

Directors Meeting Minutes 6th November 2015 8am

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (Executive Head), Mrs H Bowman (HB) (Chair of Directors), Mr P Halifax (PH) (Vice Chair of Directors), Mrs S Cockayne (SC) (Director), Mrs M Havelock-Crozier (MHC) (Director), Mrs C Humphries (CH) (Director), Mr G Wood (GW) (Director), Mrs L Brown (LB) (Business Manager)
Clerk to Directors: Mrs A Howard

PL started the meeting with a prayer.

1. **Apologies** - Mr A Farrington (AF) (Director). PL informed the Directors that AF wished to resign from his position due to pressures of work. PL suggested approaching Julie Smith, who had previously been a Howard Governor. GW asked whether it was a requirement with the FMGS for someone with financial qualifications to be on the Board of Directors, but LB said it is no longer a requirement to have a trained accountant. LB herself has substantial experience of dealing with school financial matters as well as limited company accounts, sole trader accounts, vat, paye and holds both the AAT and CSBM Qualifications. It was noted that both PH, GW and SC all have private sector finance experience and SC who has been appointed to act as the MAT's internal auditor (voluntary role) also had experience of working with auditors. The MAT would also at least for the first 1 – 2 years continue to obtain support (currently Entrust) from an external accountant which would involve regular visits and include the production of the March accounts return and year end accounts ready for submission to the Auditors. LB hoped that all Directors will continue to question and take an interest in the financial affairs of the school. It was agreed that Julie Smith be approached. HB advised that she would write a letter of thanks to AF for all his hard work and support; he would be welcomed back to the Board of Directors if his circumstances changed or would perhaps be able to take a role in the LAG.
2. **Pecuniary Interest** - The pecuniary interest register was made available for viewing, no new declarations were made. LB reminded Directors and Members that they should declare if they are related to each other or to employees. PH reported that he had talked to a member of Kings Bromley Cricket Club and a joint meeting between the school and the cricket club could be arranged in the future to discuss possible shared development of the cricket club building and site. PL would like to see a new building with a nursery/space for Care Club/holiday clubs on the ground floor.
3. **Minutes from last meeting** - The minutes were agreed.
4. **Safeguarding** - GW was thanked for doing a lot of work to summarise the policy. PL advised Directors that it was important that the Heads of Schools should be the Designated Safeguarding Leads for each school, with PL as Academy Safeguarding Lead overall. He agreed with HB that the Heads of School should still consult with PL for each safeguarding incident. As there are instances where the Academy Safeguarding Lead and the school's Safeguarding Lead are absent, there should also be a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in each school: a named person who would be able to take the details in the first instance or be able to communicate with outside bodies. The Deputies will need Level 2 training, as will MHC as the Director responsible for Safeguarding. PL and the Designated Safeguarding Leads will attend safeguarding training and cascade down to staff. CH asked whether the Heads of School have received recruitment training, but at present recruitment is undertaken by PL and HB; LB intends to undergo training in this. It was agreed that the Safeguarding Policy is a very big document, linking into other policies, but the summary was easier

for parents and staff to understand, with GW suggesting that the names of the Safeguarding Leads be moved to the top of the document. CH asked whether the term 'Trust' or 'Academy' is being used, but it was agreed that the term 'Academy' is being used to cover the three schools. CH suggested that there could be a set of definitions at the start of each policy and in the Handbook, giving the meaning of specific terms e.g. academy, head of school, employer.

5. **Policies for review – Safeguarding** - This has been covered in Item 4. LB advised that the policy will be put on the website. *Financial Procedures* - This will be covered in Item 9 on FMGS. The Members will be appointing auditors shortly. PL said that in becoming an Academy there have been a large number of things to change, but CH advised that TSSMAT is ahead of other schools and it was not a cause of concern.
6. **Pay Policy and Pay Structure Update** - CH advised that the document is much the same as before; the County Council document has been retained with some amendments. CH presented the draft policy to Directors and asked them to consider certain points:
 - With regards to staff wishing to progress through threshold, TSSMAT needs to have a standard document reflecting its own process for appraisal which PL can decide on with CH. Over the appraisal period of one year, teachers should show progress and be consistently good to outstanding to be considered for threshold progress. For new teachers who arrive part-way through the appraisal period, CH recommended that a teacher arriving after Christmas should have two terms of appraisal, but a teacher arriving at Easter should have four terms. She also suggested getting a reference from the teacher's previous employer, with the teacher's written approval, on the last two appraisal periods, including any competency procedures put in place. CH thought that the reference format could be reviewed and improved.
 - PL agreed that for teachers working at more than one school in TSSMAT, if they move up the pay scale at one school this will automatically apply to their post at the other school(s).
 - The regrading policy should be reviewed, with a process to reflect any changes in a particular role.
 - Directors agreed that three Directors will sit on the Pay Committee and Pay Appeal Committee. They will review the policy and submit it to the Board of Directors for approval. With regards to pay review, PL mentioned that the performance management appraisers will continue to review and set targets; John Bowman has assisted with this in the past, but as he is now a Member he will be unable to do this as the Directors report to the Members on the executive headteacher's performance management. CH suggested that someone should act as an external sounding-board, but it was decided that for this first year it would be carried out internally. CH stressed that realistic objectives should be put in place.
 - CH recommended a criminal check on any staff who have lived or worked overseas.
7. **Parent Questionnaire Responses** – There was a report on the parents' responses to the website and also on the change of holiday dates. The responses were mostly positive in both cases; with regards to holidays, approximately 75% of parents agreed to the change in holiday dates for 2016-2017, so it was decided to go ahead with this proposal.
8. **Finance Update** – LB is continuing to work with Entrust to confirm the maintained school balances and PL and LB reported the cashflow being healthy. LB referred Directors to the budget document that had been emailed prior to the meeting and confirmed that this had been submitted to the Efa. LB advised Directors that it was hoped that reports could be extracted direct from PS Financials after Christmas although further training would be required. GW asked about the buses and LB confirmed that these have been purchased; PL reported that he is now less willing to lend out buses at no charge, as he wishes to protect these assets. There are certain restrictions on hiring out buses and LB is looking into this. HB recommended producing a policy stating terms and conditions for hiring the minibuses. Quotes are being obtained to purchase 40 laptops. Auditors have been invited to tender and Members will be deciding on the appointment on Tuesday.
9. **FMGS** – Directors were asked to consider the document, with the supporting notes. CH raised the issue of her situation, having been appointed before the MAT was formed, on a 3-year contract. It was agreed that there would always be other quotes obtained for services, or a comparison made with Entrust services. CH was asked to complete a Statement of Assurance. The board felt that the

