



Standards Committee Meeting
Monday 17th July 2023 at 17:00 – 19:00
At Nexus HQ and via MS Teams

Those Present:		
Peter Castleton	Director /Chair	PC
Gillian Askew	Director	GA
Andrew Child	Member/Chair of Board of Directors – via Teams	AC
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
Michelle Smith	HR Manager – via Teams	MS
Richard Webster	Strategic Development Lead	RW
Matthew Sorby	For Item 5.4 only	MSo
Michelle Sault	Headteacher at West Riding Academy – for Item 5.1 only, via Teams	MSa
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO - Strategy & Partnerships – for Item 5.1 only, via Teams	JH
Vicky Hawksley	Clerk	VH
Rachael Booth	Advisor	RB
Apologies:		
Colin Bradley	Director	CB
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
<p>1.1. To receive, but not accept, apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from MG and CB.</p>	
<p>1.2. To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for MG and CB.</p>	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business.</p> <p>PC advised that part of the discussions in item 5.4 will cover the work of the Task and Finish Group and M Sorby will join the meeting for this item.</p>	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
<p>3.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>There were no declarations of personal or business interest received.</p>	
4. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES	
<p>4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 27th March 2023 were agreed and signed.</p> <p>The Clerk will finalise these minutes and send them to the Chair for signing.</p>	
<p>4.2. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.</p>	
<p>4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
<p>5.1 Presentation on Mental Health Commission</p> <p>JH and MSa gave a presentation on the Sheffield Therapy Commission. A copy of this has been uploaded to Governor Hub.</p> <p>JH explained the background to this work. A menu of options has been devised which can be linked into the Sheffield City Council inclusion support systems.</p> <p>MSa has worked closely with JT and the Extended Schools Team to ensure this commission is functioning effectively. MSa explained how interventions are put in place and that the therapists we are using are having a beneficial effect on the pupils they are working with.</p>	

Three types of therapy are being provided: Art Therapy, Talking Therapy and an Exposure Therapy App. All of these have been beneficial for our students.

AC asked: what is Exposure Therapy and what does the app do? This is targeted at children who are school-phobic and are unable to access learning because of this. These children are able to use the app to access real life events, activities, learning etc with the aim of gradually progressing to a stage where they may be able to get into school for a short period and gradually build this up over time. MSa gave several examples of how Exposure Therapy works and how this helps children to overcome their fears and achieve goals that are realistic for them.

The App has been developed by a third party and we purchase licences for access to this app. The children have access to the app and we provide the support for them to use this. The app is approved by the National Institute of Clinical Health Excellence.

Officers have provided case studies for Sheffield Council on the impact this service is having on young people and for every therapeutic intervention we offer, we monitor progress throughout and ask children to complete an Experience of Service questionnaire at the end of the process.

When therapy ends, we provide the school, parent and child with a range of strategies for them to continue using.

We have been allocated £80k for this project and progress has been pleasing so far. We will be reporting on this to Sheffield City Council by the end of September and initial feedback has been good and the initiative is working really well.

AC asked: what are the hard metrics for measuring success? How do you do this when all the therapies have to be measured in a different way? MSa answered that we have a range of baselining and tracking tools at the start of the process which we use to measure the therapeutic interventions from the goal-based outcomes of the app. These baselining and tracking tools are the same ones used by all CAMHS. We can measure progress in detail for every child and parent and the "Experience of Service" questionnaire at the end enables us to gather detailed information on how successful this has been.

PC asked: Is this a commission undertaken by Nexus on behalf of schools in Sheffield, rather than exclusively for Nexus schools? JH answered yes, and that the pupils who access this are all in mainstream schools.

PC asked: What is the benefit to Nexus of engaging in this commission and how does it relate to the work that Nexus is doing? JH explained that this fits with our work on providing positive interventions to children, wherever they are in the education system. Also, some of the therapists that we are using are also working as therapists in some of our own schools. This has been really beneficial and some of our schools have been using the app as well.

