

Totnes Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Meeting Minutes: (Thursday November 23rd 2023 at 7pm) This meeting was held online via Microsoft 'Teams'

Attended: Governors- Chair- Rebecca Sear (RS), Cat Radford (CR), Helen Hall (HH), James Buchanan (JB), Caroline Lucas (CL)

Academy Head- Jill Ryder (JR)

Governance Professional- Charlotte Roe (GP)

Apologies- GC, JS, NC, NB

Minutes: Clerk- Nicol Bush

No	Item	Led By
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming new Parent Governor- J.B (Parent Governor for Diptford CofE school) and each Governor introduced themselves to the group.</p> <p>Apologies were given from GC, JS, NC & NB.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of interest- There were none</p>	
3.	<p>Approval of meeting minutes from- Thursday 18th September 2023. (Previously circulated)</p> <p>The Governors approved the minutes from 18th September 2023.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters arising from- Thursday 18th September 2023 (not on the agenda)</p> <p>The Chair fed back to the group, the two points raised in the previous LAC meeting that had been discussed in the recent S&C meeting (Discussed in more detail under point 9)</p>	
5.	<p>Clerk Update</p> <p>5.1 Appointments/nominations- The GP updated the LAC that all vacancies had now been filled and welcomed New Parent Governor J.B & new Foundation Governor K.B (waiting on Paperwork) LAC to support new Foundation Governor with workload of 3 CofE schools.</p> <p>5.2 Training – KCSIE- The Governors referenced the KCSIE document part 1 and part 2, that must be read and signed by all staff/Governors across the trust annually and asked the following questions:</p> <p><i>“What does the Safeguarding lead do?”</i></p> <p><i>“What does the Governance Professional do?”</i></p> <p><i>“What does the impact of the updates have on how policies and procedures are updated?”</i></p> <p><i>“What are the responsibilities of Governors around Policies?”</i> (Point 98 of the KCSIE)</p>	

	<p>The GP explained that the Safeguarding lead was completely in charge of the KCSIE policy and that the GP was not involved in updating it. GP informed that she had also sent those questions to the safeguarding Lead as she believed her input would be very helpful, this would then be circulated to the governors.</p> <p>The GP informed the group that the Safeguarding Lead updated the safeguarding policy after the KCSIE document had come out (last update was Oct 2023)</p> <p>The GP then went on to explain that the Governors had no responsibility around the policy updates but that the Trustees did. She also added that the model policy had not quite caught up with the fact that we now had Local Governors, Trusts and Academies and that the models were very difficult to change.</p> <p>It was also pointed out by the GP that the code of conduct policy was not featured on the Link Academy Trust’s website due to the fact that it was a Personnel policy but that it had been circulated and signed by all across the trust.</p> <p>The GP added that the Process in which policies were reviewed was via a policy Schedule, 6 weeks before due the GP updates them, sends over to the specific reviewer which then goes to the AH to review/add to and finally back to the GP to be approved by the appropriate department for the policy i.e. Attendance policy--- Attendance Officer.</p> <p>The Governors raised the questions: <i>“Specifically, the point around multi-agency working that said “All Governors should make themselves aware of the role that it played within local Safeguarding arrangements which was the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment”</i></p> <p><i>“Was this Trust wide or more specific to ask in the school context?”</i> <i>“Could this be more streamlined?”</i></p> <p><i>JR pointed out that it would have to be on a needs basis to each school.</i></p> <p>5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues-</p> <p>a) Minutes- GP explained that following a recent Clerks meeting it had been requested that all LAC minutes to look more similar, to not identify individual Governors Questions and to wrap up each agreement or Decision etc with “Just to clarify” for clear and precise minutes across the board.</p> <p>b) Single Central Records (SCR)- GP explained that the process on SCR checks had now changed and for data protection, there would be a tab that the Governors could check for any gaps and be able to view who had reviewed and signed off. (Email with more information to be circulated by the LAC Clerk)</p>	<p>LAC Clerk to circulate SCR checks email to all Governors.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Standards and Curriculum Committee Focus: Vision and values with a <u>LEARNING WALK</u> to evidence that the vision and values and (for CofE schools) Christian distinctiveness are present.</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>SEF Overview – An EIT overview of accuracy and effectiveness of school self-evaluation (Visit Notes Autumn 2 attached) One of the Governors asked, “<i>What is SEF?</i>” (Self Evaluation Form)</p>	