document was an accurate reflection of the MAT's current positions and recognised that there was still some work to do on the policy and procedural elements. It was acknowledged that there was a huge amount to do during the first few months and that developing the MAT's policy and procedures would take time.

10. **Raise Online** - PL talked through the Raise Online data, saying the unvalidated inspection dashboard gives a good summary of the situation: all three schools have met floor standards, with Richard Crosse having very good strengths and few weaknesses, St Mary's having good strengths and few weaknesses and Howard Primary not quite as many strengths as the other two schools, but having fewer weaknesses than in 2014.
 - Richard Crosse has a good absence rate. There is a good level of development in Foundation, good phonics in Y1 and good results at the end of KS1, with the average point score significantly above the national average. The FSM children are doing well, the gap with their peers has narrowed; the FSM children did well in reading and maths, not quite so well in writing. In KS2 all the FSM children attained the expected level 4 but are not achieving the higher Level 5s. However they are making good progress in value-added terms. For KS2 children, spelling has been identified as a problem and so the schools are starting a new system of 10-15 minutes spelling each day, working on spelling patterns. It was suggested that the new spelling scheme and Zap spellings could go on the website. PL said he had been disappointed by the KS2 results; although still higher than the national average results, the gap was closer. There were three L6 Maths results, but it was felt that some children attempting to gain L6 had not gained mastery of some aspects of L5 maths. PL felt that the new curriculum would help children to ensure mastery of all topics.
 - At St Mary's, absence rates were good. There was a good level of development at Foundation Stage, 2 pupils did not achieve the phonics test in Y1 and there were good results at KS1. Results at KS2 were disappointing but there were reasons for pupils not making the expected progress.
 - Absence rates at Howard Primary were not quite so good, but it is hoped they will improve this year. There was a good level of development at Foundation for three of the four pupils, one pupil has SEN. Results at KS1 were above the national average, with maths being a real strength at this level. At KS2 it is an improving picture with much value added progress and good reading. Maths will continue as a focus for improvement. Years 4 and under are looking promising.
11. **Self-Review** - PL reported pleasing visits to Howard Primary and Richard Crosse earlier in the term, although there are some concerns with one teacher at Howard Primary. Another lesson observation is planned for 7/12/15 for this teacher and in the meantime the teacher is receiving 6 weeks of support. The previous day PL reported a delightful visit to St Mary's, but there are still some gaps in the learning to be addressed. Behavioural issues in Class 4 have resulted in a new strategy being tried, which is showing results.
12. **Any Other Business** -
 - MHC showed a leaflet about 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
 - PL reported that Mrs Bowring is pregnant, so her post as SENCO and Year 6 teacher will need to be covered during maternity leave.
 - The local authority has produced a school categorisation list, in which Richard Crosse is A, St Mary's is B and Howard Primary is C (up from D).
 - PL asked Directors to look at a letter received from a solar farming enterprise in Colton; Directors advised him to disregard the letter.
 - At Howard Primary, a pupil with medical and educational needs may lose one-to-one support funding, but the school is appealing against this; the panel will make the decision on 17 November.
 - French guests, a headteacher and teacher, have visited TSSMAT and been impressed by what they have seen.
 - PL attended training on dealing with appeals for places, receiving useful information. He was advised to leave Howard Primary Admissions Policy as it is.
 - Richard Crosse have received an application from a family who have moved into the village for their 3 children to attend the school. After discussion, this was agreed, but it was noted that there is increasing pressure on school places, class sizes and space within the school.

- A parent has complained about the quality of school meals at Howard Primary and PL will have a meeting to discuss this with her.
- It was agreed to set up the LAGs at the next Directors' meeting.
- MHC advised that there will be a Big Breakfast event at St Mary's on 14th November.

Item	Action to be taken	Action by whom	Action by when
1	Julie Smith to be approached with regards to joining the Board of Directors	Paul Lovern	04/12/15
1	A letter of thanks to be sent to Ashley Farrington	Heather Bowman	04/12/15
2	To arrange a joint meeting with Kings Bromley Cricket Club committee	Paul Lovern/ Peter Halifax	tba (after consideration by KB CC committee)
6	Pay policy: prepare standard document for appraisal, review reference format and regrading policy	Caroline Humphries/ Paul Lovern	04/12/15
6	Carry out headteacher performance management	Directors' sub-committee/ Paul Lovern	Before end autumn term
6	Undertake criminal checks on staff who have lived or worked abroad	Leanne Brown	Ongoing
8	Prepare a policy/statement on the hire of school minibuses	Leanne Brown	04/12/15
12	Set up LAGs.	Directors	04/12/15