



Minutes of a meeting of the Local Board

held at the Academy on Wednesday 29th January 2020 at 7:00 pm

Local Board Members Present: Mrs Alice Allen (Chair) Mr Adrian Alcock
Mrs Hannah Baty Mrs Claire Cleverton
Mr Daniel Curtis Miss Caroline Newton
Mr Stephen Sowden-Mabbott Mr Marcus Still (Principal)

In attendance: Mrs Kathy Jerbi (Clerk)
Mrs Vanessa Smith (Vice Principal)

Apologies: Mrs Val Pinfield

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES for ABSENCE

Mrs Allen extended a warm welcome to new LB Member (LBM) Mr Daniel Curtis. Apologies received as above & agreed by the Local Board (LB).

2 DECLARATION of INTEREST by LB MEMBERS in ANY ITEM on the AGENDA

None.

3 MINUTES of PREVIOUS MEETING – 27th November 2019

Were agreed as being a true record by the LB & signed by the Chair.

4 ACTION POINTS from above meeting and MATTERS ARISING

1 Communicate focus for LBM classroom visits to members. COMPLETED. Each LBM has been given a key target area from the academy Raising Achievement Plan (RAP) 2019-20 to focus on in their link year group visits & to report back on to the LB. **Action 1: all**

2 Produce chart detailing when LBM reports are due for submission & circulate. NOT ACTIONED. Mrs Allen confirmed that LBM reports will not be expected for the March meeting, but if LB class visits have been made, visit reports should be submitted for consideration at the March meeting.

3 Circulate link to equalities training to all LBM's. TO BE ACTIONED.

Action 2: KJ

4 Complete equalities training. COMPLETED by Mrs Cleverton.

5 Send 'Trust Induction Checklist' to Mrs Pinfield. TO BE ACTIONED.

Action 3: KJ

6 Report to the Trust that members feel the change to item 3 in the LB ToR re strategic development should have been communicated to them. COMPLETED. See item 8 for Trust response.

7 Liaise with Lloyds to finalise sponsorship of football kits & establish events they would be willing to support this academic year. COMPLETED. Mrs Jerbi showed the kit to the Board. A photo to appear in March issue of Lindfield Life. Discussions re future support continue with Lloyds.

8 Ensure article re the pitch document appears in first January academy newsletter. COMPLETED.

9 Send LBM nomination to the Trust Clerk. COMPLETED. The Board of Trustees accepted the nomination & appointed Mr Daniel Curtis to our LB at their meeting on 11th December 2019.

10 Communicate with the LBM candidates. COMPLETED.

11 Investigate setting up a parent council. ON-GOING. Mr Still has communicated with Parentkind to get their advice. To proceed further with them in setting up a parent forum we would have to buy into their service. However, the Trust has arranged training by Parentkind for its SMT at their next meeting & it is to also be a focus for the next Chairs' Forum meeting. Mr Still understands that as this is a Trust-wide initiative, if he attends the SMT training the Trust will support provision of further support from Parentkind. He will report further to the LB following the SMT meeting. **Action 4: MS**

12 Initiate update of our Community Engagement Strategy. ON-GOING. To be an agenda item at the March meeting. **Action 5: AIA/KJ**

5 URGENT MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA

None

6 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

- **Welcome to new LBM & his role.** Mrs Allen has held an initial meeting with Mr Curtis to discuss the role of the LB & his specific role. He is to take over responsibility for looking at Additional Income Generation. Mr Sowden-Mabbott is to be mentor & they will work together on the pitch working party. Link year group is Year 4 – Mr Curtis has already been invited on their forthcoming off-site educational visit.
- **Other reallocation of roles.** Mr Sowden-Mabbott will take on the PTA liaison role.
- **New staff member.** Miss Newton, co-opted LBM, has been employed as a teaching assistant at the academy. She stated that her work on the LB influenced her decision to apply for the role & that she is enjoying working in such a positive environment.
- **Future LBM recruitment timeline.** Mrs Pinfield has resigned with effect from 3rd April 2020. Mrs Allen has communicated with all the candidates from the recent recruitment process & all have expressed a willingness to consider reapplying for this next vacancy. As agreed at the November meeting, an advertisement is to be placed in the Lindfield Life magazine to attempt to attract candidates from the wider community. We are looking for a background in education. The clerk pointed out that, in order to assure continuity, we need to have a nomination agreed in time to submit to the BoT meeting on 30th March for approval. Mrs Allen & Mrs Jerbi to agree a timeline & submit LL article. **Action 6: AIA/KJ**

