

Standards and Curriculum Committee

Minutes:

15th October 2024

5pm

Held at Landscope School house.

Present: Kate Evans (Chair)
Nicky Dunford (CEO)
Max Thomas (MT)
Christine Cottle (CC)

In Attendance: Oliver Heathman (OH) - Moorland Hub LB Representative
Corinna Tigg (CT) – East Devon Hub LB Representative
Joanna Hooper (JH) - Mid Devon LB Representative
Charlotte Roe (Governance Professional)

Lizzie Lethbridge (LL) – Director of Education
Rebecca Cox (Westcotts)
Andy Keay (AK) – Director of School Improvement (for item 8)

Minutes: Nicol Bush (Clerk to the Trust)

**PLEASE NOTE - The underlined text was the Director of Inclusion (Fran Mcloughlin) response retrospectively as she did not attend the meeting.*

No	Item	Action
1.	The meeting opened with the election of Chair, nominations were brought forward, and the meeting agreed for Christine Cottle to become Chair and Kate Evans to become Vice Chair (To begin Autumn 2 S&C meeting)	
2.	Welcome and apologies The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome and apologies were accepted from Cheryl Mathieson.	
3.	Declarations of interest The CEO is a trustee of the Bearnas Education Foundation. Kate Evans is Director for Education of the Good Shepherd Trust, Diocese of Guildford. There were no other Declarations of Interest.	
4.	Any other business There were no comments.	
5.	Approval of last meeting minutes For approval: The minutes of the meeting held on 9 th July 2024 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair electronically.	
6.	Matters arising from minutes of 9th July 2024 (not on the agenda) 6.5.9 Issue with iPad log in usage. It was noted by the GP that the DCEO had this in hand. 6.7 Pupil Surveys The DoE advised that the EIT were sending out a pupil survey before half term, so results would be available by the next S&C meeting. 6.9 Notifying about Ofsted Inspections The GP explained that the process of Ofsted inspection notification between the GP and the DoE was working well and was now in hand.	

	<p>The following Matters arising from previous meetings were asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regarding the comparison of EYFS pupil outcomes with the Devon outcomes and a question around the need for data around SEND and Pupil Premium. AK explained there would be a clearer understanding on all data after the verified data drop in December. AK added that all schools were now finally on the same system, therefore easier to analyse the whole data.</i> • <i>Pupil Premium Gap- A LAC Chair previously raised that it would be useful to look at the gap for the outgoing Y6 (now in Y7) particularly at the Phonics data and the PPG gap from Phonics to Y6. If we looked at those Schools/Pupils that were in the Trust when those pupils were in Y1, what was the value added through being in the Trust for those Pupil Premium children? Had the Trust narrowed the pupil's achievement gap?</i> <p>AK said that some of that data was not available, and many schools had joined since then and the data would be skewed but would investigate further.</p>	AK
7.	<p>Governance (The ToR was circulated to the Trustees prior to the meeting) Annual Review of Constitution and Terms of Reference to check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership is appropriate • Duties remain relevant <p>The meeting reviewed the Terms of Reference and agreed that all duties had been covered during the year and it aligned with the Scheme of Delegation. The Trustees raised some questions regarding action plans. It was agreed to recommend the amended ToR to go to Board of Trustees for final approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The CEO proposed the following change to 6.2: The Committee will ensure that Action Plans are drawn up and agreed in respect of any external inspection including actions to be taken, they will then monitor the timely implementation of all observations and recommendations, together with progress reports to the inspecting authority where required.</i> 	
8.	<p>Focus: Analysis and evaluation of pupil outcomes and targets for the year (via PowerPoint/reports circulated before the meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EYFS- AK reported that overall Trust progress had been negatively impacted by two schools that joined the Trust during the year and that achievements had dropped from 69%. (which aligned with the national average) to 67%. A Quarter of the children who did not get their GLD were from those two schools. 66% of the 66 children did not achieve their word reading and writing. 44% did not achieve Maths, Number and Number Patterns and 30% did not achieve their Self-regulation/managing self, all of which contribute towards good levels of development. • Phonics- Across the Trust, the majority of schools were well above the national figures. 41 did not pass phonics screening, 21 of which were at 3 schools. All children who did not pass their Phonics screening had been identified and targeted with specific Phonics support. <p>A Trustee asked, <i>how do school targets contribute to and inform the Trust targets?</i> AK explained that a school review form had been created which was used to challenge the data. AK added once the data drop happened in December, the targets would be reviewed with AH's and Teachers. The document would remain an open working progress document.</p> <p>The DoE added that the performance targets were built into this year's AH appraisals, which was another way of ensuring accountability as well as accurate and realistic predictions.</p> <p>S&C Committee to approve targets for 2024-2025 The meeting approved the targets and would be revisiting them at the mid-year S&C meeting following the mid-year data drop.</p>	

