



Minutes of a meeting of the Local Board

held on Wednesday 25th November 2020 at 7:00 pm
remotely via TEAMS

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)
Mrs Angela Watson	

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

1 **WELCOME & APOLOGIES for ABSENCE**

No apologies.

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

None.

3 **MINUTES of PREVIOUS MEETING – 21st October 2020**

Were agreed as being a true record by the LB. Clerk to gain signature of the Chair when possible.

4 **ACTION POINTS from above meeting and MATTERS ARISING**

1 Update Community Engagement Strategy & present to LB. COMPLETED. See item 9.

2 Meet to discuss funding priorities, fund-raising ideas, other ways of supporting the curriculum. COMPLETED. LB members have met with the PTA Co-Chairs & the SLT.

3 Chase up outstanding declarations of pecuniary interest & produce a register for publication on the academy website (statutory requirement). COMPLETED.

4 Send link to recorded CP training to HB & DC. COMPLETED.

5 Update pitch document. TO BE ACTIONED.

Action1: SSM

6 Remind staff about the strategic road map. COMPLETED.

7 Assist Mr Curtis in resurrecting contact with Lloyds. COMPLETED. The Haywards Heath Lloyds office is regrettably being relocated & our contact has been made redundant. It would therefore seem this relationship will not continue & we should concentrate on looking for a new corporate partner.

8 Update & publish roadmap. COMPLETED. It should be published week commencing 30th November.

9 Prepare next LB newsletter. COMPLETED. See item 9.

5 URGENT MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA

None

6 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

(Report made available to LB prior to the meeting: [Principal's Report to LB - Autumn 2020](#))

Members like the new report format, finding it easy to engage with. Mr Still talked through the report & answered [questions from the LB](#):

Academy Context (page 1)

- Numbers on roll are static. Two Reception children have deferred start dates.
- Interviews for the TA vacancy take place on 27th November.
- [Q. Members noted that SEND percentage has increased & asked is there a large amount of need in the new Reception intake or is need increasing across the academy?](#)
- A. there is significant need in Early Years, but there are challenges across the academy following the lockdown period.
- [Q. do we have enough resource to meet the level of need?](#)
- A. at the moment, yes.
- [Q. is there national criteria for adding children to the SEND register? Our SEND percentage is higher than national average.](#)
- A. no, we tie in with the national SEN criteria, i.e. children who are receiving 'Class Support'. Schools may differ how they determine class support.
- Mrs Cleverton highlighted the rigorous speech & language screening that has taken place in Early Years to put support in place early where required. This has resulted in approx. 10 children being added to the SEN register. Support is fluid – it is hoped that if targeted early, children will quickly no longer require support.

Safeguarding (pages 4-5)

Since writing the report, the Safeguarding Review has taken place (23Nov) with Trust Safeguarding Manager, Lisa Croydon-Miles, & an external safeguarding expert. Our DSL, Mrs Robinson, did a sterling job in handling the review & we expect a very positive report. Recommendations: improve staff knowledge of private fostering; sub-category of 'allegations against staff' to be added to CPOMS (already actioned). LB member with responsibility for safeguarding, Mrs Watson, attended the review; she added that she was also impressed with the job the safeguarding team at LPA are doing.

Members asked was there any conversation about the entrance gate yet to be installed. Mr Still replied that this has been delayed by lockdown, but the contractors are ready to start work – it is anticipated this may begin during the Christmas break.

Attendance (page 6)

Very positive. Mr Geddie, Assistant Principal with responsibility for attendance, is doing a great job. We expected a drop in attendance this term, but this has not happened. Children & parents alike are happy.

Behaviour (pages 7-8)

[Q. members asked is there any correlation between behaviour & the Covid-19 measures in place.](#)

A. Mrs Smith responded that it is difficult to maintain social distancing in the playgrounds. Staff have conducted a lot of work with children on socially distanced games. Some children are on behaviour plans as they have found it difficult to maintain distance from others. This is in line with the Covid appendix to our behaviour policy. Staff have engaged with parents where necessary. So yes, there is some correlation. Miss Newton, who is a TA in year 5, pointed out that all of KS2 used to play together. Now the playground is divided in two, with one year group in each half. Staff are constantly moving children away from the dividing cordon. Year 5 children in particular are finding this a challenge.

[Q. members asked is this an issue of space or children struggling to adapt.](#)

A. Mrs Smith responded that year 5 are struggling with it. The cross country run that took place this week has been good for them & staff are considering whether they need to extend exercise periods during the school day. Year 5 currently have a late lunch, therefore a long morning session.

