

Minutes of the Trustee Standards and Performance committee

Pyramus House Roman Way, Grange Park Northampton NN4 5EA

Monday 30 January 2023 @ 10.00am

These minutes reflect the order of the discussion, not necessarily the order of the agenda.

Attendance		
Role	Name	Present
Trustee	Leigh Jones (Chair) ☎	P
Trustee	Nick Bell ☎	P
Trustee	Martin Conlon ☎	P
Trustee	Fiona Wheeler ☎	P
	In Attendance	
Chief Executive Officer	Josh Coleman ☎	P
Head of Education	John Lawson	P
Head of School Development	Katy Russell ☎	P
	Callum Brown (Orchard Academy)	P
	Rebecca Thompson (Thompson Team) ☎	P
	Laura Ward (NIA) ☎	P
	Simon Woodhouse (Prince Williams School) ☎	P
Governance Professional	Juliette Pierson	P
P=Present A=Apologies x = Absent		

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded all that the matters discussed during the meeting should remain confidential until such time as the minutes were approved.	
2. Apologies	No apologies were received in advance of the meeting.	
3. Quoracy	The meeting was confirmed as quorate. The Chair notified attendees of the need to leave the meeting at 11.30am. In the absence of a Vice Chair, the Governance Professional asked for a Trustee to take over at that point. Nick Bell offered to chair from 11.30am until the end of the meeting.	
4. Declarations of interest	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda that had not already been declared on the annual Register of Interests.	
5. Minutes of S&P meeting held on 25/11/2022 & matters arising not appearing on the Action Log.	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 25/11/2022 had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting and were agreed by all present to be an accurate representation of the meeting that took place. The Chair agreed to sign the minutes.</p> <p>The appointment of a Vice Chair and a discussion around the forthcoming Industrial Action were added under item 13 Any Other Business.</p>	

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<p>6. Actions arising from the meeting held on 25/11/2022</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organise FFT Training for Trustees – taking place on 01.02.23 @ 10.00am 2. Strategic Improvement Plan shared – completed 3. January Mock results to be added to the agenda for the January meeting – added to the agenda 4. The need for consistent recording of bullying incidents to be raised at the 6 December safeguarding Forum – completed 5. Investigation into a possible Mental Health Leads Forum – completed 6. Contact to be made with St Andrews Healthcare re further support regarding mental health – ongoing 7. EMAT Intimate Care Policy to be added to the January agenda – removed from agenda as policy was not ready. Will be approved outside the meeting – action carried forward to the next meeting 8. Upload policies to website – completed 9. HT at Orchard Academy to present an update at the next meeting – added to the agenda 10. Thompson team report added as a standing item alongside the performance reports – added to the agenda 	<p>JP to organise approval – Education team to update the policy</p>
<p>7. - Orchard Academy Headteacher presentation</p>	<p><i>GP Note: The Headteacher from Orchard Academy joined the meeting at 10.10am</i></p> <p>The Headteacher gave a presentation to Trustees covering an update on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to areas underperforming last year • The new SLT and their areas of focus • Pupil and staff attendance • Pupil behaviour • Aspen SEN unit and the first term • Update on recent data analysis <p>The Chair thanked the Headteacher for the informative update provided.</p> <p>In response to a question from a Trustee asking for further information around the children displaying problematic behaviour, the Headteacher explained that the school currently has five children for whom issues such as attachment and trauma mean that they are displaying extremely challenging behaviour, both in school and at home. The school has commissioned a report on each child from the Educational Psychologist who has concluded that the behaviour displayed is some of the most challenging and the cause is difficult to pinpoint and the behaviour predict.</p> <p>A Trustee commended the Headteacher on the work undertaken informing both parents and children of recent assessment outcomes and encouraging children to take responsibility for their own learning and for improving their results.</p>	

