

Directors Meeting Minutes
8th July 2016 8am

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (Executive Head), Mrs H Bowman (HB) (Chair of Directors), Mrs L Brown (LB) (Business Manager), Mr P Halifax (PH) (Vice Chair of Directors), Mrs S Cockayne (SC) (Director), Mrs M Havelock-Crozier (MHC) (Director), Mrs C Humphries (CH) (Director), Mrs J Smith (JS) (Director), Mr G Wood (GW) (Director)
Clerk to Directors: Mrs A Howard (AH)

RC: Richard Crosse

SM: St Mary's

HP: Howard Primary

LAG: Local Advisory Group

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

CIF: Condition Improvement Funding

EY: Early Years

KS: Key Stage

TLR: Teaching and Learning Responsibility

EFA: Education Funding Agency

SEN: Special Educational Needs

SEF: Self-Evaluation Form

NQT: Newly qualified teacher

PAN: Planned Admission Number

FTCBB: Fibre to Cabinet Broadband

1. **Prayer** - PL started the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies** - None
3. **Pecuniary Interest** - There were no changes.
4. **Minutes of last meeting** -
 - a) **Actions taken and items to carry forward:** The letter to the website company has not yet been sent, but is under discussion. Other items appear on the agenda.
 - b) **Approval and signing of minutes:** These were agreed as a true record and signed.
5. **Safeguarding Update** - MHC (Director with responsibility for Safeguarding) met with PL to discuss safeguarding issues and SEN. A Safeguarding audit has been completed and is available for Directors to view. CH's company has developed a toolkit for safeguarding for use in training staff and volunteers in schools; there is a PowerPoint presentation, with information which will be updated on a regular basis and at the end of the training there is a self-assessment questionnaire for participants to complete. The cost is reasonable and the Directors agreed this would be very useful. MHC asked whether she should undertake Stage 2 safeguarding training and PL/LB confirmed that this would be a good idea. JS had watched a safeguarding video about the dangers of grooming and thought it would be useful for adults to watch this. PL agreed that it is important to raise awareness amongst parents and is planning an evening on e-safety for parents, with the possibility of hiring a venue and a speaker. It was agreed that parents are often unaware of what their children might access on the internet. GW thought it essential to have regular updates on safeguarding, including practical advice for parents, as the Directors' main concern was the safety of children in their schools; this could be a KPI for the coming year.

6. **Governance -**

a) **LAG:** There are 3 candidates from HP PTA who wish to join the LAG, so interviews will be held at RC next Monday, with HB and SC attending. The tour of the three schools by minibus will take place on Tuesday 13th September. It was agreed that the LAG meetings will take place during the second half of each term.

b) **Amendment to Directors' responsibilities -** HB and PH are swapping roles, with HB having responsibility for curriculum and data monitoring, PH taking responsibility for strategy. PL and LB will continue with individual meetings with Directors.

c) **Members update -** It is proving difficult to arrange a meeting for Members, who have met at the beginning of the year but not since then. It is hoped to have a meeting in late September, with GW and HB attending. The role of Members may need to be reviewed.

7. **HR and Staffing -**

a) **HR:** CH met up with PL and LB on 15 June. It has been decided to have a meeting on 3 August to update contracts, discuss whether to change terms and conditions for new staff, finalise the handbook (with a shorter version for recruitment purposes) and look at job evaluation. There are five policies to publish and the local government pension scheme will be considered. Regarding job evaluation, the job descriptions need to be updated, with a view to improving and reducing the number of them to reflect the values of the MAT and future developments. The responsibilities of the Heads of School should be made explicit, stressing their accountability. Actions in HR will reflect the employment journey: next term, job profiles and roles will be reviewed, in the spring term recruitment and selection will be considered, in the summer term performance management will be the focus and in autumn 2017 the process of exiting people will be reviewed.

There will be some additional charges for these services; GW asked about accountability regarding CH's role as Director and LB confirmed that an assurance control statement had been made. A comparative quote of £750 per day from Entrust had been obtained and CH will supply invoices for her services. GW praised the good action plan structure for HR and Directors agreed there were clear milestones; PL thought this tied in well with the SEF. PL would like copies of the MAT's development plans, budget, policies and action plans in each school, so that staff are aware of issues and budgetary problems.

b) **Staffing:** PL explained the senior and middle management roles from September, with the Heads of Schools in senior roles, head of Early Years, head of KS1 and head of KS2 (with temporary TLR payments) in middle management roles and each teacher taking on a subject leader responsibility. One teacher will be on maternity leave from October and a NQT has been appointed on a maternity cover contract from September. The Head of KS1 will also have responsibility for Wrap-around care, and as Line Manager will monitor planning and safeguarding. PL mooted the possibility of moving HP after-school Care Club to Richard Crosse and JS considered this to be a very good idea; this could be put in place from January. PL feels that the after-school provision could be improved, offering French, sports, IT, cookery, art and homework clubs. The TA and support provision was discussed, with PL explaining that there was now no extra funding for 1-to-1 SEN provision.