MSa explained that this initiative has also opened Nexus up to the option of having Art therapy students working with us from Sheffield Hallam University for free. We are

<p>looking at developing this further and making connections with other schools where possible.</p> <p>CEO explained that the purpose of this commission is to help to build a more appropriate provision locally and support for all our children across Sheffield, which we have a moral and ethical obligation to contribute to.</p> <p>PC stated that Directors are clear that we should continue to positively engage with this and thanked JH, MSa and her colleagues for their work. JH stated that the commission has also been extended to August 2024 and this is likely to extend further.</p> <p>MSa and JH left the meeting at 17.41 pm.</p>	
<p>5.2 Nexus MAT Conference Evaluation Feedback</p> <p>A report on the detailed feedback from the recent conference had been circulated in advance to Directors.</p> <p>JT explained that a short questionnaire had been sent out to staff after the event to gain feedback on the workshops and other activities on offer on the day. A summary of the feedback is contained in the report.</p> <p>AC asked: Were there any negative comments? JT answered yes, there were a few comments which are detailed in the report. However, feedback was overwhelmingly positive.</p> <p>AC asked: Were these negative comments justified? JT replied possibly. The main comment was that some staff struggled to apply what the key note speaker in the morning was saying to their daily work and others felt the information shared was too complex.</p> <p>GA asked: Could Directors be provided with a glossary of acronyms? There is a glossary in the report to the Standards Committee but a full list could be put on Governor Hub.</p> <p>GA asked: Were any of the workshops at the conference recorded and if so, could Directors be given access to these? Also, could Directors be invited to the next conference? JT explained that the workshops were not recorded but we can look at this for the next conference. Directors will be invited to the next conference in 2025.</p> <p>GA asked – there were lots of workshops on offer and staff had to choose to attend 2 of these. Were they able to get information on the workshops that they couldn't attend and how did we cascade this information to staff? JT answered that the Trust asked Headteachers to ensure that their staff attended a wide range of workshops to ensure good coverage of as many workshops as possible. We did not officially give options for information to be cascaded to all staff.</p> <p>For future events, we could consider what workshops we offer and whether these are the right ones for our staff.</p>	<p>CLERKING SERVICES 16/01/24</p>

<p>PC asked – there was a large number of workshops on offer. Is there any way this could be reduced or repeated to allow more staff to attend? We were keen for the workshops to be accessible to all our staff and we were reluctant to ask too many of our own staff to deliver these workshops as they would then miss out on being able to attend other workshops. We will consider offering these activities in a more consistent way and we are already discussing whether we will run the conference in the same way in future, given the size of the Trust workforce and the limitations on appropriate, affordable venues.</p>	
<p>5.3 CSIF Delivery Plan – Update report</p> <p>JT explained that this is a working document and will be referred back to on a regular basis.</p> <p>PC commented that the use of Blue, Green and Red to identify improvements etc is really useful and allows Directors to gain a clear picture of progress over the academic year.</p> <p>No further questions.</p>	
<p>5.4 Standards Committee Report</p> <p>MSo joined the meeting at 17.54 pm for this item.</p> <p>PC explained that the Task and Finish group had been looking at development a new dataset which would be useful for Directors on this committee to have a secure, higher level view as the Trust grows. MSo has been instrumental in shaping the information contained in this report.</p> <p>PC asked: Are Directors happy with the way in which the data has been collected and the format and content of the report? Directors felt that the format and content of the report was helpful.</p> <p>MSo explained that drawing accurate data from a range of different sources is challenging and we are working hard to ensure that consistent data is provided.</p> <p>PC asked: Some of the data is numerical and some is in graph form – does the data capture what we want it to? Yes.</p> <p>CEO feels that there are areas within the dashboard where self-assessment is not clearly defined, and this is an area to consider for the future. Directors need to be clear that we can drill down into each KPI to allow for greater interrogation of data.</p> <p>CEO explained that any data not contained in this report is included in the SPSB reports where the qualitative judgements and discussions are held.</p> <p>All Directors were satisfied with the format and content of this report and agreed that this format would be used for reporting to future Standards Committee meetings.</p> <p>JT explained that it has been a very positive year overall with lots of notable successes. The work of our Trust Cabinet has been really strong this year. We have run two very</p>	

successful sports days which were led by our students and we are very proud of the developing training offer through the Nexus Learning Institute with a growing number of trainers and courses now available and accessible for all our staff.

