

Local Advisory Group Meeting
Wednesday 22nd March 2016

MINUTES

LAG	Local Advisory Group/s	CM	Claire Malcolm – PTA Member Howard
SEN	Special Educational Needs	CB	Chris Billingham – Community Member Howard
PL	Paul Lovern – Executive Head	ST	Samantha Teece – Parent Member St. Mary’s
HB	Heather Bowman – Chair of Directors	CC	Claire Clarke – PTA Member St. Mary’s
SC	Sue Cockayne – Director for LAG’s	MH	Marie Havelock – Community Member St. Mary’s
AA	Antony Allen – Parent Member Richard Crosse	NJ	Nicola Jarrett – Head of School Richard Crosse
MHE	Marcella Henley – PTA Member Richard Crosse	PH	Pauline Hupfield – Head of School Howard
JH	Jan Higgins – Community Member Richard Crosse	JW	Jon Wynn – Head of School St. Mary’s
PB	Phil Bate – Parent Member Howard	RW	Rebecca Worboys – Trust Administrator

Attendance : PL, HB, SC, AA, MHE, PB, CM, CB, CC, MH, NJ, PH, JW, RW

1. The meeting opened with a prayer.

PL introduced RW to the group as Trust Administrator and PA to PL. Each attendee introduced themselves to the group.

2. **Apologies :** ST and JH sent apologies.
3. NJ presented the autumn term assessment data for Richard Crosse and explained that assessments were going on this week which means the data will soon be updated with the spring term results. She explained that they have an 80% target for age related attainment.

Reading – Y1 has a more rigorous assessment but the Autumn Term assessment did not reflect what was seen the rest of the year. Therefore the assessment was stripped back and the data presents worst case scenario.

Writing – This requires a whole year to go through so they would not expect pupils to reach the standard until the end of the year. We will therefore see a shift in the Spring and Summer Term data as they reach their expected level.

GPS – When pupil’s reach Y2 the spelling is more challenging therefore the dip in the data is expected. This should rise in the Spring Term. Y4 and Y5 data is strong and long term strategies look good.

Maths – There is a high proportion of SEN but interventions have been put in place so progress will be seen in the Spring Term data.

Combined GPS/Reading/Maths – It is hard for pupils to attain across all three areas so the focus is on the combined data which will include writing in the future.

NJ also outlined what Richard Crosse has been doing in terms of enrichment. There will be a Maths workshop for parents so they can see what pupils are doing. This will be led by pupils. MHE asked whether this would be held across all years. NJ confirmed it would be and that it would be repeated again in the Summer Term depending on uptake.

In terms of parent liaison Richard Crosse have been holding informal and formal parents evenings and following comments on the DOJO behaviour points system they are redressing the balance to drill down and agree what constitutes awarding DOJO points. MHE noted that she has already noticed a change in the last week and can see it starting to balance out.

Anti-bullying – one incident has been reported at Richard Crosse and was dealt with and resolved straight away. However NJ noted that they are trying to educate pupils as there is a misunderstanding of bullying. They are picking up on the reported small incidents and responding quickly so that pupils feel safe and supported. MHE suggested that there is also an education there for parents as they can automatically be defensive but there is a need to encourage pupils to work it out themselves. NJ noted that Richard Crosse has introduced peer mediation with pupils who have had similar experiences which parents have valued.

Lesson observations – These have been good which is reflected in the outstanding Ofsted report.

PH presented the data for The Howard. It was noted that they are moving forward all the time and are mindful that they only have small cohorts. Progress is much better down the school but the higher years are catching up.

GPS - Y2's are a strong group and as they are lucky with staffing, interventions are taking place to address any issues.

Maths – We don't have huge numbers below attainment but again there are interventions in place.

Combined GPS/Reading/Maths – The data is much better than it has previously been and it is a good grounding for the Spring and Summer Terms.

Extra-Curricular – Roald Dahl and Chinese days have been successful. They have set up a gallery on the web page which is regularly updated so that parents can see what pupils have been doing.

PH explained that The Howard have focused on working with the community this year. Class 2 have already been to the walled garden to help with planting and the feedback from the village has been good. Pupils have also been to sing carols at the community coffee morning, been involved in the Harvest Workshop and marched for remembrance for the first time.

Clubs have been successful though this year they have decided to hold them at lunch time instead of after school. These include clubs such as homework club, touch typing and relaxation. They will also be holding sewing and textiles, yoga and chess clubs in the future.

PH also noted that the PTA have been brilliant and raised a lot of money for the school. A new pond cover has been installed already and they are also trying to raise funds for a new classroom.

JW presented the data for St. Mary's.

Reading – Age related attainment is looking strong across the whole school.

Writing – They are building up to the end of year but as shown by the data some groups are already there at attainment level.

GPS – The data shows snap shots under test conditions and it should be noted that the Y3 and Y4 curriculum is the same so is a two year cycle.

Maths – Good data is coming through.

Combined GPS/Reading/Maths – This does bring the data down and they have ambitious targets but these should be attained. Following the Spring Term tests the data will be unpicked to show any specific areas that need intervention.

HB asked about the writing difficulty. NJ responded to say writing is done at a level above to meet the standard and pupils work is assessed every two weeks against a 14 point criteria. For example the use of hyphens has to be shown three times but this doesn't come into the curriculum until Y6 unless they are exceptional at Y5. HB also asked whether pupils are assessed on creative writing. NJ explained that we celebrate creative writing but the criterion has to be met.

MHE had feedback from the Y2 parents that the volume of work is making children feel under pressure and asked whether this was felt across the other schools. PH confirmed she had not heard anything from The Howard. JW said that this had been raised in the Autumn Term at St. Mary's but they have been working with parents.

CM noted that there has been a lot of homework this year but having spoken to teachers they have found out what needs to be prioritised for them. PH agreed that this has also been raised at The Howard and they are also working with the parents on what needs to be prioritised. NJ said that it would be looked into. PL suggested the group should encourage those parents to come into school and speak with teachers.

PL thanked the Heads of Schools and teachers for their efforts and dedication to trying to get pupils to the best possible standard whilst helping them to enjoy school life.

4. PL updated the group on staffing changes. PH will be retiring at the end of the year and the recruitment process to replace her is already under way. The group will be kept up to date with any appointments. It was also noted that Leanne Brown, the Trust Business Manager will be moving on at the end of this term and will be replaced by Alison Hodgson.

PL also explained that they are currently consulting directors to alter the school uniform for early years. It is suggested that nursery and reception should wear plain white polo shirts and a sweatshirt with the school logo.

PL explained the plan for the MAT to grow following government agenda changes. This is in early stages and they are in a strong position. They are looking for schools to come to us who share the same philosophy. AA asked whether a time frame had been placed on it. PL said that it would take at least twelve months for a school to officially join. AA further asked if there was a longer term pace in growth and whether it was manageable. PL reiterated that they are looking for schools who share our values and that it will be done properly and with due diligence. The group will be kept informed of any decisions.

In terms of finances we are tightening our belts as there is lag in funding. HB said that economies of scale will work for us as small schools.

5. Richard Crosse – MHE updated the group that following the AGM on the 1st January they now have a new chair, treasurer and member. As the charity status had lapsed they have also started a new charity. The group have set up a closed social media page to get feedback and for parents to engage.

Jackie Bowman has met with the Co-op who have pledged support with fundraising and volunteering. They would also like to install some new planters and run a program with the children, this is currently on hold.

They are currently looking at the wish list from teachers as to what they can fund and where they can pull on resources.

Events – Chocolate Bingo on 31st March, school disco and race night later on in the year.

The Howard – CM explained that fundraising this year has been focussed in the village as well as the school. They have reached out to the village and the village have run with it. The New Year's Eve party became a school fundraiser. They held a shopping night at Christmas and the race night they ran was a sell-out. Coming up they have a 'pig and jig' night at the walled garden, a 'Tour de Elford' and a Bavaria night.

The group are trying to raise funds for a new classroom and are utilising parents skills to work on options. They are also making sure they spend money on the current pupil's as well as investing for future pupils.

Furthermore the group are talking to the social club about contributing to their car park maintenance so that parents can use it to drop off and pick up pupil's.

CB noted that the attitude and progress in the village has been amazing as the school had previously lost connection with the village.

St. Mary's – CC updated the group. The PTA reformed back in September and are just finding their feet. Their Halloween disco and film night were a success and they are currently planning a big breakfast event. Fundraising is underway to buy some chickens and volunteers are planned to come and clear the conservation area. JW explained that money has already gone to outdoor learning and the PTA have funded outdoor cooking equipment and fencing.

CC explained that they held a mother's day lunch and are looking at re-introducing parent lunches.

MH shared with the group that she is a PCC member so reports to the PCC about management of the school. She also noted that proceeds from the Summer Fayre will be going to the Village Hall and the school and that there will be a community clean up every month from April and as part of that they will be digging out the pond at the school.

6. AA raised issues on the parent pay system. Communication needs to go out to let parents know that they can use their childcare vouchers for care club. Also parents are finding it difficult to see a breakdown of costs so don't know what they are paying toward.

PL will ask the Business Manager to look into this.

7. **Date of Next Meeting:** 12th July 2017
Venue: The Howard Primary School