9. **Focus: Academy Improvement Planning
(Presentation with plan(s) circulated before the meeting)**

The following questions were asked:

- *How would progress and impact be measured each term?*

The DoE explained that the EIT team had been approaching the milestones and that each member of EIT had been asked to each take on board an ATSIP key priority and add in their own milestones and costings. The intent was the milestones were written for a yes/no response and from there evidence could be built to cross reference the milestones to the reviews. The DoE said this was currently in progress.

- *Regarding the 3 Best start in life documents and the proposed gold standard, do you feel the gold standard plan reflects the Ofsted recommendations?*

The DoE explained that the 4 documents (3 best start in life and the Strong Foundations documents) were going to be built as descriptors into the final plan. The DoE added that the strong foundations document had been circulated to the leaders and had been added to the AH (Academy Headteacher) meetings. The DoE said that an audit of practice across the Trust had been started and that the 4 documents were at the forefront of that, all of which set the expectations for the gold standards.

- *Referring to the priorities around the Relational Approach, how will the feedback of parents and pupils be fed into the evaluation of the plan?
How will the Trust gauge the views of parents and pupils?*

The DoE said that Fran Mcloughlin (Director of Inclusion) had the relational approach as a milestone priority and was compiling a survey to get the parent viewpoint.

One of the Trust targets this year was to help parents and pupils understand more about RA. Part of this is to update the IHH website with parent friendly info and send info to schools to share with parents. Early summer term we will do a parental survey on inclusion including RA. Pupil voice is a part of our inclusion reviews and LSC days

- *SEND- How would pupil outcomes for SEND and parents feedback be included in the evaluation plan? Hopefully through the Power BI I will be able to do improved data analysis by area of need, level of support etc. Parent feedback will feed through as above. How would the quality of provision for SEND be validated and verified? Through Ofsted reports, Inclusion Reviews and feedback from Inclusion leads on their work with schools. I am currently planning in work on sampling provision maps in January as a priority as I feel there is a lot of variances between these. How would the Trust quality assure the judgements around the provision of SEND? I would expect that AH discuss these judgments through PP meetings and hub DoSIs include this in their meetings with AH, it will also be reflected in LSC feedback. Our approach as IH is to be curious and question our own and each other's findings and work*

The DoE responded that one of the aspects of the key priorities was the Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provisions (OAIP) and the Inclusion Hub had attended and received training and were working with external agencies to ensure the practice met Local Authority expectations and added she would ask the DoI for a more in-depth answer to this question. If Trustees are interested in this area they can read more on the Devon website here <https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/ordinarily-available-inclusive-provision/> All schools attended our initial training and this is being

DoE

followed up through AH meetings and SENDCo network meetings held termly. Schools have been asked to start the OAIP audit and this will be shared with DoI. OAIP is a national agenda and one we want to be at the forefront of as it is helpful to all and harmful to none.

- A Trustee added that SEND was a focus for the Summer, which would hopefully provide more answers on this subject and show the added value the Trust were adding for SEND pupils. I did send a SEND report to Charlotte and Christine but was told this is only needed for the summer term, I have attached it in case useful. I would find it useful to know in plenty of time exactly what Trustees want and when. As IIH we are currently discussing how we measure and exemplify small steps of progress for children who are always going to be at BARE. The CEO commented that there had been some work around delivering SEND in a more strategic way, for example setting up resource spaces in schools where support for SEND was needed. Being strategic is my key driver for inclusion, we already offer some high quality support but as the Trust has been through rapid growth and our SEND needs continue to increase we need to ensure our priorities are the right ones. It has been challenging working as DoI alongside my AH role so I am looking forward to being able to focus more wholly on the one role. We need to upskill our SENCos, ensure all leaders understand their role in developing inclusion and look at the challenges we face in meeting needs. I would like to be able to link up with Dols in other MATs so we can learn from good practice. Setting up Littleham with a high quality resource base is paramount and we may be able to develop future bases too. I would also like to be able to invest more time to understanding disadvantage and the challenges across the Trust.
- How will pupil outcomes be factored into the evaluation of the plan each term?

