

**Local Advisory Group Meeting
at St Mary's School and via Google Meet
Monday 7 March 2022**

MINUTES

CG	Charlene Gethin, CEO	AH	Alison Howard - Clerk
SC	Sue Cockayne – Director for LAG and Chair of LAG		
HB	Heather Bowman – Chair of Directors		
AA	Antony Allen – Parent Member Richard Crosse		
MHE	Marcella Henley – PTA Member Richard Crosse		
PBu	Phil Burrow- Parent member Richard Crosse		Abbreviations
GP	Gillian Pitchford - Community Member Kings Bromley	RC	Richard Crosse
AR	Anna Redpath - Parent Member St Mary's	SM	St Mary's
CC	Claire Clarke – PTA Member St. Mary's	TH	The Howard
MH	Marie Havelock – Community Member Colton	AS	Anson School
PW	Philippa Wood – The Friends Member Howard	ARE	Working at Age Related Expectation
CB	Chris Billingham – Community Member Elford	HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
		NPQ	National Professional Qualification
EB	Emma Bowring - Headteacher Richard Crosse	SEN	Special Educational Needs
JW	Jon Wynn – Headteacher St. Mary's	EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
RM	Rachel Mills – Headteacher Howard	HT	Headteacher

Attendance : CG, SC, HB, MHE, PBu, CC, MH, PW, CB, EB, JW, RM, AH

1. SC welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting opened with a prayer. Introductions were made for the benefit of PW.
2. **Apologies :** There were apologies from AA and GP.
3. **Pecuniary Interest**
There were no changes to be made to declarations of Pecuniary Interest.
4. **Minutes of last meeting 4.10.21**
These were accepted as a true record and were signed by SC.
5. **Headteacher Reports**
The Howard School: RM presented her report, starting with pupil data: standardised tests in the autumn term have provided data to identify strengths and areas for development. Pupil progress meetings have taken place based on the data. With regards to progress towards SATs, the present Y6 are a challenging year group of 8 children: *confidential item*. The Y4 children, a group of 10, have had a check on Maths tables and the target is for 100% to get more than 20 out of 25 marks. in the Y2 group, *confidential item* 86% are working at the expected level in the combined subjects. In Y1, a group of 4 children, 100% are on track to pass the Phonics screening test. For the 10 children in EYFS, 80% are on track to achieve a good level of development. RM considers that the children are receiving a rich purposeful curriculum with wonderful learning experiences, and the planning across the MAT is a strength. White Rose Maths ensures consistency and it also helps to embed key concepts. The English curriculum is working well and Reading is a strength across the school. Monster Phonics has been embraced by the staff. Peer school reviews are being carried out

at present, looking at consistency across the MAT. It has been an extremely challenging time with regards to staffing this term at TH, but a new secretary and a new cook have now been employed. In Class 3 Mr Challinor is teaching Monday-Thursday and RM is teaching on a Friday, to be replaced by Miss Jennings when she returns to school one day a week after Easter; standards have improved dramatically in this class. A new member of staff has been employed to work one-to-one in school until July. RM is following a NPQ for Executive Leadership, with CG as her mentor; Miss Stretton is following a NPQ in Teaching and Learning, with support from a Maths hub and some financial help towards Maths resources. AA was thanked for the continuing Greenpower project in school, which is now a valuable part of the school curriculum. A student from Derby is working in school. RM thanked CB, who has returned as a volunteer to work with readers in school. RM also wished to thank SC who has given a lot of support to the school and helped to improve staff morale. There have been many enrichment activities following the easing of the lockdown due to the epidemic, including a visit by pupils to a nursing home before Christmas to deliver Christmas gifts and sing carols, a pantomime visit, orienteering, residentials at Whitemoor Lakes and to York, Forest School and a planned 'Great Fire of London' experience. With regards to parent and community liaison, the Parent Forum and Parents Evenings have been a great success and children in Class 3 write pieces for the Mease Valley News. Although it has been a challenging time at TH since Christmas, the children have not been impacted by this and RM thanked the MAT, staff, parents and children for their support.