Quality Assurance (QA) processes are working well and we have tools to support schools where necessary. The Headteacher Away Day held last Friday was really successful and feedback was very positive from all aspects of the day.

There have been some emergent challenges this year, namely around curriculum sequencing, knowledge progression. One school has recently joined us on a Partnership Agreement and we have had to mobilise capacity and resources for this school.

Network groups have been invaluable across the Trust as outlined on pages 6 and 7 of the report.

AC asked: Are there any network groups that should not continue? JT said yes, and feels that we may need to consider how and by whom these are chaired in future in some cases.

AC asked: Are there any network groups that we would like but do not already have? Yes, definitely. Subject Leaders is one example.

GA asked: On Page 11 in the reference to attendance trend changes to coding and reporting absences – Was this a change in reporting on or an actual change in attendance? MSo explained that this was reported attendance not the actual attendance of the pupils.

PC asked: Is the attendance table in this report helpful for Directors in identifying school trends? Directors all agreed it is.

PC noted that the attendance trend at Nexus is lower than national for special schools (see graph on page 9). Is there an explanation for this? JT answered that the attendance trend across Nexus MAT is only 1% lower than national. We do have three schools within the Trust whose attendance has been significantly lower (Becton, Kenwood and Heatherwood) for credible reasons but this adversely affects the overall attendance average across the Trust.

AC asked: Given the uniqueness of the schools within Nexus, should we set national attendance targets to one side because they do not really reflect the nature of our schools? CEO feels that these targets are useful as contextual data, providing that we maintain a helpful and realistic perspective on this.

Directors felt that it was very useful to have a clear document which summarises what has been happening in the Trust over the last 12 months.

PC asked: At the start of the report, in the section relating to contextual information, this refers to primary, secondary and other. Most of our schools will be in the Other category – is this the right way to describe the schools in the Trust? MSo explained that this term comes from the data set itself, but we hope to be able to create our own datasets in future.

<p>5.5 Dashboard Report – Confidential Report</p> <p>Two reports had been circulated to Directors in advance of this meeting. The following question was raised:</p> <p>AC asked – Has the situation at Hilltop relating to the recent complaints, been resolved? CEO explained that there have been no further complaints and the LA have provided a supportive response to Ofsted to all the complaints received.</p>	
<p>5.6 Schools in receipt of Early Intervention Report</p> <p>The report was circulated in advance of this meeting. No questions or comments were raised that had not been covered elsewhere in this meeting.</p>	
<p>5.7 Safeguarding and LAC Report</p> <p>There has been an increase in the number of Child in Need (CIN) cases across the Trust but it should be noted that we have taken on 3 additional schools since this time last year as well as growing Kenwood and other schools, all of which has affected numbers.</p> <p>CEO explained the changes relating to Keeping Children Safe In Educations (KSCIE) and that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is now responsible for filtering and monitoring what children can see and access via the internet. Our DSLs will receive Trust support on the specifics of filtering and monitoring and protocols for this are being established.</p> <p>GA asked: Relating to the increases in this report, how worried should we be as a Trust about this and are we doing all we can for these children and the staff who are supporting them? CEO is confident that we are supporting these children and staff appropriately. The main challenge is being able to secure social care support from a sector that is over stretched. The threshold for a child becoming LAC has risen. The situation is challenging but we are confident that we can reasonably respond to these increases.</p> <p>RB noted that the main problem for Headteachers relates to the difficulties in families being able to access Early Help services and we are finding that Early Help are passing a lot of cases back to the pastoral teams in schools.</p> <p>GA asked: As a Trust, have we got a sufficient handle on this to know when it is becoming problematic? CEO answered yes, we have evidence of where we have supported Heads and DSLs with specific cases and we have a clear pathway for this through line management. CEO is confident that we have robust systems and processes in place and our staff know their children and families well and make every effort to support them as much as possible.</p> <p>PC suggested that GA might wish to meet with some of the DSLs in the Trust and talk to pastoral teams to gain more insight into this area. As Safeguarding lead for the Trust, PC will be re-starting meetings with DSLs and will invite GA along to these in future. PC to provide possible dates for the CEO to arrange this meeting.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">PC 16/01/24</p>