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	<p>In response to a question from a Trustee around the quality assurance of lessons, the Headteacher confirmed that lesson observations were taking place and feedback given promptly to teaching staff, both verbally and in writing.</p> <p>The Trustee responsible for SEND expressed a keen interest in visiting the school. The Headteacher confirmed that this would be welcomed and could take place at any time.</p> <p><i>GP Note: MC left the meeting at 10.40am due to poor connection.</i></p> <p><i>GP Note: The Headteacher at Orchard Academy left the meeting at 10.44am.</i></p>	<p>GP to assist with organising a visit to Orchard for NB.</p>
<p>7a. Industrial Action</p>	<p><i>GP Note: This item was taken early due to the Chair leaving the meeting early.</i></p> <p>Update on Forthcoming Industrial Action</p> <p>In response to a question from the Chair about the forthcoming planned national industrial action taken by the teaching unions, the CEO provided a summary of the preparation work undertaken by the Trust. The Trust has been informed by NEU that 129 teaching staff are members and potentially could strike. Following liaison with Headteachers and teaching staff, it is hoped that all trust schools will remain open. Primary phases will be fully open and secondary schools will close to KS3 only (with the exception of NIA year 7 who will be studying at home). There is a pool of staff (including central team) who may be able to travel to alternative schools to fill any gaps in staffing. The Trust has issued information and guidance to staff around the effect on pensions and loss of earnings from strike action.</p> <p>In response to a question around whether any teaching staff are worried about crossing picket lines, the CEO explained that the Trust has issued guidance and informed staff that support will be provided by schools for anyone wishing to attend work, if required.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the CEO for the work undertaken and for keeping the trust schools open to as many pupils as possible.</p>	
<p>8. Performance Reports overview and individual schools</p>	<p>Standing Item Papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>In response to a question around the reason why persistent absence across both primary and secondary phases remains high, the Head of School Development outlined that it is partly due to the problem with attendance figures being calculated over a half term (ie a short period of term) in comparison to national figures which are calculated over a year. However, persistent absence is higher across some schools than expected. The education team are working with attendance leads in schools to monitor levels and interrogating absence measures as part of school reviews. Schools are taking all reasonable measures to follow up absences and working with individual families to reduce overall absence. The CEO further outlined that there has</p>	

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	<p>been a significant increase in cases where anxiety and school refusal is a cause of prolonged absence.</p>	
<p>9. Safeguarding Matters</p>	<p>Standing Item Papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>A Trustee asked the Head of Education to give a brief summary of safeguarding across the Trust whilst the Thompson Team were dialled in to the meeting. The Head of Education summarised that recent school reviews were positive, and no significant concerns were identified. Robust systems and processes have been put in place and there is a high degree of confidence that safeguarding practices are secure across the trust.</p> <p><i>GP Note: Rebecca Thompson from the Thompson Team joined the meeting at 11.04am</i></p> <p>A copy of the presentation was circulated with the agenda in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>A Trustee asked whether in future it was possible to be provided with some data over the same period or the previous period, for comparison purposes. RT outlined that this would be provided but added a caveat that figures may not reduce as often with mental health, referrals are encouraged as a positive step.</p> <p>The Chair commended the work on safeguarding and mental health taking place across the Trust for both staff and pupils.</p> <p>In response to a question from a Trustee regarding the severity of MASH referrals, RT explained that the majority of referrals resulted in investigations and further support being provided such as parenting support but no further action. There are a number of serious cases, but these are being dealt with effectively in-house. The Head of Education added that the Thompson Team are doing an effective job supporting Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and have increased the level of professionalism and support provided to move Safeguarding forward across the trust.</p> <p>Both Trustees and the CEO gave thanks to the Thompson Team for the work undertaken and the support provided.</p> <p><i>RT left the meeting at 11.17am</i></p> <p><i>GP Note: The Chair handed over to Nick Bell for the remainder of the meeting at 11.17am.</i></p>	
<p>10. Primary Assessment Data – Autumn Assessment Update</p>	<p>Papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>The Head of School Development gave a brief verbal summary of the main points. Schools are focusing more on their data this year and identifying areas for improvement. Pupils across years 1-5 completed assessments at the end of</p>	

