

Minutes of Directors' Meeting 16 October 2020 8am via Google Meet

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (CEO and Director), Mrs H Bowman (HB) (Chair of Directors), Mr C Bradshaw-Smith (CBS) (Director), Mrs S Cockayne (SC) (Director), Mr P Halifax (PH) (Vice-Chair of Directors), Mrs M Havelock-Crozier (MHC) (Vice-Chair of Directors), Mrs C Humphries (CH) (Director)

Also present for Item 5: N Jarrett (NJ) (Head AS), R Mills (RM) (Head TH)

Also present for Item 5, 6 and 7: J Wynn (JW) (Head SM)

Also present for Item 10: Ms S Cole (SCo) (Finance Manager).

Also present for Items 6, 8 and 9: Mrs J Bowman (JBo) (Data Protection Officer DPO)

Clerk: Mrs A Howard (AH)

RC: Richard Crosse

SM: St Mary's

TH: The Howard

AS: Anson School

SLT: Senior Leadership Team

CIF: Condition Improvement Funding

NQT: Newly qualified teachers

1. **Welcome, Prayer** - PL welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the Directors in the prayer.
2. **Apologies** - No apologies had been received. AH will update the attendance register.
3. **Pecuniary Interest** - Directors were asked to look at the Pecuniary Interest Register on the TSSMAT website and advise AH of any changes to be made as part of the Annual Review.
4. **Minutes of last meetings** - The minutes of the FAR/Directors' meeting held on 18.9.20 were agreed as a true copy by Directors (with a change of 'installed' rather than 'fitted' in Item 5). The minutes will be signed by CBS when the situation allows.
5. **School Updates** -

Anson School

NJ presented a report on AS, saying there had been a good start to the term: the children had returned to school very happy, with little anxiety. There have been a number of experiences for the children to enjoy to help them settle back: the book 'After the Fall' has been used in different areas of the curriculum to promote resilience and moving forward; there has been a Roald Dahl day, a MAT quiz, 'reading dogs' have come into school (this was particularly successful, especially for shy children). Parental consultations have taken place and 54 families joined in a virtual Harvest Festival. The parents have been receptive to the changes in the school start time from 9am to 8.30am and staggered start times. There have been meetings with the PTFA and church leaders to arrange future events. Attendance is at 98%, showing that parents feel that the school is a safe, secure place. It has been a smooth start to the school year, made easier by working with the Office Manager and school staff over the summer. *Confidential Item* Directors asked about NJ's feelings on her move to the school and she said it had been a big change and hard work, but she was finding it a really lovely experience.

The Howard

RM remarked on how much had happened over the recent months and thanked the MAT for the support. She is really happy about the start to the new year and feels the school is in a good place: the children are back in school and happy. RM stressed the importance of nurturing and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health. Parental feedback about the school's actions during lockdown has been very positive. RM reported that a TA is now training for Forest School and the aim is to develop the outdoor learning and encourage teachers to change their pedagogy to use the outdoor classroom as much as possible. The PTFA is very supportive of this. Regarding catch-up in learning,

RM said that routines and good quality teaching were in place to support this; she praised the White Rose Maths course, embedding basic Maths in the approach, and workbooks have been purchased to support the management of the course. The children's reading progress has been analysed; not many children have fallen back. RM considers that the school is offering a rich curriculum, with theme days, such as the Roald Dahl day, language and Maths days, and a MAT quiz. Some positive aspects of the Coronavirus outbreak are that some families seem more settled, enjoying a slower pace of life with children getting more quality time and learning new skills. The downsides of the epidemic have been loneliness and a lack of social interaction. RM mentioned the Reading Spine, with each year group having a range of good quality books; she is very proud of setting this up in the MAT and PL acknowledged the hard work put in by RM, liaising with the school Curriculum champions on this. CH asked how the staff were feeling and RM said they were tired and some had been ill, but as RM did not now have a class responsibility she was able to go into different classes to help and support staff.

St Mary's

JW joined the meeting to present an update on SM, saying he was really pleased at how well the children had settled back into school. Staff had checked on children and parents over the summer to see how they were faring, and nurture packages had been put in place for certain children as a result of this. A few children last year had some behaviour issues, but have returned to school with a nurture and support package and have settled in well this term. The new SEN Hub will be used as a separate specialist area. There was a catch-up programme for all the year groups, with some extra after-school classes for Y6 children. Attendance has been good; there has been one child in self-isolation who has received work to do at home. Classes have formed 'bubbles' using separate toilets and with a TA in each class. The staff are happy with the measures in place; they miss the staff interaction, but can meet online, particularly on a Friday afternoon. There are two new members of staff who are being given support and have settled in well.