St Mary's School: JW gave a report on SM, saying that many activities mentioned by RM are experienced consistently across the MAT by all the children. With regards to data, JW stressed that in a small school individual children rather than groups are targeted, with intervention taking place. Due to the Covid epidemic, many children have missed a lot particularly with regards to communication and language and need social and emotional support; a TA is working with children on this. One challenge within SM is a lack of space, due to increased numbers in Nursery, and there are plans to improve this. However, it is also a cause of celebration that 15 children have SM as their first choice school for Reception in September. JW thanked his staff for their resilience during a challenging time, when there have been many absences. The school is providing many opportunities for a wider curriculum, with the residentials, dance and drama, Forest School. One teacher has achieved the Forest School qualification and one member of staff is following HLTA training. Volunteers are now returning to school to help and the school is going into church; the vicar has provided consistent support during the epidemic. The staff have responded positively to a questionnaire about their well-being and are happy in the school.

Richard Crosse School: EB presented the report for RC, stressing the importance of the support given by the HTs to each other within the MAT. With regards to the curriculum, individual pupils are being targeted. It has proved difficult to appoint a TA/breakfast club leader, but the cook has agreed to help at the breakfast club and a TA has now been appointed which will greatly improve the number of interventions taking place to support pupils. Whole school worship is now taking place, which releases teachers to also carry out interventions. With regards to SATs, *confidential item* the Y6 teacher is giving booster sessions twice a week. EB has conducted a learning walk, looking at whole class reading from EY to Y6 and was very pleased with what she saw. A well-being playground is being established, to include an outdoor gym, place for reading, trim trail and traversing trail and EB thanked the PTA for all their hard work in raising funds for this. Father Jeremy is coming into school on a regular basis, taking RE lessons and providing a spiritual lead; also, members of the church community are coming into school as part of the Open Book project. EB was concerned that a group of Y6 boys are showing a decline in effort since coming back to school after lockdown, due to spending a lot of time at home on computer games; their language has also got worse. The Y6 teacher will be having meetings with all parents to raise awareness about this. Pupils have enjoyed a variety of visits and residentials. EB thanked the staff involved with the residentials and also the pupils who were very well behaved and a credit to the MAT. She thanked all the staff for their hard work and also the volunteers who come into school; extra

volunteers would be welcome to help with KS2 readers. EB commented on how nice it was to be working and teaching face-to-face and she was pleased that things were returning to normal. SC thanked the HTs for their reports and thanked the Headteachers and the staff for all their hard work.

6. Trust Updates:

CG's report had been sent to LAG members to read beforehand, but there were no immediate questions. She started by saying a huge thank you to the HTs for their passionate, vibrant approach to their work, but she acknowledged that the last half-term has been difficult. Referring to her report, CG said it was a really positive picture regarding admissions and, in her reviews of the schools, she had found that teaching and learning are very strong. New whiteboards have been put in place and an order for Chromebooks will be placed. Concerning staffing, CG stressed the importance of well-being and a balanced workload. The shortage of cooks has been difficult, as there have not been enough in the MAT to provide flexibility; difficulties in the kitchen can have a big knock-on effect in a school, despite offers of help from volunteers. Staff are now returning from maternity leave, with flexible working arrangements being discussed; it is considered most important to retain talent within the MAT. CG and HB are making two presentations during the coming week to schools considering joining the MAT: *confidential item*. Two new Directors have joined the Board and there is now a wide area of expertise, making the Board stronger.

CG wished to draw the attention of the LAG members to her vision for governance, looking at how the LAGs can impact more on the schools, becoming more strategic and useful. It is proposed that each school should have its own LAG, including the school's Headteacher, a Director, parents, PTA members and Community representatives (e.g. Church, Parish Council, Scouts). CG suggested that a sub-committee could discuss the composition and remit of the LAGs and invited present LAG members to express an interest in joining the sub-committee. HB thought that the new LAG structure would give more say to members about what goes on in each village. Minutes from the different LAG meetings could be sent to each LAG so that ideas are shared.