7 ADMISSIONS SUB COMMITTEE REPORT

(Circulated prior to the meeting)

8 TRUST MATTERS

(letter to the LB from Kathryn Smith, Head of Governance & Admissions, dated 17 January 2020, circulated prior to the meeting)

- **LB strategy role query.** *(Item 4, Action 6 above)* Addressed in the letter circulated.
- **Admissions query.** *(Detailed in the Admissions Sub Committee Report (item 7))* Addressed in the letter circulated. The LB discussed the case briefly. Mrs Allen reiterated that in her telephone conversation with Kathryn Smith, she was firm in asserting that this case should not set a precedent for admitting above PAN. Kathryn Smith assured her that it would not & was contrite that correct protocol had not been followed. Mr Still had been concerned that parents of existing pupils in the class in question may have raised objections, but, in fact, he reported no communication from parents on the matter. Mr Still added an update to the situation – another child has been withdrawn from the year group with effect from 14th February, thus reducing the number on roll back to 90. This may have an impact on our appeal for additional staffing resource in the year group.

9 LOCAL BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

The LB received reports from Members prior to the meeting on actions taken & achievements made in their area of responsibility since the previous meeting as follows:

- SEND & Pupil Premium & CLA – Mrs Cleverton.
- Communication/Parent Liaison – Mrs Baty
- Corporate Sponsorship/PTA Liaison – Mr Sowden-Mabbott

10 LOCAL BOARD MEMBER VISIT REPORTS

Visit reports. The LB received reports prior to the meeting on the following Member visits to the Academy:

- Class visit Year 1 Jan 2020 – Mrs Baty
- CLA SEND visit Jan 2020 – Mrs Cleverton
- Pupil Premium visit Jan 2020 – Mrs Cleverton

Mrs Cleverton highlighted the 'Key issues arising for the Local Board' on her CLA SEND visit report: Mrs Robinson, SENCo, has highlighted that several families at the autumn term open days had stated they would be applying for September 2020 places for their children with physical needs. Other agencies are still signposting LPA for SEND support – not only based on our good reputation for SEND provision, but also because of our physical aspect, i.e. our site is flat, all on one level & classrooms open directly onto outside areas. Mr Still stated that WSCC are performing a review of county-wide SEND provision.

Members asked why the shift in focus of Learning Mentor (LM) time to those pupils whose emotional needs are resulting in a barrier to learning. Mrs Cleverton responded it is purely down to the increasing numbers of children needing SEMH support. Those children who will really benefit from LM support in school will be prioritised. Some children may benefit more from outside agency involvement. Members asked what the tipping point is. Mr Still responded that we simply do not have enough human resource – we are short of 7 midday meals supervisors & would ideally like 5 more TA's. However, the staff we do have are of a very high quality.

Members asked how the new LM is settling in. Mr Still replied very well. She is working with children in their classrooms rather than taking them out of their learning environment.

Future visits focus. Already covered (*Item 4, Action 1*). Mrs Allen asked Mr Still to provide feedback to the LB from staff regarding the effectiveness / practicality of the new focus areas for LBM class visits.

11 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

(Circulated prior to the meeting)

Further to his report, Mr Still reported the following:

- Interviewing on 27th January resulted in the recruitment of maternity cover teachers for 2 teachers starting maternity leave late spring/early summer term, 1 x Year 4, 1 x Early Years. We were fortunate to have a strong field of candidates for both posts. Mr Still thanked Mrs Allen & Mrs Baty for their support on the interview panels.
- Term dates for 2020-2021 have been circulated to parents & staff, including INSET Day dates.