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	<p>November which also included teacher assessments. The teacher assessment data is generally lower than the test results obtained, indicating that teaching staff are being cautious in their assessment of children. Year 5 across the trust have the strongest results and there is a particular concern around KS1 at NIA. Work is being undertaken to support staff at NIA on the provision within the classroom as some early years' skills are not fully developed. Stimpson have lower results in KS1 and in reading. Stimpson reading is proving to be a bit of a conundrum as teaching is strong.</p> <p>Trustees gave thanks for the summary provided. In response to a question from a Trustee around the KS1 results at Stimpson and whether any analysis had been carried out on the cohort, the Head of School Development responded that analysis has shown that a number of new children have joined the school mid-year which has potentially affected the results. School leaders are looking at groups of children who need to make the most progress and are supporting with interventions to expedite progress.</p> <p><i>GP note: LJ left the meeting at 11.29am</i></p> <p>A Trustee asked for further information on the reasons for the exceptionally low year 1 reading results at NIA and asked what is being done about improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The Head of Education explained that the quality of teaching at NIA is inconsistent across the school. To address this, the school has implemented a specific coaching strategy based upon research. Where staff have been identified as requiring additional support, more experienced teaching staff will work alongside individual staff members to improve certain individual aspects of their teaching. NIA piloted the scheme last year and it was found to be worthwhile. Each school across the trust has an objective in the School Development Plan around improving the quality of teaching and the trust is expecting the quality of teaching to improve.</p> <p>The CEO added that the trust is supporting all schools to move forwards with the quality of their teaching and learning. Leadership capacity has been increased at the NIA in order to support the primary Headteacher and a mentor provided together with subject specialist teachers and the introduction of interventions. Mitigations are not accepted for children not moving forwards.</p>	
<p>11. Secondary – Assessment Data Key Stage 4 results</p>	<p>January Mock Results KS4/5 Papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>Simon Woodhouse (PWS) and Laura Ward (NIA) joined the meeting to deliver a presentation on the secondary assessment data for the year 11 and 13 mock examinations, held across both schools in November. For these cohorts, this was the first time exams had been completed in exam conditions due to the change of arrangements around Covid. The assessments were based on past exam papers. The grade boundaries used in 2022 were more generous and it is widely publicised that these will return to 2019 levels.</p>	<p>.</p>

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	<p>The GCSE data for November 2022 was presented in comparison to the data around GCSE data achieved within each school in November 2021. LW outlined that the cohort at NIA is significantly larger and more able this year but that the data is poor indicates there are significant issues. There is an expectation that pupils will increase by a grade between November and the exams in the Summer, but this will not address the gap between the grades obtained and student's target grades, so interventions have been put in place. There is some concern around some of the particular results in certain subjects such as languages, business and drama and interventions and additional support have been put in place.</p> <p>SW explained that the cohort at PWS is the same in terms of size, but slightly more able. The grades achieved are comparable to the same period last year. The SEND gap and the gender gap seen last year is much smaller, however the gap between the attainment of pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils is slightly larger, which is being addressed.</p> <p>A Trustee commended the education department on the quality of the data and asked whether or not pupils had coped with completing the assessments in exam conditions. SW explained that: there were a small proportion of U grades; one or two pupils with longer term absences had difficulties; and that a small number of students with health issues will be entered for core subjects only.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium attainment and how much could be attributed to Covid. SW outlined that prior to Covid there was a larger gap between the two groups, which by 2019 had been reduced to virtually no gap. The main contributory factor is attendance and this has been impacted by Covid. Specific pupils are being monitored and supported in order to reduce the gap. The CEO commented that the cohort is a difficult to engage year group and that persistent absence is a key issue but having reduced the gap before, the school has the expertise to be able to replicate this achievement over time.</p> <p>Following further analysis of the data, Trustees were asked whether there were any further questions. A Trustee outlined a recent visit to the NIA, expressed an appreciation of the work undertaken but outlined several areas of concern; the data is not reliable; some questions were released ahead of the examinations; despite this, the results are significantly below where they are expected to be; the school is changing a GCSE English text three months before the examination and asked why these things have only recently been identified as being a problem. In response to the statement that pupils were informed of questions from the examination paper in advance, the CEO outlined that it is impossible to stop instances such as this happening completely as it is down to individual staff behaviour and issues of non-compliance stem from being an inadequate school. The trust and the school have worked hard to stabilise the school quickly and address any issues with safeguarding and behaviour. Work is now concentrating on the curriculum and the quality of teaching provided. The leadership team is now stable with a new</p>	

