



Reydon Primary School Ofsted Success

It is great to be able to report that the hard work of the staff at Reydon Primary School, supported by the central Trust team, has been recognised by Ofsted. In a report published in March the school received a good rating in all areas and a good overall. This is a tremendous achievement for Jo Viner and her team and for the governors at the school. The Ofsted report, in terms of governance, noted:

“The local governing body works closely with the school’s leaders to develop an in-depth understanding of the strengths of the school, and the areas where it needs to improve. Governors visit the school regularly and ensure that they are able to draw on a variety of evidence to enable them to have an accurate understanding of the progress that pupils are making”

In terms of the work of the Trust more widely, the report noted: “Where necessary, the trust has supported the school by providing training for teachers and other staff to improve the quality of teaching. Staff also spoke positively about the support that they get from other schools in the trust to help them to assess pupils’ work more accurately and provide effective intervention where necessary. Leaders said that they appreciate the regular challenge provided by representatives of the trust to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress”.

A very big thank you to all those across the North Suffolk hub that have supported Reydon on its journey to this great result.

Major Developments at ALT Schools

At the time of writing this newsletter, two major developments are going through national approval processes to provide opportunities for young people in Cambridgeshire.

Highfield schools

At Highfield Academies, working in partnership with the County Council, provision is being established through a pilot (which we think may be the first in the country in a school setting) for students aged 19+. This expansion will provide an opportunity for initially up to ten young people with high needs to continue their development within a setting they know. In addition, as this will be provided in a school they already attend, the staff working with them will have first-hand knowledge of their needs. This is, in the first instance, a pilot for two years based at Highfield Littleport pending further building works at Highfield Ely and if successful we hope will become a model on which to build provision for young people who, until now, have had fewer options than most to continue with a quality education experience. Given the extension of the age range to include adults this change will need approval at a national level, following approval at the Regional Headteacher Board, this is anticipated mid to late April following a positive visit from the DFE in late March.



Cromwell Community College

Regional approval, via the Headteacher board for the East of England, has been given for both the expansion of Cromwell Community

College to admit 240 pupils per year and (again a first for the County) to become an “all through” school admitting pupils and students from the age of 3 to 19. This exciting opportunity will provide much needed extra places for Chatteris and surrounding villages in Cambridgeshire. Work is underway with the County Council who are meeting the capital costs of the project, to provide the necessary accommodation to ensure this new provision can be in place for 2019.

Senior Leadership Conference

As part of our approach to developing the wider leadership of the Trust, Gary Peile met with headteachers across the Trust and the senior leaders from the central team in March. This conference gave leaders the opportunity to reflect on progress across the Trust since its inception five years ago and to take part in planning for the future development of the organisation.

We were delighted, as part of the conference, to meet with the new Regional Schools Commissioner for the East of England, Sue Baldwin, and to learn from the experiences of Martyn Collin who had been both a headteacher, Executive Headteacher as well as an Interim CEO of a Trust in the Midlands. Leaders were also able to share some of their experiences of leading on key areas of work that are currently taking place across the Trust. At the time of writing, we are working through the outputs from the conference and expect to be able to update Governors at the hub events during this term on our plans to enable the Trust both to continue to support all schools and at the same time flourish so we meet the objectives of all schools being recognised by Ofsted as providing a good standard of education and ensuring all our pupils progress and attain at the very best levels they can.



Dates for your Diaries

The next ALT Governor sessions are booked and you will receive further details very soon. The session will include a Trust update, responsibilities for new legislation regarding GDPR, discussion on the consultation paper for governance restructure, and cover some areas highlighted in the governor survey.

Tuesday 15th May 2018: 6pm in Ipswich

Wednesday 16th May 2018: 6pm in North Suffolk

Thursday 17th May 2018: 6pm in Chatteris

Thursday 17th May 2018: 2pm in Ely



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Governor Survey



Thank you to all governors that completed the Survey that went out last term. Whilst not a statutory requirement, it is good practice to carry out surveys and the information gleaned will ultimately support school improvement. Contributions are greatly valued, are acted upon when appropriate, help us plan effectively for training and feedback sessions and are seen as a positive way to collate the views of our governors.

The full results of the survey will be available on the ALT website after the Easter break, but some headlines are:

84% of responses felt that one or two training sessions per year is sufficient

Geographical location was felt by some (Cambridgeshire Hub) to be relevant when deciding whether to attend governor sessions

71% of governors felt they are fully aware of their responsibilities as a governor – with the remaining 29% being partially aware

Four schools expressed concern about how to recruit and retain governors

97% of governors said they felt their work is valued

Governors are overwhelmingly supportive of schools

Governance Restructure Consultation

“All boards need to regularly review their governance arrangements and MATs are no different”.

In response to this statement from the DFE, the Board of Trustees are reviewing the structure of governance throughout the Trust and how this can be adapted to improve effectiveness. As part of this review, a consultation period will run from 16th April to 18th May 2018, including discussion at the governors sessions planned for w/c 14th May.

Please look out for a consultation document that is being sent to all governors giving further details of the proposals.

Supporting Schools Mental Health and Safeguarding

Several developments are taking place by the Trust to support schools in these key areas.

As part of a wide-ranging review of services to support good mental health in 2017 through the publication of a green paper on Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision, the government proposes to require all schools to have a designated senior lead for mental health. To support this development, the Trust is arranging training, and meeting the training cost for a designated person at each school who will undertake this role. In addition, the Chief Executive has called together a small group of school staff who are undertaking work already to improve mental health support to help the Trust with its wider role to support all schools in this important work. Further information on progress in this work will be provided to local governing bodies during the year.

The Trust is also aware of the need to keep safeguarding arrangements under review at school and Trust level. Two developments are coming forward during the next year or so to support schools in meeting their safeguarding duty. The first of these relates to supporting the collation of data and information across a school. A new system is being purchased for all schools to both provide accurate data for schools and to enable leaders to have an accurate assessment of any concerns to be addressed at school level (as well as then providing the Trust with information on which to base its own work to support schools and their students). The expectation is that this system will reduce (and hopefully remove) the need for paper records.

In addition, following a successful implementation at an ALT school, it has been decided to roll out a new access system for schools over the coming two years. The vast majority of the costs of this system will be met centrally and will equip schools with an online system of managing visitors to schools including a store of DBS records for frequent visitors and the production of visitor badges.

At the time of writing, arrangements are being made for both systems to be shown in detail to DSLs and headteachers in the coming term.