered free to all children and staff are paid from the PPG or PE budget. Unfortunately, there aren't enough places for all the children who apply but time is spent selecting pupils and ensuring it is a fair selection.

MF is very impressed with how well the children are engaging and enjoying lessons, especially History and Geography- a new scheme that the staff are trialling.

BS apologised that he had to leave due to another meeting (6.30pm).

MF offered to go through the curriculum review with MS who would like to visit the school and MF will discuss key documents with MS then. MF attended the Ofsted Curriculum Roadshow and is confident that they are covering all the points raised. Early reading and beyond, with vocabulary richness, is paramount. **Where can you move on to from here?** The school will continue to evaluate lessons to improve children's knowledge, share extra skills and check any gaps. SEND children have individualised learning maps and therefore targeted support is offered. The school had a very positive safeguarding report and also a review on the whole school wellbeing - recommendations are being implemented.

The school had a meeting with the EWO who talked about methods of encouraging absent children into school. **Could the use of a minibus help to collect children and get them into school?** MF mentioned that the pastoral team have spent a lot of time getting persistent absent children into school, even to the extent of arranging a taxi. Some children have had many persistent non-authorised absences. Letters have been sent to parents regarding absent children and late children (who are also marked as absent). The school has a good Attendance Policy but a minibus would certainly help. National attendance is 93.8%, school attendance is 91.4% (lates are 1.4%, without which the school attendance would be 92.6%).

Climate Change strategies are in place. Neil Swait complimented the school on their work with this. MF looked at school governance and leadership and felt that MS would be able to help with this. MS asked governors to reflect how best she can do this. **Should the school be recruiting for more governors?** Yes, most definitely. MF has been asking potential parents but to date has not been able to recruit anyone.

7. Safeguarding / Health & Safety

MF shared the Safeguarding Check List that the school is now using. If anything is missing the school will ensure it is covered. S157 has been completed.

PD mentioned that Helen Trelease (independent Safeguarding Advisor) had submitted a very positive and comprehensive report; PD quoted "the children I had the privilege of meeting are a credit to the school and I enjoyed my meeting with them". Helen Trelease noted that children were very knowledgeable about safeguarding; no concerns were noted regarding safeguarding and the children were very happy. PD felt that all governors visiting the school should be aware of safeguarding and this should be added to the Monitoring Visit.

8. Review Vision, & Ethos

Having looked at other Trusts, the CEO has considered how the Trust schools present themselves. Vision, Ethos, Missions Statement, Strap Lines will now be Vision (embrace learning opportunity, inspire ambition, celebrate individuality), Values (which concerns capabilities of the whole child and how they can be the best they possibly can) using advocacy, creativity, relationships and leadership; Lived Experience (capabilities curriculum, enrichment curriculum. The same curriculum is used for all children including Woodlands Skills Centre, social development & life skills, steering groups, House Captains, trauma-informed schools, rights respecting the school's UNICEF, Visible Learning and others.

MF asked the governors to consider the above and feedback with any thoughts/suggestions for the future Vision, Values and Lived Experience.

KW and Rachel Jenkin (ARB Teacher) will review the curriculum offer as soon as possible.

9. **EYFS Statutory Framework**

EYFS have updated their curriculum offer and this is on the website. The Early Years children are making very good progress.

10. **St Stephen's Pre-School**

There is a new manager who is looking at the curriculum offer. Staff have updated their paediatric First Aid training. Pre-School numbers are very good – 25 on role with maximum of 20 at one time.

11. **Parental Views & Engagement**

This will be carried out in the summer term. Parents are happy to make their views known and the school's "open-door" policy facilitates this relationship. The last parent survey was very positive.

12. **Compliance**

Report by exception - Cyber Security, GDPR, Health & Safety

All staff have completed the first 2 sections of Cyber Security. Teachers will complete the 3rd stage next week. GDPR and Health & Safety Policies are up to date and on the website. The governors were satisfied with this and raised no questions.

13. **Set Term Dates**

These have been agreed and are on the website.

14. **Governor Monitoring & Training**

Monitoring/Visits

- Improvement Plan priorities (JH/PD) - **this was discussed at the Working Party and will be followed up this term**
- Online safety (JH/PD) - **carry forward**
- Safeguarding (JH/PD) - Safeguarding audit completed
- Curriculum (JH/PD) - discussed, full audit completed
- SEND (JH/PD) – **carry forward**

Agree monitoring and working groups for next term

- **Improvement Plan priorities (JH/PD)**
- **PPG impact and provision for next year (JH/PD) – MF will Email with a date**
- **PE impact and provision for next year (JH/PD) – MF will Email with a date**
- **Likely Improvement Plan priorities for next academic year (JH/PD)**
- **Safeguarding (PD)**

MS would like to accompany JH and PD on a school improvement visit which will be arranged.

Governor Training

JH – Safeguarding 17/11/22, CS 2/12/22; SEND 30/1/23

KW – Cyber Security (CS) 30/11/22, SEND 30/1/23

PD – CS 2/11/22, SEND 30/1/23

BS – CS 15/12/22.

Training Overdue – to be completed as soon as possible

- SH to complete Safeguarding and Prevent training and a local governance course
- All governors have completed Cyber Security training, except SH
- Skills Audit required from SH.

Governors to Email copies of certificates to AC so that records can be updated.

Chair's meeting with CEO

The Chair's Report has been made available to all.

The Improvement Plan has been covered in item 6; attendance has been covered in item 6.

The CEO reminded all governors to make themselves familiar with all new policies and amendments (which are on the website) and Confide.

The CEO was very positive about everything.

15. Policies

All policies are up to date and compliant, and are on the website. The governors were happy with this.

16. Any Other Business

Brief matters for notification only. None.

17. DONM

KW asked if the meeting could be held during the daytime. This can be changed back to the evening if a potential new governor isn't available during the day.

The date of next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 28th June at **10am**.

Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Ann Cullum

Local Governance Officer

Distribution List:

Joan Heaton – Co-opted Governor (Chair)

Maura Furber – Head Teacher

Kathy Walsh – Staff Governor

Paul Dickens – Co-opted Governor (Vice Chair)

Sophie Hughes – Co-opted Governor

Bonnie Soanes – Co-opted Governor

Will Hermon – Executive Head/CEO

Steve Tavener – Chair of Trust Board