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	<p>structure and a new Headteacher will be in post from February half term. The school is now in an improved position to drive improvements forward.</p> <p>LW explained that the mock results were poor and measures have been put in place to help the cohort of pupils to achieve their best and to improve quickly, such as teaching from specialist staff, changes to subject leadership and advice sought from exam boards. Measures are also being put in place for years 10 and 12 which were not completed last year for the current years 11 and 13. There has also been a big shift in educating staff in how a normal exam series should run.</p> <p>The Chair gave thanks to LW for the hard work being undertaken around assessments and teaching and learning.</p> <p>A Trustee commented that following a recent walk around NIA, behaviour is now good but there is a lack of lesson observations being carried out and children are having to lead their own learning where cover teachers are not subject specialists. The CEO confirmed that the new Headteacher and leadership team would be carrying out learning walks and that the English team at PWS are working with the English team at NIA to offer additional support.</p> <p>A Trustee commented that there should be an additional meeting scheduled before the May meeting to check on the progress at NIA. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that written feedback would be sent out instead of an additional meeting.</p> <p>SW provided further analysis of the PWS A level mock results which were pleasing. Only seven U grades were obtained (three from one student who is restarting the course). Boys did not achieve as well as girls and this is being monitored by the school. The focus is on improving the number of pupils achieving the higher grades.</p> <p>The Chair commented on the strong performance at PWS and thanked SW and the team for the work undertaken.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about applications for PWS sixth form and the capacity at the school to be able to take on additional students. SW reported that the school had received 140 applications to date for September and that additional space would be required and therefore, work is already underway on timetabling to accommodate the additional students. The CEO highlighted to Trustees that PWS was graded as 'Requires Improvement' when the trust took the school on and the school is now oversubscribed. Parallels were then drawn with the current situation at the NIA and the aspirations to undertake the same improvement work.</p> <p><i>GP note: SW left the meeting at 12.26pm</i></p> <p>LW advised Trustees that the prior attainment data was missing as there are issues with obtaining the data from SIMS.</p>	<p>LW to provide JP with updated data and commentary following the next assessments</p> <p>LW to send prior</p>

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	<p>LW provided further analysis of the GCSE mock results. The average grade attained is higher than in the mocks last year but the cohort is expected to achieve at a higher level. There is a gender gap as boys are not currently achieving as well as girls.</p> <p>A Trustee outlined some concerns with the A level predicted grades for UCAS forms and the support for applications received by students.</p> <p>In response to a question from a Trustee asking about the delay around the finance, the CEO summarised that there have been issues with a £500,000 overspend last year which is being investigated and the correct financial protocols being implemented.</p> <p>A Trustee praised the school for the plans that have been put in place and asked whether the desired impact will be achieved. LW explained that there has to be an impact and all plans are currently being monitored and measured to ensure the best chance of success for the students.</p> <p>In response to a question from a Trustee about the number of students showing an interest in staying on for sixth form next year, LW responded that the school has received 70 applications. A re-sit pathway will be offered to any student who just misses out on expected grades along with A level courses.</p> <p>The Chair recognised the challenging circumstances and thanked LW and the team for the work being undertaken. The Chair also thanked staff for the time given to the meeting attendance and preparation.</p> <p><i>GP Note: LW left the meeting at 12.42pm</i></p>	<p>attainment data to JP for circulation</p>
<p>12. Items for next agenda</p>	<p>Moving forward, the following items for discussion were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out a new date instead of 8 May due to the Coronation • Walk throughs and observations • Update from SW and LW re secondary assessment data • Update on data for Year6, phonics and EYFS. Luci from Stimpson to attend. • SEND specific item – Ruth Ryan to attend • Appointment of Vice Chair to the committee 	
<p>13. AOB</p>	<p>As the meeting was no longer quorate, the appointment of a Vice Chair was deferred to the next meeting on Tuesday 9 May 2023.</p> <p>There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12.46pm</p>	<p>Governance Professional to add to the agenda for the next meeting</p>
<p>14. Dates of Next Meetings</p>	<p>Dates for the academic year 2022/2023 have been set and distributed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 09/05/2023 at 10am 	<p>Calendar appointments sent to EMAT</p>

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="427 271 869 300">• Wednesday 19/07/2023 at 10am	email addresses

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The meeting closed at 12.45pm

Signed by Chair of Standards & Performance.....

Name..... Date.....

Actions from the EMAT Standards and Performance meeting – 30/01/2023

No.	Action	Owner
1.	EMAT Intimate Care Policy to be added to the January agenda – removed from agenda as policy was not ready. Once completed, to be approved by Trustees outside the meeting.	JP
2.	NB (Trustee responsible for SEND) to visit Orchard Academy	JP/NB
3.	LW to provide JP with updated data and commentary following the next assessments	LW
4.	LW to send prior attainment data to JP for circulation	LW
5.	Appointment of a Vice Chair for the S & P Committee to be added to the May agenda	JP
6.	Stimpson Avenue HT to be invited to present at the next meeting	JP
7.	SEND Lead, Ruth Ryan to be invited to present at the next meeting	JP