8. **Developments - Class Structure from September 2016**

PL explained the class structure in the three schools from September. In SM and RC, the mixed Y5 and Y6 class will have the Head of School to teach Y6 separately in the mornings.

9. **Finance -**

a) **Interim Directors' meeting update:** GW has attended update meetings with LB and showed Directors spreadsheets which indicated that the expenditure has been more than the income since September, with monthly outgoings slightly more than income on a regular basis. Although there is still a healthy surplus this is being eroded. Therefore, savings will have to be made, unless the number of admissions can be increased. At RC, there is demand for more places, but not enough space to accommodate a rise in the PAN from the present 15. At SM, there are sufficient classrooms, but not the demand for places. Nursery provision at SM would increase the popularity of the school. HP would need an additional classroom if the PAN was raised; the school is becoming increasingly popular.

b) **KPIs:** These were agreed to be Progress and Standards, Finance and Admissions/PAN, to be monitored and milestones to be planned and ticked off when completed.

c) **Finance Update:** LB shared the EFA return with Directors and the potential future overspend was discussed. Directors discussed ways in which savings could be made and income increased.

d) **Audit and Compliance Update:** The pension audit has taken place with no issues arising. LB reminded Directors to look at the new financial handbook.

10. **Premises and Health & Safety -**

a) **Expansion Plans at RC:** Directors had received plans and costings. The rough estimate of costs was £300,000. A CIF application will be made in September. PH questioned the success rate of Entrust (now Capita) in dealing with building projects. CH suggested that Directors consider the idea of building a Free School and GW thought that the MAT needed an overall, joined-up plan covering all three schools. It was decided that there should be a Strategy Meeting to review expansion plans.

b) **EY room adjustments at SM:** Work will be undertaken at SM to improve provision for EY.

11. **ICT -**

PH informed Directors that a new network structure at HP was required. A decision is required on this as connectivity has moved from Staffs County Council to Entrust; although connectivity at SM and RC are good, the FTCBB is unusable at HP. Alternative quotes have been sought, but it has been decided that the Entrust quote of £13,900 is good value, an extra £2030 due to the work at HP. The 5-year IT plan includes a single sign-up, PS Financials, more automated installations and upgrade to the latest versions. At present the IT support received is good value and reliable. The total cost including staff laptops (already approved by Directors), network cabling and infrastructure will be £33,016. It was agreed by Directors to use the remote backup facility. There was discussion on whether the upgraded fibre connections should be offered within the village of Elford.

The spending on ICT was approved by Directors and PH was thanked for all his hard work on this.

12. **Curriculum -**

HB and GW had met up with the three Heads of School to look at the data following the recent SATs. Directors were shown the data for the three schools and PL expressed his disappointment at the results. He acknowledged the complexity of the new testing and the grading system, but said it was important to look at what had gone wrong and how to improve in the future. It would be necessary to look closely at the RaiseOnline data and the MAT is collaborating with a number of Rugeley schools to look into ways to improve. The Teacher Assessments show children on the whole performing above the expected level in all three subjects, but these assessments do not always match the SATs results with children performing above and below the expected level; nationally, the average is expected to be around 66%, with the MAT schools performing at or just above this level. Directors were shown Year 2 results, indicating that HP will need to work on Writing, and results of Y1 Phonics tests which were good in HP but very disappointing at SM. Directors discussed the data and agreed that, although the results were disappointing, it would be interesting to compare with the national and local results and the MAT provided an excellent all-round education for the children, with many opportunities for extra-curricular events.

13. **Any Other Business -**

a) **Confidential Item removed**

b) LB asked that Directors involved in Finance (GW, PH, HB) attend separate Finance meetings regularly with herself and PL. Dates for these will be notified.

c) PL has circulated a notice from the DfE stating that there will be a league table of MATs based on results and progress. He thinks that the younger children in school, using the new curriculum from now onwards, will gain the expected levels more easily.

14. **Future meetings -**

LB has circulated a questionnaire to Directors asking them to state availability for dates during 2016-17. It was agreed that the first meeting of the school year will be 16 September, 8-10am, followed by a Strategy meeting until around lunchtime.

Signed.....

Date

Chair of Directors

Item	Action to be taken	Action by whom	Action by when
5	To attend Stage 2 Safeguarding training.	MHC	tba
5	Arrange e-safety evening for parents.	PL	July 2017
6a	Interview HP candidates for LAG	PL, HB, SC	11/7/16
6c	Arrange/attend Members' meeting	LB/PL/HB/GW	End September 2016
7a	HR meeting (contracts, conditions, job evaluations)	PL/CH/LB	3/8/16
9d	Look at new Financial Handbook	Directors	16/9/16
10a	Apply for CIF funding.	PL/LB	End September 2016
10a	Strategy meeting	Directors	16/9/16 (after Directors' meeting)
11	Proceed with new network structure	PH/PL/LB	tba