	<p>JR pointed out that the EIT had everyone's SEF in full and that they were working documents that were live in the moment.</p> <p><u>Diptford</u>- (To be written up)</p> <p><u>Stoke Gabriel</u>- Found that the vision and values was well embedded in the children, the children had been supporting each other and had been showing recognition upon writing down their experiences.</p> <p><u>Landscope & Broadhempston</u>- Pupil voice feedback, showed that the children do know and live their values, a very positive visit.</p> <p><u>Stoke Gabriel</u>- A positive meeting, evident that there was a lot of promoting of vision of values, children being involved in shaping this. Weekly assemblies centred on the vision and values, each child given an apple to write their piece and add to the apple tree displayed on the wall as you walk in.</p> <p><u>Harbertonford</u>- The visit was vibrant, enjoyable, and found that everyone was on board.</p> <p>Impressed that the school was taking an inclusive approach to the theological underpinnings of Christian distinctiveness in an intelligent way, involving the children and parents feedback too. (Please refer to visit notes for further clarification)</p>	
7.	<p>School Updates</p> <p>JR informed that attendance was looking good across all schools and everyone had been doing all they could to keep this up.</p> <p>ASIP updates- constantly evolving and working as we go through; most schools knew where their data was and any gaps to fill.</p> <p>A Governor raised the question <i>“Upon reading visit notes one of the AH reports noted that the AH workload was more focused on operational issues and wondered what this meant?”</i></p> <p>JR responded and explained that AH meetings contain a lot of things to do and it is more about prioritising and thinking about what your school needs you to do.</p> <p>The Governors asked, <i>“Would it be more valuable to include these AH report questions within a chat over the phone with the AH rather than filling out the forms?”</i></p> <p>The GP informed the LAC that the AH forms were only sent out to be completed 3 times per year and the point of them was for representation of Schools up at S&C Trustee level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>PAN (to include pupils joined/left)</u> <u>Harbertonford</u>-School is at 90, which is 99% of PAN. Were at 100% but have had one year 5 child move to a school to Totnes – reason given is that the current year 5 is a small cohort and had not made friends within that cohort. <u>Diptford</u>- 57 Pupils on Roll 4 in Preschool <u>Broadhempston</u>- 62 (70 when full) <u>Landscope</u>- 86 (105 when full) <u>Sparkwell</u>- 87 <u>Stoke Gabriel</u>- 90 • <u>Pupil workload</u> <u>Landscope</u>- Survey to go pupils this half term (annual) <u>Sparkwell</u>- Children supported well with all staff. <u>Harbertonford</u>- Generally monitored through PSHE lessons. • <u>Staff wellbeing and workload</u> <u>Harbertonford</u>- Challenging issues around staffing, inconsistency in terms of staffing with sickness etc. <u>Stoke Gabriel</u>- A few Staff have left which is mainly down to pay or inflexibility/work life balance. 	To continue to keep staff wellbeing and workload on the agenda.

Suggestions that an online survey could work well for staff to pick up any issues before potentially staff leaving and later finding the issues out in an exit interview. AH having to take on 2 days of teaching herself at the moment.

Sparkwell- SLT/Teachers felt stretched with reduced release time (due to budgeting and HT being unable to cover)

Landscope- Trust have agreed to another full time TA.

Diptford- Staff workload higher than usual due to staff absence.

- **Attendance**

Sparkwell- 96.2% (current cross Devon is 96%)

Stoke Gabriel- 93.7% excluding nursery

Landscope- 97.1%

Harbertonford- Currently at 95.57% (Letters have been sent out to families following procedure) (Please refer to visit notes for clarification)

Diptford- 97.4%

Broadhempston- 96.8%

Stoke Gabriel- 93.7% exc nursery

- **Suspensions and permanent exclusions**

- **Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA**

Sparkwell- PTA met, planning Christmas events.

Stoke Gabriel- Positive feedback from parents about approach to recent parent evenings. New PTFA chair (Friends of Stoke School) started in September. FOSS Newsletter went out to parents in September and FOSS has already had several fundraising events, raising £600 for the school at the recent firework event. Funds raised by FOSS have paid for all children to watch a local pantomime in December.

Diptford- Parents evening well attended.

Harbertonford- Had Parents evening before half term. Difficulty with PTFA is in committing money to what the school wants it spent on. The PTFA want to spend on particular things on their own agenda.

Broadhempston- Parents evening held before half term- well attended.

Landscope- Parents evenings well attended and held before half term.

- **ASIP update**

Sparkwell- Maths and English action plans being updated.

Stoke Gabriel- Academy School Improvement Plan is on track, Maths particularly strong across the whole school.

SEND levels high 0-25 team responses not matching need, finance of SEND (pressures of high needs block funds) and recruitment.