The DoE answered that the team had started to unpick data which would become a baseline for the impact. Part of the plan would be to look at the improving outcomes of GLD and track this current year through and to look at the progress made all the way through to KS1.

- Attendance- Will schools be held to account for targets for reducing absence/persistent absence and improving punctuality, was there a need to focus on vulnerable groups?

The DoE responded attendance had been a large feature for EIT and had been a focus at the recent Academy Head's Day. Pete Halford had unpicked the new attendance document and EIT were looking at other Trusts' approach to improving attendance. Vulnerable groups were separately tracked in each school.

The DoE said she had also carried out some Ofsted training and had supported AH's with tracking and analysing attendance.

- How confident were schools to use assessment data, to adapt and shape their curriculum sequence/delivery and for Teachers to adapt day to day teaching?

The DoE commented that there was a varied picture at the moment, and it was a complex situation, but work was being done to improve monitoring of the curriculum in the Trusts schools. The DoE added that AK had created a comprehensive document that outlined the summative and formative assessment key points.

Clerk

	<p>S&C Committee to approve ATSIP for 2024-2025 The meeting approved the plan and agreed to revisit the plan (to be placed on the item “Matters Arising” on the next S&C agenda)</p>	
10.	<p>Focus: British Values and preparing for life in modern Britain (Verbal report/Presentation)</p> <p>The DoE reported that she had delivered training to the AH’s around PD and how to achieve outstanding PD in an Ofsted inspection. The DoE said she had visited some schools and had done some modelling on pupil questioning.</p>	
11.	<p>Local board reports</p> <p>11.1 Committee to note any additional updates from local board Chairs and from LAC minutes.</p> <p><i>The Chair asked was there more the Trust could do to train and improve the confidence of Governors to gain more consistent feedback to the LACs given the difference in reporting on the visit notes especially around British Values?</i></p> <p>A LAC Chair commented that some Governors may not have known what was needed for that particular focus.</p> <p>The DoE added that there were lots of resources and in-house training available and it would be good for Governors to have a consistent understanding of the broad scale of the British Values and how well PD was developing in their school.</p> <p>The GP commented that the British Values topic would be added to summer/autumn Governor’s training.</p> <p>The Moorland LAC Chair had the following questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PP- was there more detail around the white paper available?</i> <p>The CEO explained that she had gone through in detail back in February but added that she would review the paper again. The CEO clarified that PP money should be used to the benefit of all children as well as the PP children, for example: TA’s, expertise etc and any leftover money was to support families in need financially.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Was there a Trust-wide policy around Greater Depth?</i> <p>The Chair noted that this issue could be investigated after the next data review and added to the Spring 2 agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Was there a strategy within the Trust of diverting families to other schools with a low PAN.</i> <p>The CEO said the Trust did try to channel families to other schools where chosen schools were full.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Trustee added that the birth rate had plummeted over the last 4 years and asked, is the Trust monitoring the number of pupils born and the impact that would have on the upcoming cohorts?</i> <p>The CEO commented that the DCEO had been tracking this and was working with the Local Authority to find out what was in the catchment area. The Trust was continuing to do everything it could to promote the schools such as open days, banners and social media to create interest.</p> <p>The CEO added that the Trust were currently working on a strategy with the Local Authority, where funding would be offered to create spaces in schools for a nursery. This would be covered in more detail in the CEO report at the Board of Trustees meeting.</p> <p>11.2 Trustees to approve the Terms of Reference for the Local Advisory Committees – this was deferred to the next meeting</p>	<p>GP</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
12.	<p>ETHOS Minutes</p> <p>The Ethos minutes from across the LAC’s were circulated before the meeting and there were no comments made.</p>	
13.	<p>Action Plans</p>	