[Q. members noted that the well-being questionnaire identified 7% of children requiring extra support – is this general anxiety or a result of the lockdown in particular?](#)

A. Mrs Smith responded that these children are now working with the learning mentor, triangulated by the children's feelings & teachers identifying children struggling in the classroom.

[Q. is there a lot of parental anxiety?](#)

A. this is present in pockets, in some particular year groups. Mrs Smith added that parents have been very supportive of wearing face masks in the playgrounds at drop-off & pick-up. There are on-going issues re crowding off-site. She called on the LB for support in this area.

[Q. it was reported in the safeguarding section \(page 4\) that two senior leaders have been trained as mental health first aiders – how is this going?](#)

A. this is in addition to two mental health first aiders in place already for children. They have been signposted to staff & it's going well. The Trust is interested to see how this might tie in with support they wish to offer.

Community Engagement (page 11)

Mr Still remains keen to set up a parent council – put on hold due to Covid. For newer members, it was explained that this idea came about from a presentation by Parentkind at the Trust Governance Day in November 2019. The Clerk to circulate literature from that presentation.

Action 2: KJ

Academy Priorities (page 13)

Mr Still has added the following to the Report:

- Progress towards previous Challenge Partner (CP) recommendations from visit on 4th Feb 2020 (page 14)
- CP report following visit on 4th November 2020 (page 15)
- Progress of the current academy Key Targets (page 16) (MS at the top of columns = Milestones to be reviewed at the end of each term)

The two CP visits & the safeguarding review have been 3 intensive days of academy scrutiny, all producing positive reports.

Mrs Allen recommended that senior leaders communicate to parents how much has been achieved already by the Recovery Curriculum. Parents may not appreciate how hard staff have been working. Mr Still acknowledged that we need to highlight our successes more often.

Mrs Allen feels also that LPA is ahead of the game in supporting the health & well-being of staff. Other schools are not in such a positive position.

Q. Members asked is there an official status with regards to Ofsted inspections, what is our expectation.

A. Ofsted are due to begin inspecting again in January 2021 but now have a backlog.

Mrs Allen thanked Mr Still for his report.

7 SAFEGUARDING LINK REPORT

Reports circulated prior to the meeting:

- *Trust Checklist for LB Safeguarding Link 2020-21 (23 Nov 2020) [here](#)*
- *Trust Single Central Record Safeguarding Link Monitoring report (23 Nov 2020) [here](#)*

Mrs Watson confirmed that the above reports have been submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration at their next meeting. She highlighted the different termly focus for the checklist reports.

As reported in item 6, Mrs Watson attended the safeguarding review on 23 Nov. Nothing further to add.

8 STAFF WELL-BEING

Miss Newton reported that the robust policies in place are assisting staff well-being. An appendix is being added to the Staff Well-being Policy – 10 questions that a school setting should consider with regards to well-being (to be circulated to LB).

Action 3: CN

A lot of useful resource is being provided by the Trust. Miss Newton reported a real sense of community in the academy, staff supporting each other, despite the lack of physically moving around the building to restrict mixing of bubbles. She is not sure the academy could do much more. Well-being is a very personal thing – individual experiences vary.

Mr Still reported that a low point in staff morale was reached earlier in November due to a number of factors: workload – recovery curriculum, assessment, 3 intensive days of academy scrutiny – as well as anxiety over increasing Covid cases in the community. Teachers have lost assembly time in which they would normally prepare for lessons, they are having to do more break & lunch supervision. 4 new midday meals supervisors begin work week commencing 30Nov, this will help. Mr Still reported that the SLT are taking action to help staff well-being. The CP stated in her visit report that you wouldn't know there is a national pandemic when in LPA! This & the positive review reports recently are a credit to the staff, but the consequence of their hard work is a negative effect on their well-being.

Mrs Allen expressed the need to acknowledge & celebrate the work of staff in some way. She & Miss Newton to discuss & action.

Action 4: AIA/CN

9 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

(Circulated prior to the meeting ([here](#)))

Mrs Baty reported that she & Mrs Allen took the previous version of the Community Engagement Strategy (dated 2018) & updated it. The LB discussed the items/questions in red on the document.

- The SLT appreciate the need to hold a Parent View survey & are considering what focus it should have. They are anxious about using the standard questions when we are not operating in normal times. If it is based upon the work that has been achieved this term, members feel it would receive positive feedback & be a morale boost for staff.