6. **Digital Strategy** - PH gave an update on the purchase of Chromebooks and planned digital strategy, following a meeting with Staffs Tech. At the meeting it was confirmed that the licences are transferable, policies and restrictions were discussed and Staffs Tech were able to share their experiences. As a result of this meeting, it was proposed that parents of pupils in Y3 and Y4 should be asked to purchase a Chromebook, complete with insurance, and a set should be kept in school. Children can bring in their own Chromebook, but families will have to sign up to the TSSMAT policies; this will be strictly enforced and will involve some limitations on use, but parents will have the knowledge that safety is paramount. At the end of Y6, the TSSMAT software can be wiped, returning the device to factory settings. Chromebooks will be purchased for staff to use, giving people time to move files and data across from their laptops. Office staff will also be given Chromebooks and PH thought that they (and possibly other staff) should use multifactor authentication to access their accounts, as they have access to sensitive data.

PH went on to explain that there has been a lack of investment in IT by TSSMAT over the years, resulting in old equipment, particularly cabling and network switches. Staffs Tech will put together a proposal for improving the base infrastructure, moving away from individual servers in each school to using cloud servers; cabling will be replaced, the wifi updated, more resilient internet switches installed to give more channels and more speed.

JW considered that from a learning point of view, the system was not good even before the extra demands of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a lack of devices and internet problems. The use of Chromebooks in Y3/4 will free up devices for use by other classes. He said it was important to communicate the advantages of Chromebooks clearly to parents; this proposal has not been rushed into as a result of Coronavirus and Google has been chosen because Google Classroom has been found to be the most suitable.

JBo joined the discussion to say she was looking into Data Protection issues with Chromebooks. She added that some of the older iPads in use in the MAT would need to be replaced and quotes for 20 iPads were being sought. PH mentioned that there can be a safeguarding issue with iPads as,

although you can filter what goes to them, you cannot log what is happening when the iPad is in use.

PL said that Chromebooks would be offered to parents of Y3/4 children to purchase or on a Pay As You Go scheme. Each child will have their own device; Pupil Premium children would be given one of their own as an entitlement and a letter will be sent out to all parents asking about their internet connection. If parents were struggling to pay, they would be advised to contact the school. In the case that parents did not wish to pay, but this was not due to financial concerns, the child would be given a device but would not be able to take it home. It was important to gain parental support for this scheme as it was too expensive for the MAT to provide free Chromebooks for all - it would cost around £36k to pay for the present proposed scheme. PL confirmed to CBS that although the proposed scheme was a trial, it was intended to learn from this first year and there would still be a need for the upgrade of underlying infrastructure, so the MAT planned to continue with this digital strategy. PH agreed that it was a case of 'when' not 'if' for the implementation of the digital strategy. At the recent LAG meeting, support for the scheme was expressed by community members, PTA members and parents.

JW pointed out that the scheme was proposed for Y3/4 children, as they were at an ideal age; R - Y2 were too young and Y5/6 would only have a short time on the scheme.

The devices will have to be PAT tested on a regular basis, as there is an issue of liability for the MAT, having bought them.

JBo reported that quotes had been obtained from 3 companies; Directors agreed with JBo and PL that the management of the scheme would be easier with Staffs Tech and approved the quote. PH asked that JBo check that the battery is included in the insurance for the device.

Directors approved the scheme to buy Chromebooks for Y3 and Y4 children, with parents being asked to pay the MAT for these.