	<p>Action plans from previous term to be presented to Trustees to include progression. There were no action plans circulated prior to the meeting. The meeting rolled this item over to 15.</p>	
14.	<p>Safeguarding CEO/DoE to give any safeguarding updates</p> <p>The CEO reported that CPOMs across the Trust had been implemented with some minor amendments needed. The Trust strived to ensure consistent reporting of safeguarding and be accessible to the right people. Alex Waterman continued to lead Safeguarding for all schools across the Trust, delivering training and carrying out monthly focus work. The CEO added that AW had been recently working on online safety after setting up a Filtering and Monitoring group (MM, Limbtec, GS) The CEO said that she felt Trust schools were well ahead and in a healthy position with Safeguarding. <i>The Chair asked Did a more detailed report go to the Board of Trustees meeting?</i> The CEO explained that AW prepared a Safeguarding report 2x a year and AW carried out audits on a rolling programme, which was a robust form of making sure schools were properly monitored. The Chair requested that the S&C meeting have the detailed Safeguarding report from AW going forward. The GP agreed to ask the Safeguarding Trustee for clarification.</p>	GP
15.	<p>Trust Risk Register – Trustees to consider report on the following risk categories: - Safeguarding Education Standards and Achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At what point did amber schools on the Trust Risk Register need an action plan, how does the Trust choose who has an improvement plan? <p>The DoE said that RAG (Red-Amber-Green) rating done by the EIT was linked to indicators such as when the schools were due Ofsted inspections etc. The EIT ran a health check on every aspect of each school which linked to the school review and the DoE then met up with the AH after each termly visit to look at RAG rating against the schools. The health check determined whether the school went onto a Tier 3 plan. The DoE added the process was in depth but was a work in progress. The Chair suggested revisiting with a more in-depth discussion on the following standing items on the agenda for the next S&C meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 3 plans and whether they had arisen from an Ofsted inspection or the Trusts self-evaluation. How the Trust use the Risk Register, who populates it and who was held account for it? <p>The CEO said that the DCEO had recently been tasked with re-jigging the Risk Register, but the document/areas of risks needed a more in-depth review. The GP advised that the Risk areas chosen, were taken from the ToR and additional risk areas could be added. The Chair suggested that once the Risk register has been reviewed and amended, the document should come through to the S&C meeting for review and discussion.</p>	<p>EIT/GP/ CLERK</p> <p>CEO GP/CE O/DCE O</p> <p>GP/CL ERK</p>
16.	<p>Strategic Plan - School Improvement and Safeguarding 16.2 Review of 2024/2025 plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust monitoring of pupil performance- to be revisited after the next data review. Ensure adequate capacity for EIT for when the Trust grows. <p>The meeting discussed the workload and timeframe of reports and the submitting of questions, in order to give enough time for in-depth research and response in time for the meeting.</p>	

	<p>The GP asked the Trustees to alert the GP/Clerk on when questions are added to the question sheets for future meetings to ensure that the questions were forwarded on to the officers in a timely manner.</p> <p>It was agreed for the Clerk to remind the Trustees of available reports and give a deadline for submitting of questions when sending out the agenda/covering email. The meeting agreed there should be adequate time for the submission / circulation of reports to allow for reading and posing of questions.</p> <p>It was agreed that the deadline for submitting questions, would be the Thursday before the meetings in future.</p>	Clerk
17.	<p>Policies</p> <p>17.2 Special Needs and Disability policy</p> <p>17.3 Safeguarding policy</p> <p>17.4 Supporting pupils with medical conditions and administering medicines <i>Represented from previous meeting</i></p> <p>17.6 Curriculum policy – this was deferred</p> <p>17.7 Teaching and Learning policy – this was deferred</p> <p>17.8 Relationships Policy</p> <p>17.9 Early Career Teachers policy</p> <p>There were no comments brought forward and the meeting agreed the above policies (apart from the Curriculum Policy and the Teaching and Learning Policy).</p>	Clerk
18.	<p>Evaluation of governance impact</p> <p>Review performance and value of meeting– Trustees to reflect on the effectiveness of the meeting and how it positively impacts the Stakeholders of the Link academy Trust particularly the pupils.</p> <p>Quote of the meeting- “One of the best standards and Committee team meetings I have seen, it was very robust and having the EIT member join the meeting was valuable” (Westcotts comment)</p> <p>The Chair felt that the discussion around British Values was strong, and everyone participated well. The discussion highlighted the gaps, in particular the training needed for LAC members and trustees around the British Values.</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.07pm

Signed by the Chair.....on 10th December 2024.