LBM questions & responses from Mr Still:

Q. what arrangements have been made to replace the year 1 teacher leaving on 14th February?

A. a job-share arrangement – one teacher returning from maternity leave, one a teacher who has been working a lot of supply cover for us & whom Mr Still has worked with previously. Both are excellent KS1 teachers.

Q. 'Attendance' - what is your response to the increase in unauthorised absence, from 0.35% to 0.63%?

A. this is the result of parents continuing to take children on family holidays during term time. Mr Still has heard from other head teachers at the Heads Exec that this is a common thread. He & other heads feel that the consequence of taking children out of school (a Fixed Penalty of £120) is not a sufficient deterrent. They are recommending the fine is increased substantially to be more effective.

Q. is the Fixed Penalty region specific?

A. not known. But the policy of issuing the Fixed Penalty in WS is very patchy – some schools implement it, other don't. It needs regulation.

Mr Still added that our attendance remains above the national average. Mr Geddie is doing a great job in managing persistent absentees and lateness. Attendance is celebrated academy wide.

Q. 'Budget Overview' – LBM's understand we have an imposed savings challenge, but why has the 'copying' budget not been increased in line with the increase in numbers on roll?

A. the budget pressure being felt on 'copying' now is partly due to faulty equipment (new printers are imminent) & partly due to additional copying at this time of year because of mock test papers being re-produced.

Mr Still highlighted that the format of the Principal's report template has changed: the Trust wants there to be less about school improvement as the Board have Improvement Partner reports for that.

Mr Still asked that LBM's be aware of the 'Curriculum Intent'. LBM's like the layout & asked if this layout/content is unique to LPA. Mr Still replied it is & that other academies have used it as an exemplar.

10 SAFEGUARDING & PUPIL WELL-BEING

➤ **Monitor attendance & behaviour.** (*Behaviour Report for Autumn Term circulated prior to the meeting*)

LBM questions & responses from Mr Alcock & Mr Still:

Q. in the two year groups where the number of behaviour incidents is high, is this having a negative impact on staff morale?

A. staff morale remains high – the well-being lead is working hard, introducing new initiatives.

Q. are the families of the children with a high frequency of behaviour incidents engaged with managing them?

- A. families are all aware – there are varied levels of support & engagement from parents.
- Q. is the trend in year 6 simply because at age 11 the individuals are growing into their personalities?
- A. no - not entirely – there are a lot of issues in the year group.
- Q. have the Computing Co-ordinator sessions helped with social media issues?
- A. yes, we saw an immediate impact in the first instance.
- Q. how many year 6 children have their own mobile phones?
- A. approx. 95% & probably 60% of year 5 children – many children walk home unaccompanied, which is why they bring them to school. Our policy is that phones stay in the children's bags during the school day – the children are very good at observing this rule.
- LBM's suggested that perhaps if the computing co-ordinator workshops are having a positive impact, maybe they should happen more frequently & perhaps in year 5 too.
- **Safeguarding Report** (circulated prior to the meeting). Mr Still added that he was pleased with the success of the safeguarding peer review. The action to have playground walkways installed has been an action for 2 years, but the Trust estates team are due to visit week commencing 3rd February to assess, so perhaps the feedback of the Safeguarding Manager has had an impact.

13 POLICY APPROVAL

- **Relationships & Sex Education (SRE) Policy.** A new SRE curriculum comes into effect from September 2020, requiring all schools to have a new SRE policy. Mr Still reported that we use the 'Jigsaw' scheme to teach SRE across the academy & that this already uses the correct terminology required by the new curriculum. Our PSHE subject leader, Mr Fox, has worked on a revised policy & has presented this to staff. It is a statutory requirement that the proposed new policy is made available to parents for consultation. Staff are proposing to post it on the academy website for 3 weeks & parents signposted & invited to comment on it.
- LBM questions / comments & responses from Mr Still:
- Q. what is new in the revised policy?
- A. nothing that we are not already covering.
- C. suggested circulating a FAQ sheet to parents.
- Q. why not circulate the policy directly to parents by email?
- A. parents are signposted to the website already & letters are set home annually to each year group advising parents of content to be covered in SRE lessons. Last year, Mr Still received questions from some year 5 parents.
- C. two-way communication on this topic will be a good example of parental engagement.