Action 5: MS/VS

○

- Virtual Principal 'Pop-In' sessions – after brief discussion, Mr Still agreed this could work well & will instigate. **Action 6: MS**
- Lindfield Life magazine – members agreed for a small group to engage with Lindfield Life. Mr Curtis to lead. **Action 7: DC**
- Engagement with PTA – it was agreed that Mr Sowden-Mabbott continue as LB link to the PTA rather than invite them to attend meetings.
- Mr Curtis has begun to meet with businesses re corporate sponsorship & has spoken with our Business Manager re trusts/foundations that offer grants. **Action 8: DC**
- Mrs Watson & Mr Curtis to work together on exploring outreach possibilities other than funding that Mrs Watson is aware of through her work. **Action 9: DC/AW**
- Communicate to parents the possibility of corporate fund-matching by companies that they may work for. **Action 10: DC**
- Suggestion that we target companies/sectors that have thrived over this Covid period, e.g. pet stores, estate agents.
- Income from lettings has fallen considerably due to Covid restrictions. Pioneer Childcare provide stable income. It is hoped that other lettings will be permitted again from January 2021.

Local Board Newsletter (circulated prior to the meeting ([here](#))). The LB discussed the proposed newsletter, to be published before the end of term.

10 ADMISSIONS & VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS

Mr Still reported that 3 successful virtual 'open days' were held in November. Mrs Smith & Mr Geddie worked hard on the presentation. The SLT gave live introductions, which were followed by our 'showreel' & a pre-recorded 'tour' of the academy by year 6 pupils. We have received some very positive feedback from prospective parents. Mrs Smith added that it was hard work but feels we have done our best in difficult circumstances. It doesn't compare though to having parents visit the academy in person.

PART II

11 LOCAL BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

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

- [LB Contact Report CN - Yr 6 Oct 2020](#)
- [LB Contact Report CN - Yr 6 Nov 2020](#)
- [LB Visit Report CC - PP Nov 2020](#)
- [LB Visit Report CC - SEND Nov 2020](#)
- [LB Report DC - Nov 2020](#)

Mrs Allen thanked members for their reports. She intends to speak with Mr Still as to how best to support year groups through link visits moving forward. This to be an agenda item for the next LB meeting. **Action11: AIA**

12 CELEBRATION

- **Opportunities for LB to be involved in celebrating pupil/staff successes - involvement in virtual assemblies/supporting year group events.** Mrs Allen is keen for members to resurrect the 'celebration' role of the LB. It would also be positive for members to see first hand how the virtual communication between classes is taking place inside the academy & for the children to see the LB members. Mr Still suggested the Monday assembly in the first instance. Mrs Allen invited ideas/suggestions.

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

None at present.

14 DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 13th January 2021 at 7pm via TEAMS

Mrs Allen closed by thanking Mr Alcock for his contribution to the LB – his term of office as staff LB member ends on 11th December. Mr Alcock has been a pleasure to work with & his input has been invaluable. Mr Alcock responded saying he has enjoyed very much his time on the LB.

The meeting closed at 9 p.m.

ACTION POINTS:

ACTION POINT NUMBER	MINUTE ITEM NUMBER	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
1	4	Update pitch document	Mr Sowden-Mabbott	LB mtg Jan 2021
2	6	Circulate literature from Parentkind presentation	Mrs Jerbi	LB mtg Jan 2021
3	8	Circulate appendix to Staff Well-being Policy	Miss Newton	LB mtg Jan 2021
4	8	Organise a celebration of staff's hard work	Mrs Allen/Miss Newton	18Dec 2020
5	9	Consider a Parent View survey	Mr Still / Mrs Smith	LB mtg Jan 2021
6	9	Instigate virtual 'Principal Pop-In' sessions	Mr Still	18Dec 2020
7	9	Form a small group to reach out to Lindfield Life magazine	Mr Curtis	LB mtg Jan 2021
8	9	Continue looking for corporate sponsorship & grant opportunities	Mr Curtis	On-going
9	9	Explore outreach possibilities other than funding	Mr Curtis / Mrs Watson	On-going
10	9	Communicate to parents re the possibility of corporate fund-matching by their employers	Mr Curtis	Spring term
11	11	Speak with Mr Still as to how best to support year groups through link visits moving forward & report at next meeting	Mrs Allen	LB mtg Jan 2021

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