7. Community Updates

Richard Crosse/Kings Bromley: MHE gave an update on the PTA, saying there were two key members at RC who worked really hard and did not get a great deal of support from other parents. She thanked the RC staff for their support, but said it was important to engage more parents; Covid has had an impact on parental interest in PTA activities. The AGM will take place shortly and will include the Parents' Forum and a fundraising committee. Activities have taken place including a Big Breakfast, a pancake day, a Funky fashion day and raffle tickets have been sold for hampers. The PTA is thrilled to be raising money for the well-being playground and has partnered with the Co-op to raise funds. A Tesco grant has been applied for; a Summer Fayre on 18 June and a carwash are being planned. MHE said that, as a parent, she was really pleased to see the return to normal activities in school, with residential for the children and Parents Evenings.

AA had sent a message, saying he was pleased to see the return of school trips; he considered the residential to Whitemoor Lakes and York a great success and thanked all the staff involved.

PBu said his children had thoroughly enjoyed their residential at Whitemoor Lakes and they were exhausted at the end of it. He thanked all the staff concerned. With regards to the proposed new set-up of LAGs, he considered, as a recent joiner, that a lot of information is passed on at the LAG meetings, but there should be a clearer purpose to the meetings. He thought that increasing parental support and participation will become more difficult as parents will be facing work and economic challenges; it will be important to think more creatively and use the time at the LAG meetings more efficiently. PBu echoed other parents' comments in sending congratulations to the staff on helping children settle back into school.

The Howard/Elford: PW thanked RM and staff at TH for keeping going over a difficult time. She thought that children are having to adjust to a more 'normal' situation in schools and need support with their social and emotional development; at Elford many children are engaging in after-school activities such as the village football team and dance classes, with the cricket season approaching. Not many events have been held by The Friends of the Howard due to Covid, but smaller

fundraising activities have taken place. The Electric Avenue event was a great success and more events are planned for the coming weeks. A new committee has been elected who will shadow the coming events before taking over in September; however the present committee will be on hand to support and assist with events. There is a large sum of money which has been raised and it has been decided to use this to improve the external appearance of the school and provide more play equipment, do some resurfacing and improve the roofing and lighting at the school entrance. Bids have been put in to the Parish Council for money from two housing developments in the village; this could be used for automatic gates, but The Friends will liaise with CG and RM on how the money is used. PW said that a parent who is a surveyor had offered his services to undertake an assessment of the school building; PW herself works on building contracts so could offer expertise in this area. CG and HB confirmed that they are looking at arranging building inspections of all four schools in TSSMAT.

CB agreed that it was good news that automatic gates are being considered and that a school secretary and cook had been appointed. She said that it was appreciated how much the school was contributing to the life of the village; engagements with the village such as Electric Avenue and children's contributions to the village magazine are welcomed. CB thought it was important to consider the purpose of the LAG. She hoped that TH would be able to re-establish contact with the twinned school in France.

St Mary's/Colton: CC gave a report on the PTA, saying that the PTA had been busy with a number of face-to-face events, including a Christmas wreath workshop, Big Breakfast, a tombola at the village Christmas Fayre, Christmas and Valentine discos; a number of events were planned for the coming months, including Easter Bingo, a car wash, Sports Day and a Leavers' event. The bike shelter has been installed and 4 balance bikes and helmets have been purchased for the younger children. Money has been given for dance and drama, books and a new monitor for the library and quotes are being obtained for a partitioning wall in the hall. It is planned to buy commemorative tea towels for the Queen's Jubilee, which may have children's self-portraits or children's portraits of the Queen on them. CC handed out business cards with details of SM's PTA 59 Club and their 'easyfundraising' scheme which provides a steady trickle of money into PTA funds.

MH said how nice it was to hear such positive reports from everyone. She considered that attitudes in the village towards the school were now very positive, with people feeling that SM was an important part of the village and should be supported and that it was going from strength to strength. Jubilee events are planned for Colton and MH finished by saying that SM and the church had raised over £250 for the Children's Society at the Christingle service.

CG asked schools to let Directors know of events taking place as they were keen to be involved. SC thanked the PTA and community members for their reports and asked for further questions, but there were none.

8. LAG member appointment dates:

It was agreed that, with the proposed changes in LAG structure, LAG members should stay on the present LAG committee at present, with a view to joining the new school LAGs if they wished, from September.

9. Any other business

There was no other business.

Date and location of the next LAG meeting 2021-22

4pm 20 June 2022 The Howard/Google Meet

Signed.....
Sue Cockayne, Chair of Local Advisory Group

Date.....