Mr Fox to be invited to the March LB meeting to present the proposed policy & invite feedback. The LB will be required to approve the final policy by July 2020 in time for its implementation in September.

Action 7: AIA/MS/KJ

14 LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE TRUST

Mr Still reported as follows:

The position of Principal at Trust academy Pound Hill Infant Academy (PHIA) has been vacant for some time & a recent interview process failed to fill the post. The current Vice-Principal at Blackthorns Primary Academy, who had applied for the position, has been offered the post of Interim Principal subject to being given support. The Trust have asked Mr Still to provide that support.

Mr Still will be Lead Principal at PHIA for 2 days per week for up to 1 year (until Christmas 2020), commencing after spring half-term break. He will remain Principal at LPA. On the 2 days he is absent, Mrs Smith will be Acting Principal & Mr Geddie Acting Vice-Principal. Other SMT members may need time out of class to cover specific tasks. The Trust have said they will cover all necessary teaching supply cover costs.

This is a great mentoring & CPD opportunity for Mr Still, but also for all the management team who will have to act up. The Trust's decision to offer this opportunity to LPA staff is acknowledgement of the strong leadership team we have.

It is likely that the 2 days per week support will reduce to 1 day per week in the autumn term 2020.

Mrs Allen added that the Principal at Blackthorns has already enjoyed two similar mentoring opportunities. They provide leadership development & enable the Trust to keep their experienced leadership staff.

When asked how she feels about this opportunity, Mrs Smith stated that she is very excited. Her workload will certainly increase, but Mr Geddie will be relied upon to assist her.

If we get the Ofsted call, then of course Mr Still would be present at LPA for their inspection.

The SMT have been informed, other staff will be told week commencing 3rd February.

The LB discussed how to communicate this arrangement to our parent body. It agreed that the tone of the communication must be positive & to be issued by 7th February.

Mrs Allen concluded by stating that this leadership opportunity being offered by the Trust is a re-endorsement of the abilities of Mr Still, Mrs Smith & Mr Geddie.

15 COMMUNITY

- **Pitch working party update.** Mr Sowden-Mabbott reported that the group has not yet met as it has proven difficult to find a time convenient to all members. It may have to meet in two smaller groups, but will meet before the half-term break.
Members discussed briefly whether we should have a minibus on our wish list of things to raise corporate sponsorship for.
- **PTA link update.** At a recent PTA Committee meeting, one parent queried PTA funding of the Year 2 booster groups. The Committee gave unanimous support for this funding. It was felt that a communication from school to parents would help, as parents of younger children perhaps did not yet understand the benefit to all children of the booster group programme.

16 CELEBRATION

Mrs Allen asked Mr Still & Mrs Smith to highlight opportunities for the LB to be involved in celebrating pupil achievement, e.g. poetry competitions, special curriculum events, celebration assemblies, extra-curricular achievements at school.

17 Agree items to be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees

None.

18 DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 25th March 2020 at 7pm

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.

ACTION POINTS:

ACTION POINT NUMBER	MINUTE ITEM NUMBER	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
1	4	Make class visit & report to LB	All	End of spring term
2	4	Circulate link to equalities training to all LBM's	KJ	Immediately
3	4	Send 'Trust Induction Checklist' to Mrs Pinfield	KJ	Immediately
4	4	Report to the LB on further support available from Parentkind through the Trust	MS	LB mtg 25Mar
5	4	Ensure update of our Community Engagement Strategy appears as an agenda item at March meeting	AIA / KJ	LB mtg 25Mar
6	6	Agree a timeline for recruitment process & submit LL article	AIA / KJ	11 February
7	13	Ensure PSHE subject lead is invited to March meeting & RSE Policy consultation is an agenda item	AIA/MS/KJ	LB mtg 25Mar

Signed as being a true and accurate account of the meeting:

..... **Date:**

Name: Mrs Alice Allen **Position:** Chair of Local Board of Lindfield Primary Academy