7. **Kingswood:** JW informed Directors that a Y5/6 Residential had been planned for this September, but due to the Covid-19 epidemic had been postponed to the end of March 2021. Parents have already paid £40 deposit, but the balance is due at the end of October. However, there is a possibility that the residential may not take place due to Covid-19 and the company providing the residential may go out of business. It was decided that JW should ask to delay the payment of the balance or to change the date of the residential to later this academic year or next September. CH suggested that SCo look into the Risk Protection Register and PH thought a claim could be made under Force Majeure conditions.
8. **Data Protection:** JBo presented the quarterly DPO report, covering the period July - September. There were no issues, but JBo was having difficulty carrying out in-depth monitoring due to the Covid-19 restrictions and had asked staff in the school offices to monitor their schools. JBo went on to present the Annual Data Protection training to the Directors, saying it was a form of Safeguarding, looking at the protection of personal data and special category data. It was necessary to prove compliance with DP regulations and DP should be built into everything from the beginning. Any data holding and processing should be for specific, explicit and legitimate reasons. Directors had responsibility for Data Protection (CH as the named representative). There is an annual schedule of DP review and this year there is a focus on Cyber Security. There has been an audit of DP by PHRP and the report was very positive. JBo said that Staffs Tech had been helpful in identifying the Trust priorities and looking at the cyber risk of the MAT technical assets. CBS asked about the issue of parental consent; JBo explained that a variety of consent forms were used in the MAT and parents can request that data be deleted following the MAT record retention policy.
9. **Policy Updates:** The following policies had been sent to Directors to review: Accounting, Care Club Lone Working, Care Club Mission Statement, Confidentiality, English, FOI Publication, Gifts, Healthy Eating, History, Illness & Accidents, Manual Handling, MAT Due Diligence, MAT Induction, Pandemic Flu, Parent Partnership, Reading, Remote Learning Policy, Whistleblowing. The policies were ratified with no changes.
10. **Finance:** SCo joined the meeting. The P1 Management Accounts were not yet completed. The audit had gone well, with some minor reallocations. The Risk Register has been updated to reflect Covid-

19 conditions, there was nothing to report on the Gift Register and CBS had reviewed Charge Card expenses. SCo reported that the photocopiers (reconditioned models) at RC, SM and TH were becoming increasingly unreliable and she had sent information and quotes obtained from three providers for new or leased machines to Directors. CH had reviewed the photocopiers online; both models had received a good write-up and she thought either model would be suitable. PH gave a critique of the two models based on his experience of working in offices where they were used. Directors agreed with the decision to purchase new machines rather than lease, and accepted the quote from A-stat for a Toshiba model for each of the three schools.

With regards to the CIF applications, PL considered that the report for resubmission by Entrust had been very poorly written, so the resubmission had been rewritten by TSSMAT and another company, AMR Consult, is being approached for future work on applications. SCo reported that two quotes had been received for the roof work at SM, but some work has been done on the roof and it is not leaking at present.

The Salix lighting work at SM has been carried out.

SCo reported that the Scheme of Delegation has been updated, including the new roles of SCo and JBo. This was approved by Directors.

11. **School Update:** As a number of Directors had to leave the meeting, it was decided that the report on RC will be carried over to the next Directors' meeting in November.
12. **HR Update:** CH reported on changes to teachers' pay scales. It is intended that NQTs will move towards receiving £30k by 2022, so, in order to get to that figure, teachers' pay has been increased. CH proposed that the government's recommended increase for all pay points M1-M6, UPS and Leadership be accepted and this was approved by Directors. This pay award would be backdated to 1st September 2020. She advised that standards are now included in pay and conditions. With regards to the Local Government Pension Scheme, CH informed Directors that there was a new cap on exit payments, to be implemented by the end of October. The implications of this will need to be assessed in early 2021.
13. **Health and Safety:** H&S audits are due in November.
14. **Safeguarding** - PL reported that there had been one safeguarding referral at RC. All staff have undertaken L1 Safeguarding training and been given a copy of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document. The SLT have had L2 training. PL is waiting for the Local Authority to offer L3 Safeguarding training for the Head at RC. CH will inform PL about dates for Recruitment refresher training for himself and HB.
15. **Any Other Business** -
CH has purchased Nativity Advent calendars to be given to each school on behalf of the Directors.

Dates of next meetings –

Directors' meetings: 8am on a Friday

20 November

18 December (AGM with Members)

26 February

5 March (with Members)

14 May

18 June (with Members)

9 July

FAR meetings: 8am on a Friday

6 November

22 January

7 May

Members' meetings: 8am on a Friday

18 December (AGM with Directors)

5 March (with Directors)

18 June (with Directors)

LAG meetings: 4pm on a Monday

10 March 4pm at TH

23 June 4pm at SM

Signed.....

Date

Heather Bowman - Chair of Directors

Item	Action to be taken	Action by whom	Action by when
3	Check Pecuniary Interest Register on TSSMAT website and advise AH of any changes in entry.	All Directors AH to update Register	20/11/20
6	Check that battery for Chromebook included in insurance.	JBo	20/11/20
7	Contact Kingswood, look into Risk Protection Register and Force Majeure conditions	JW/SCo	20/11/20
11	Receive RC School Update	EB/Directors	20/11/20
14	L3 Safeguarding training and Recruitment refresher training	EB/PL/HB	tbc