Harbertonford- Staff are updating the ASIP as they are going along – particularly the front section in which key questions for subject development are monitored.

Diptford- Changed dates for relational approach to spring 2024 (please refer to AH report for further clarification)

- **Risk assessments/Accident book.**

	<p>Sparkwell- Accident book in place, minor incidents only... now paper version.</p> <p>Stoke Gabriel- AH receives monthly email reminder notification about reviewing risk register. Deputy Safeguarding Lead reviews accident book entries every term.</p> <p>Harbertonford- In storm last week discovered music storage room shed ceiling has collapsed</p> <p>Landscope- 13 risks on Every register 2 red/high (pupil numbers, low numbers in reception) 4 amber / medium 7 green/low.</p> <p>Broadhempston- 15 on Every.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-school update <p>Diptford- Low numbers at present.</p> <p>Stoke Gabriel- Pre-school leader is strong, focused and works closely with school. Have a recruitment challenge in that their second qualified member of staff is leaving (financial reasons) meaning that ratio is not sufficient due to being offsite. They will either need to create a temporary FSU with school or have temp staff. The other member of pre-school staff qualifies in Spring.</p>	
8.	<p>Current Year’s Trust Focus – Relational Approach</p> <p>The GP gave a summary of the presentation given which was circulated to all Governors with the agenda. Encouraged all to read and ask AH any questions if needed.</p> <p>The Chair asked <i>“Do most schools add the relational approach to their websites? Does it get discussed at interviews?”</i> The GP asked, <i>“How could we raise this?”</i></p> <p>Sparkwell- Staff had been given access to training model, but the school were having to delay working on this until Jan due to needing to focus on new phonics/writing program. However, Sparkwell believed that the Relational Approach is already embedded in their school ethos.</p> <p>Stoke Gabriel- The relational restorative approach seemed to be working well. There had been a conscious shift away from ‘public shaming for poor behaviour’ which seemed to have been well received by the children, where they could reflect on poor behaviour in their own way and in their own time. This approach had helped build more trust in the longer-term.</p> <p>Harbertonford- The AH is modelling relational behaviour approaches in the classroom and has done a lot of support verbally. They had found that some people needed more support with the approach and it can be a lengthy process.</p>	The Chair to raise the Relational Approach and using this with recruitment, job description/interviews at S&C meeting.
9.	Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting	

		<p>The Chair fed back to the group from the recent S&C meeting that, following the questions that were raised in the previous LAC, the first question being <i>“How could we be inclusive of families not within CofE schools?”</i> discussions were had about communities and Community links.</p> <p>The Second point was about Part-time/flexi working and <i>“How could we get information flowing/resolve future recruitment challenges?”</i></p> <p>The response to this from the S&C meeting was about setting up 2/3 working day contracts and staff being offered a flexible approach to work such as a job share, meetings online etc. (Please refer to S&C meeting minutes for further clarification)</p> <p>Senior Structure had been previously circulated with Governors.</p>	
10.		<p>Next S&C Focus: Wellbeing/PHSE and Safeguarding Audit with a <u>LEARNING WALK</u> to evidence the practice within the school</p> <p>The Chair asked, <i>“Are we capturing those issues in exit interviews in a more formal way, is there anymore that could be done?”</i></p> <p>JR responded that moving forward, flexible working/ part time working opportunities might help us to keep the great staff/recruit great staff that might be put off by full time only positions.</p> <p>The GP pointed out that retention was regularly discussed on a Trustee level as a huge focus of the trust, it was also on the Risk Register and the Strategy plan.</p>	<p>The Chair to raise the Relational Approach and using this with recruitment, job description/interviews at S&C meeting.</p>
11.		<p>Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups</p> <p><i>The Governors asked, “What is the ETHOS Committee?”</i></p> <p><i>“Should my School incorporate this?”</i></p> <p><i>“What does SIAMS stand for?”</i></p> <p>The Chair explained that the CofE schools had ETHOS Committees which were SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) point of Governance, the other non-CofE schools had a School life group, both were created to hear the parent forum and had been running in the same ways, This was up to the school to decide if they had their own ETHOS groups.</p> <p>JR added that Sharon Lord had set up a monitoring schedule for the ETHOS groups and had introduced a template for how she wanted the meeting minutes to look.</p> <p>(Please refer to Harbertonford visit notes for more detail)</p>	
12.		<p>Evaluation of governance impact</p> <p>The Governors were invited to share their thoughts.</p> <p>The GP thanked the LAC for their hard work and challenging questions which showed that things were being read and that was how things are improved.</p>	

The Meeting ended at 8.15pm.

Signed as a true record by the Chair on