<p>PC asked for clarification on the carrying of weapons in school. Are we clear on what we mean by a weapon? CEO explained that this is clearly outlined in our Behaviour Policy.</p>	
<p>5.8 HR Scorecard</p> <p>MS explained that this Scorecard relates to May 2023. MSo has carried out a lot of work on the teacher, non-teacher, FTE and gender split of staff and this information is contained in this report. Apprentices are now included in this data. We also have more accurate data on BAME and disability, though MS feels these are underreported areas.</p> <p>MS explained that the workforce profile has been changed to include data on the age range 55 and above.</p> <p>Absence data for May shows a high number of absences, particularly at Kelford and Hilltop schools. Most of these absences are short-term. Absence data is not yet available for June but initial indications are that this is much more stable.</p> <p>Recruitment and Retention – MS is confident that the figures presented are accurate. However, the profiles in the report do not give a true figure in terms of support staff and how they are grouped together. For future reports, admin and site staff will be grouped together, with groups for TAs, HLTAs and other staff being added.</p> <p>GA asked: The report states that the student profile across the Trust is 13.3% minority ethnic but the staff profile is 5.2% minority ethnic. What can we do to redress this imbalance? MS explained that the data in the report reflects what is input and often staff may not wish to state their ethnicity so it is difficult to report on this accurately. CEO also talked about the workforce supply of TAs typically coming from the communities where our schools are physically based, which aren't the same communities where the majority of our children live. Regardless, CEO acknowledged that more needed doing on this.</p> <p>Agreed that the Trust should continue to work towards attaining the right balance of staff and pupils which is reflective of the communities it serves.</p> <p>AC asked: How much of the Apprenticeship Levy is left for us to access? MS to find out how much is left and where the money has been spent.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">MS 16/01/24</p>
<p>5.9 Happiness Plan</p> <p>CEO explained the background to this Plan. We do not currently publish this document, but Directors felt that prospective employees should be made aware of what support is available to Nexus employees. CEO explained that we do capture this in the Workforce Engagement Statement which is shared with staff annually and published on the Trust website.</p> <p>It was suggested that this could be promoted as a Health and Wellbeing Plan rather than a Happiness Plan.</p> <p>GA asked: What does the Trust do to ensure that temporary/agency staff are getting the same benefits as permanent staff? CEO explained that the Trust aims</p>	

to ensure that these staff move across to permanent employment with the Trust as soon as possible. GA asked: Does everyone have the same experience of Nexus regardless of how they come to work for us? No, not at the moment but CEO will look into this in more detail. GA and CEO to meet separately on the issue of agency labour and report back to the next meeting.	CEO/GA 16/01/24
5.10 Annual Safeguarding Statement of Assurance No comments or questions raised.	
5.11 Risk Register No changes made since the last review carried out in June.	
5.12 Minutes of the Schools' Performance Scrutiny Board Meetings No questions raised.	
6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair. There were no urgent business items to discuss.	
7. CONFIDENTIALITY	
7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting None raised.	
7.2. To consider any areas of risk discussed in the meeting None.	
8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS	

Tuesday 16 th January 2024	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 7 th May 2024	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 16 th July 2024	5 – 7pm	MS Teams

Minutes approved by Trust Board of Directors

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE