



Standards Committee Meeting
Monday 12th September at 17:00 – 19:00
via MS Teams

Those Present:		
Peter Castleton	Director /Chair	PC
Gillian Askew	Director	GA
Rachael Booth	Advisor	RB
Andrew Child	Member/Chair of Board of Directors	AC
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Vicky Hawksley	Nexus MAT Clerk	Clerk
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
Michelle Smith	HR Manager	MS
Apologies:		
Richard Webster	Strategic Development Lead	RW
No Apologies:		

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
<p>1.1. To receive, but not accept, apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from RW.</p>	
<p>1.2. To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for RW.</p>	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timings of these meetings in 2023-24 – JT. <p>PC reminded everyone that this meeting was rescheduled from the summer term and the reports are the ones issued in the summer term. Updated information will be available at the next meeting.</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 28th March 2022 were agreed and signed.</p> <p>The Clerk will finalise these minutes and send them to the Chair for signing.</p>	Clerk 15.9.22
<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>There were no matters arising.</p>	
5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
<p>5.1. Standards Committee Report, including CSIF Delivery Plan – Update (Attached Documents)</p> <p>JT gave the headlines from each section of the report which is updated with data from the Spring term. JT reported that collaboration groups continue to be successful and there has been some good progress made around alignment across schools, particularly in relation to assessment and knowledge progression grids.</p>	

PC asked whether this progress was as a result of the co-operation groups and JT confirmed that this was the case.

JT explained that the collaboration groups are also feeding into the Dashboard and School Improvement Plans and that lots of new partnerships have been forged last year. In addition, we have made partnerships with the Exchange Teaching Hub and the Maths and English Hubs and have also worked closely with Doncaster LA and their outreach service, along with Barnsley commissioners, looking at extended schools.

We held a shared INSET day which was attended by all staff across the Trust and we are planning a conference in February 2023. The portal has been launched and this allows us to gather data centrally on performance, family support casework, safeguarding etc. This will allow us to conduct analysis across all schools in the Trust.

MH has started in her post as Early Reading and Phonics Lead and has identified areas where support is needed.

All schools have been signposted to the National Professional Qualifications and we will be able to ascertain how many of our staff are accessing these courses.

We have introduced Executive Regional Directors and Executive Primary Leads and have identified specific roles and responsibilities for these posts.

CEO pointed out that work is still in progress on issues around quality assurance and where the boundaries are between line managers and the role of the support and challenge partner. As the year progresses we should have instances where we can identify what falls where. In due course, we will bring this matter back to the Directors.

PC asked whether this fits with the Trust's notion of subsidiarity. CEO explained that the only issue is whether staff in place have sufficient understanding of the role and what is required.

JT stated that we have also recruited a Performance and Data Analyst who is now in post and is starting to collate and analyse outcome data.

Attendance (Section 4 of the report) – JT explained that the majority of schools are above national average for attendance. One of the new Executive Regional Directors will pick up attendance as part of their role and will work alongside schools to encourage greater attendance across all schools.

Assessment data – JT explained that the data in this report runs up to the Spring term. SATs results for Crags were; Reading 51%, Writing 51% and Maths 53% - these results are very similar to the school's own self-assessment predictions. The results are below the national average however and the school is engaging with the national tutoring programme to look at ways of addressing this.

Collaborative School Improvement Framework Delivery Plan – the majority of actions in this Plan were successful and have been achieved. This Plan has been used as the basis for the 2022-23 priorities.

The Safeguarding 175 audit has been completed by all schools and all have undergone internal and external scrutiny.

PC thanked JT for her work on this comprehensive and detailed report.

A number of questions were raised as follows:

1. AC referred to Page 3 Paragraph 2.2 which refers to 'redefining these groups as collaboration groups' – Do some schools participate more than others? CEO explained that all schools participate but not all attend all the groups. Where a particular issue is not a priority at school level then they may engage less in the group. For example, Careers will be a less important issue for Craggs as they finish education at KS2 level. We do have a commitment from the schools to contribution to broad improvement across the Trust and all schools are doing this.
2. AC referred to Paragraph 3 re capacity – Is there a spreadsheet which sets out data relating to capacity? What exactly is the capacity in which topics and is this defined somewhere? CEO explained that this information would be defined broadly in the Dashboard. We may have more capacity in one school than another depending on the type of school and the type of need for support. Broad indicators for Directors are the Summary Indicators in the Dashboard but the definition of this is subjective depending on the school and the area.
3. PC asked about partnerships and asked whether it is possible to assess the value of partnership working and have we got examples of these partnerships working in our interests? CEO explained that we can obtain evidence from schools where we commission partnerships and this information will be in the Local Governing Body reports for 2021-22. CEO gave an example of family support and Early Help in Doncaster and explained that, because we have actively sought to work with Doncaster LA we have fewer open cases now. JT pointed out that partnerships with Local Authorities are crucial to enable us to offer the packages available to families etc.
4. AC referred to paragraph 3.8 relating to the CPD Learning Pyramid. How has this been perceived by the two new schools in the Trust, Beech and Fountaindale. CEO explained that both schools had experienced difficulties prior to joining the Trust but is confident that they have started the new school years as confident and fully functioning members of the Trust family and are participating fully in all areas. We will continue to support both schools as much as we can.
5. AC asked why there had been only a 30% return rate on the employee survey? MS hypothesised that part of the issue was that staff were struggling because of the impact of Covid and that completing this survey was the last thing on their minds. MS feels that some staff may have been deterred by the survey being only online, and some staff not being confident in completing this online and will therefore be reviewing how we promote this next time to achieve a better response rate.
6. GA asked what the normal response rate would be for this survey. MS explained that we would normally expect this to be much higher. The previous response (in 2020)

<p>was 75%. A number of schools in the Trust had particularly low response rates and we will analyse this and look at what can be done to improve response rates in future.</p> <p>7. AC noted the issue about some staff not being confident with IT and asked whether that raises concerns given the importance of IT within the Trust. MS feels this is more related to a fear of not wanting to ask others how to complete the survey and also some cleaning staff may not have access to laptops at home and would be reluctant to ask to use a computer at their school. MS feels we need to target these staff in future and give more prompts to staff to respond.</p> <p>8. PC asked whether the steady increase in numbers on roll at Becton is sustainable and manageable and whether it is highlighting any other issues we need to address? CEO explained that the growth of numbers at Becton is directly related to the growth on Kenwood. CEO noted that we are approaching the limit of our capacity with Becton, however we have taken the decision to open West Riding as a hub of Becton from the start of September. CEO explained how this situation is being managed and that Directors will be briefed on the updates on this situation in due course. CEO is confident that the increase in numbers at Becton has sustainable as it has been planned and capacity has been put in place in advance.</p> <p>9. Paragraph 6.26 – After-school clubs survey – PC noted that a number of responses indicated difficulties with the online payments system for these clubs. Has this been a deterrent in accessing these clubs? JT explained that we have tried to streamline systems and move to electronic systems where possible. However, some schools have not yet adopted the Parent Pay app or have been late in doing so. JT reported that we do support parents as much as possible when there are difficulties in accessing this.</p> <p>PC thanked JT for her helpful and comprehensive report and feedback on questions.</p>	
<p>5.2 Dashboard Report – Referred from TBoD</p> <p>This was reported to Directors at the June Board meeting and referred to this Committee for any further questions.</p> <p>CEO and JT have reviewed the KPIs and tried to align them more closely with the Ofsted inspection framework for 2022-23. This will be discussed at the Director Away Day event later this month.</p> <p>The Dashboard indicates that we were correct in our assessment of Becton and that the school with the most areas of insecurity is Coppice. Leadership changes have taken place at this school and we are confident we can move to a secure Good very quickly. The following question was raised:</p> <p>10. It is encouraging that the inspection at Becton bore out our own internal judgements. However, given the uncertainties around teacher recruitment nationally at the moment, are there any indications that this might become a problem for the Trust? CEO explained that this is not a problem for the Trust and that we have an</p>	

<p>inversion of staff at special schools who often stay for long periods of time. The biggest challenge has been recruiting non-teaching staff and we are putting measures in place to try and increase our recruitment potential. MS explained that a suggestion of an 'Open Day' for recruitment was put forward and the Trust could look at this as an option when we are recruiting multiple posts in one school.</p>	
<p>5.3 HR Scorecard</p> <p>MS explained that this is still a 'work in progress'. It appears that some staff are reluctant to complete some aspects of the scorecard and we therefore need to encourage them to report their situations to us so that we can support them appropriately and can report accurately.</p> <p>MS explained that the Scorecard data is somewhat misleading because it does not give an accurate reflection of our staff, particularly in the areas of ethnicity and disability. The Trust is doing all it can to be open and honest with staff to encourage them to share their data with us.</p> <p>Absence – MS reported that good progress is being made on this. A number of monitoring meetings have been held with staff relating to attendance and we are supporting Headteachers in schools with this. The next iteration of this scorecard will be available to before the next meeting.</p>	<p>MS 5.12.22</p>
<p>5.4 Employee Opinion Survey Summary Report</p> <p>MS reported that responses were lower this year but noted that the last survey conducted was done in paper form and some staff are more comfortable with this method. We will work on increasing the response rate in future to give meaningful data.</p> <p>There were lots of suggestions around how the Trust could better support staff and some suggestions relating to staff morale, celebrating success, mindfulness, mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Feedback overall was positive however some staff feel that the Trust leaders are not visible enough around the schools. MS will look at how this might be addressed for future years.</p> <p>JH has compiled detailed reports for the Trust overall and for individual schools and has worked with Headteachers to give feedback on responses and where appropriate has compiled support plans.</p> <p>The Employee Assistance programme is in place and started from 1st September. We have already received positive feedback on this programme. Sessions on Yoga, mindfulness etc are being considered and MS is intending to give an update to this meeting in December.</p> <p>CEO referred to the issue of Trust visibility and whether we are asking the right questions in the survey and in the right way. For example, how visible does the Trust</p>	<p>MS 5.12.22</p>

<p>need to be if schools are working well themselves and have strong leadership and management systems.</p> <p>A number of questions were raised on this item:</p> <p>11. GA referred to item 3.7 of the report which relates to wellbeing. What more could the Trust do for staff wellbeing and the logistics of hosting yoga and mindfulness sessions in schools or online?</p> <p>12. Do we understand in what capacity and for what reason we want Trust directors to be visible? Do we know what as directors would be useful and valuable in the capacity of visibility and what do we need to be doing to address this? Schools are led by their Headteacher so it is not a normal function for the Trust to be visible in the school unless there is a specific issue or concern.</p> <p>Lengthy discussion took place on whether the initial survey question is being asked in the right way and CEO feels that Directors should perhaps reflect on how we get a sense from our workforce that the Trust is being governed effectively. It was suggested that this issue be discussed in more detail at the forthcoming Development Day or a future Board meeting</p> <p>AC pointed out that this is an issue that is raised every 2-3 years in the Trust and is more about profile rather than visibility. This links in with the Student Parliament model which has links with the Board of Directors. AC referred to one idea which works in another trust is to allocate one director to 2 or 3 schools in the Trust to act as a link person and establish a connection between the schools and the Board.</p> <p>CEO explained that we are planning to establish a Staff Parliament model which will have an interface with the Board of Directors.</p> <p>Agreed that this issue needs further discussion at a future Trust Board meeting.</p>	
<p>5.5 Standards and LAC Report</p> <p>CEO – report circulated in advance with data taken from the autumn term. LAC numbers have been relatively static with no major changes throughout the year. We have not seen the increases in statutory interventions predicted by the pandemic.</p> <p>CEO reported that we have had a safeguarding matter referred to Ofsted and they will handle this in due course.</p> <p>CEO reported that safeguarding arrangements are deemed effective across the Trust.</p>	
<p>5.6 Draft Designated Safeguarding Director Statement of Assurance</p> <p>Report circulated in advance to Directors.</p>	<p>CEO 5.12.22</p>

<p>PC asked whether this statement can be strengthened in future and this was echoed by other directors. This would relate mainly to what the key matters and issues are on safeguarding across the Trust. CEO to work on strengthening the statement as outlined.</p>	
<p>5.7 Risk Register (SI Element)</p> <p>Directors have seen this report already and noted that changes relate mainly to risks being reduced for the residual RAG rating.</p>	
<p>5.8 Pupil Parliament – Trust Cabinet Minutes 14.07.22</p> <p>Minutes for information only to ensure directors have copies of minutes.</p> <p>AC asked whether the pupils taking part feel that they are adding value to the governance of the Trust? CEO feels it is too early to say at the moment as there has only been one meeting.</p> <p>PC asked whether the Pupil Parliament minutes are confidential. CEO explained that these do not appear in the public domain but we could designate them as confidential if deemed appropriate. PC indicated a preference for the minutes being deemed confidential to protect the anonymity of contributors. CEO noted this for future minutes.</p>	
6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair</p> <p>Timings of meetings for 2023-24 – CEO and JT proposing to change the schedule of these meetings from 2023-2024 to enable directors to be given the best and most up-to-date information at each meeting. CEO and JT are therefore proposing that the first Standards Committee meeting of the year should be held in January to allow for information and data from the Autumn term to be discussed at this meeting. The Spring meeting could be held in May with the Summer meeting being held in July or possibly even September.</p> <p>All directors agreed to this proposal from September 2023 onwards.</p>	<p>Clerk 20.09.22</p>
7. CONFIDENTIALITY	
<p>7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>No items were deemed to be confidential.</p>	
<p>7.2. To consider any areas of risk discussed in the meeting</p> <p>None.</p>	
8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS	

Monday 5 th December 2022	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Monday 27 th March 2023	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Monday 17 th July 2023	5 – 7pm	MS Teams

Minutes approved by Trust Board of Directors

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE