

Coppice Primary Partnership
Meeting of the Trustee Board
Wednesday 14th July 2021 at 5.30pm
Via Zoom

Present: Carole Hardy (Chair of Trustee Board), Mark Chatley (Trust Leader), John Edgar, Isabelle Linney-Drouet, Andrew Maitland, Peggy Murphy

In attendance: Andrew Lacey (Trust Business Manager), Carina Cuddington (Invited)

Clerk: Nicky Wheeler, Clare Nursey

Agenda item and discussion	Action/decision
<p>1 Welcome and any introductions CH welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that while this was possibly the last regular TB Zoom meeting, occasional meetings via Zoom might be held in future.</p>	
<p>2 Apologies for absence 2.1 All present except Neil McDonald. No apologies received.</p>	
<p>3 Declaration of business interests No new interests to declare.</p>	
<p>4 Minutes of the last meeting (26th May 2021) and any matters arising 4.1 The minutes and confidential annex were agreed as an accurate record of discussions and hard copies would be physically signed when circumstances allowed.</p> <p>4.2 Completed actions not discussed elsewhere on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JE confirmed that SKPS is working closely with secondary schools, especially Holmesdale, on transition • Trustees will start to contribute to the trust newsletter with CH to submit information for inclusion this term • Review Behaviour policies – MC will do at next regular review date <p>4.3 Action points to be carried forward again from the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss SLT contracts with HTs • Review Complaints policy (large piece of work needed) – during next academic year • MC to mail ILD re subject support available from FST – T1 • Develop criteria for checking / challenging Business Continuity Plans • Circulate paper on proposal for Standards Committee – during next academic year • MC to suggest date for governor training on curriculum – T1 <p>4.4 There were no further matters arising.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MC CH MC NM/AL/CC CH MC</p>
<p>5 Development of Trust Support Services This item was taken at the end of the meeting with discussion contained in a confidential annex.</p>	
<p>6 Strategic Direction 6.1 MC had circulated a written report and asked Trustees to confirm that they are happy with the format and he invited questions.</p> <p>6.2 <u>Teaching staffing structures in schools</u></p> <p>Q : Are the Trust planning to overstaff this year?</p>	

MC advised there has been more late movement of staff than anticipated, possibly linked to the pandemic, and SKPS are still struggling to recruit staff. The Trust budget provides for 3 ITT places, to be filled by existing staff or via an external provider, and this may help the situation. Once trained the teacher would then be available to all of the schools in the Trust depending on where a vacancy exists. MC is hoping this will generate 3 NQTs a year however, if there is no vacancy in the Trust there is no obligation to employ the NQTs.

6.3 Proposed changes to the appraisal process from Sept 2021

MC explained that the proposed new Appraisal system, which has been discussed with HTs and senior leaders, is designed to be more empowering for staff. Each member of staff will undertake a body of work aimed at improving current practice and positively impacting the pupils.

Q : With the enquiry approach will staff still be set targets?

MC explained that there will be a move away from targets but accountability will remain, eg through Pupil Progress meetings. Teachers will have more freedom to choose a specific area of practice on which to focus and develop. PM confirmed that the model is very successful in her school.

Q : Will Leaders be following the same Appraisal system?

MC advised this was still under discussion, and much would depend on leaders' roles and how much teaching responsibility they have. Leaders may choose to focus on the development of other staff, development of leadership practice, or a teaching-based area. JE suggested HTs could look at work which will develop a key area of the Trust, not just a school, which would expand options and impact.

Q. What would happen to the outcomes from research?

MC advised these would be fed into future years via a research bank of resources for staff to use to develop their ideas and area of investigation. A celebration of work and sharing of outcomes at the end of each year would encourage collaboration across the Trust. Trustees suggested that the results could also be added to the website to promote the work of the Trust – MC would pursue this at the appropriate time.

Q. Will the same system apply to non-Teaching & support Staff?

MC will investigate this and discuss further with the staff concerned, but would like to roll the system out to all staff on an equity basis. ILD agreed that it is always more challenging developing effective appraisals for non-teaching staff even using the existing target system. PM suggested that they could be asked to choose an area to research or project to complete, eg streamlining a process. This could help to encourage communication across the Trust and enable support staff to also share best practise.

Q: With the new model how can the Trust ensure performance is judged in fair & consistent way?

MC and SLTs have discussed the idea of establishing a quality assurance panel across the Trust to ensure objectivity. This might include trustees and local governors.

Trustees asked MC to circulate his proposed evaluation sheet, and to report back on the new appraisal system in T1 or T2.

MC advised he would welcome further feedback on his paper and the proposals.

6.3 Trust Wide Roles

MC

MC advised that new trust wide roles have been agreed with HTs to encourage collaboration and sharing of good practice. An equitable spread of roles across the Trust has been agreed, based on strengths in individual Schools.

Q. Will the new designated leader have overall responsibility for their subject or area of work across the trust?

MC advised that it will just be a collaboration process at the moment with one designated person (such as one SENCo) to coordinate and feedback on work across the trust. The roles are not funded, so do not carry accountability, but offer opportunities for leadership development.

6.5 Curriculum developments within the trust

Q. Will the curriculum be prescriptive or aligned across the 3 schools?

MC confirmed the intention was to align the curriculum across the 3 schools but the schools will have autonomy in delivery of the curriculum, to ensure it met the needs of their particular pupils and to allow teachers flexibility. Alignment would provide clarity to enable Trustees, via the TL, to monitor the curriculum (currently difficult to achieve with the schools working independently) as a shared understanding will make the process smoother. Trustees agreed that aligning the curriculum would be a positive move for the Trust and result in positive outcomes for pupils. The proposed collaboration would spread knowledge and other resources across the Trust, offer further opportunities for professional development of staff, and ensure a balanced, broad and exciting curriculum for all pupils.

Q : Is the plan for all Schools to use the same schemes of work?

MC explained the long-term aim is for the Trust to develop its own schemes and not use bought in packages. Every scheme has strengths and weaknesses, and the trust will evaluate current schemes over the next year, and tap into secondary specialists, with the aim of creating trust schemes which benefit all the children.

Q. Is there a risk in over-alignment that the trust finds the best practice in CPP but loses sight of best practice elsewhere?

MC agreed this was a risk, however under the new model the focus of subject leader meetings would always be to look forward, not to concentrate on what was happening now or had happened in the past. The curriculum was constantly evolving and MC wants the Trust to be dynamic and develop new ideas with equal input from all Schools.

Trustees agreed that the TL should pursue development/alignment of the curriculum as discussed above. However, they were concerned that the HTs and SLT in all schools understand that this is a collaborative process and that there was no intention to prescribe the curriculum. JE advised that some concerns had been expressed by SKPS LGB, perhaps because this point had not been communicated clearly enough to staff, and MC agreed to meet RP and the new Chair of SKPS LGB to discuss further.

MC

6.6 Professional Development

Trustees **AGREED** that others schools could be invited to participate in professional development opportunities in the trust.

6.7 Staff, pupil and parent surveys

Not all information was available yet, and results had not been discussed by LGBs, but trustees agreed that overall the results were very positive. They noted in particular that staff surveys showed remarkably positive results at the end of this difficult year, which reflected the lengths to which

<p>leaders had gone to keep staff morale high. They also noted feedback on the trust itself, and agreed that the profile of the trust needs to be developed going forward.</p> <p>Trustees noted that pupils rated bullying / behaviour incidents more of a concern than parents. MC felt there could be many reasons for this such as pupils having higher expectations of behaviour in class, and different interpretations/perceptions of bullying. The wording of questions for children might also have been a factor.</p> <p>MC advised that next year's surveys would provide more opportunities for comments to enable dialogue and greater analysis. Trustees agreed that the present survey results provided a good baseline/stepping stone for MC to develop.</p>	
<p>7 School specific matters</p> <p>7.1 MC had provided a new report for Trustees to give a flavour of the different schools.</p> <p>7.2 Trustees noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schools did not differ as significantly as expected in numbers of SEND children • Numbers of children with EHCPs varied greatly – why was this? MC suggested several possibilities (eg teacher or parent influence, Quality First Teaching reducing requirement for support) but would tease out the information to discover reasons • Exclusions were much higher at one school – why was this? It was explained that these related to one child waiting to transfer to specialist provision. Trustees agreed that a narrative to accompany figures would be useful in future to aid understanding and help identify any areas where help might be needed from the trust • Figures for attendance differed and made comparison difficult (FSM/Ever 6 or Pupil Premium?) – MC would ensure one standard measure (PP) was included in future <p>HTs had provided different information in different styles under T&L and Pupil Outcomes. MC explained that information for this first summary had been taken from HT reports produced for LGBs and he would ensure standardised information next time. Trustees agreed that MC should decide what information would be provided in this area of his report reports to ensure trustees were sufficiently informed on the schools.</p> <p>Trustees agreed this was a useful summary report which might be helpful for benchmarking purposes. MC advised the report format and content would evolve and be refined over time.</p>	<p>MC</p>
<p>8 Feedback from LGB's</p> <p>8.1 CH advised that the LGBs had noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the local governor role might be different under the revised Scheme of Delegation (SoD) and with developments in the curriculum. CH reminded trustees that all LGBs face an ongoing challenge to have all of the skills needed on the committee, and it was suggested that skills could be shared across the Trust. • LGBs had commented that they felt out of touch with trustees - MC & CH (or any other trustee) would aim to visit LGBs in Term 1 2021/22 to develop continuity and offer support. <p>8.2 Scheme of Delegation (SoD) – JE thanked ILD for sharing her Trust's SoD. He had considered several and found this to be the most straight forward. JE will continue to work on this document and bring an amended version to Trustees for review in October 2021. In the interim period, trustees confirmed they had adopted the updated existing version at the last meeting. NW to circulate clean copy to Trustees and upload to website.</p>	<p>MC / CH</p> <p>JE</p> <p>NW</p>
<p>9 Policies and Key Documents</p>	

9.1 Trustees received the following updated policies and documents:

- Finance Policy – Amendments p13 & p15. **APPROVED**
- Lettings – amendment p2 & p3 re LPS pool charge. **APPROVED**
- Appraisal Policy & Documents – **APPROVED**
- Risk Register – amended to include ransom elements. **APPROVED**. Further review will be needed in the new academic year to incorporate the challenges faced if Covid cases increase once the bubble system has been abandoned. MC felt that the biggest challenge will be providing remote education for a small number of pupils at home – perhaps live streaming lessons might be necessary. PM also raised the issue of covering staff if they have to self-isolate. The situation would be further complicated if Government announcements were not made until just before the start of the new academic year.

9.2 Pay & Reward policy not available as teacher pay award has not yet been announced. Drug Education policy not available. SEND offers to be considered in T1.

10 Business Matters

Report from FAC

10.1 Minutes of the FAC meeting on 6th July had been circulated and AM summarised discussions:

- Management accounts for the trust showed an outturn of £411k (£6k higher than originally budgeted)
- 3-year budgets had been challenged for pupil numbers and discussions held on how to improve numbers at SKPS through marketing – see discussion at 10.2 below.
- Data and information audit had given a good result, with only 2 small and 1 medium recommendation re GDPR
- CIF bids had been unsuccessful but 4 decisions were being appealed

10.2 Regarding promoting SKPS, MC advised that he has contacted the company CPS used to produce a video to go on the SKPS website. LPS had produced their video internally and he proposed commissioning a professional video for LPS too, then material from all 3 videos could be edited into a trust promotional video. To produce videos for LPS & SKPS, edit the CPS one and produce a trust wide version would cost £2,800 plus VAT. If a video is only produced for SKPS then the cost would be £1,100 plus VAT. After discussion by the trustees, it was agreed that the videos need to be produced as a matter of urgency and will be funded by the trust. The matter of reimbursing CPS for the cost of their video (£1,100 plus VAT) would be considered further on the grounds of equity.

10.3 CC provided an overview of the latest Management Accounts:

- All 3 schools had suffered trading losses resulting from Covid
- All 3 schools had received additional High Needs Funding and made savings, which more than covered the loss in trading income
- There were no concerns with reserve levels carried forwards

10.4 CC advised that the 3-year budgets had to be submitted to the ESFA by the end of July. FAC had reviewed and approved all assumptions, including pupil numbers, and recommended the budgets for approval to trustees.

10.5 CC highlighted the implications of the teacher pay award. Although not yet confirmed, CC understood their current proposal is for a pay freeze in 21/22 followed by a pay increase of 3% in 22/23. Budgets still assume a 2.75% increase in pay each year and significant savings will result

<p>annually if the pay freeze goes ahead (CPP £5k, LPS £25-28k, CPS £15k, SKPS 16-19k). In addition, costs of planned work (ICT, premises and Conditions Survey related) show worst case scenarios as these are estimates not actual quotes.</p> <p>Wrap around care income remains below the levels experienced pre Covid and if demand does not fully recover it will remain a significant risk to the budgets across all 3 schools.</p> <p>10.6 Discussion of the individual school budgets is contained within the confidential annex.</p> <p>Q. Will the Trust be challenged for submitting in year deficits?</p> <p>CC explained that the Trust will be challenged by the ESFA and will have to justify the situation at SKPS (eg explain assumptions) and show a recovery plan in place, but it should be noted that the budget remained balanced.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the 3-year budget plans presented, for submission to the ESFA.</p> <p>10.9 AL had provided a written update on the Estate Management report, and advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 6 CIF bids had been refused but appeals had been lodged on 3 of these – no indication when a decision might be received • An overdue compliance check at SKPS had shown problems relating to cold water storage and electrics – costs of remedial work were included in the budget plan • The new IT contractor, has been into all 3 schools and handover with Bode is going well. AL and MC to meet ATS next week to agree the plan of work over summer, and AL has circulated details of the new processes for September to all HTs. <p>10.10 Regarding the KLZ outage, AL advised that historical emails were gradually being restored (no guarantee they would all become available) and that a claim for compensation had been lodged with Cantium but no decision was likely until the whole problem had been resolved.</p> <p>10.11 Business Continuity Plans – to be carried forward to next meeting. CH to discuss with NM.</p> <p>10.12 Term Time Only (TTO) staff pay award - approval of Kent Offer. APPROVED via email and ratified now by Trustees.</p>	<p>CH / NM</p>
<p>11 Governance</p> <p>11.1 CH proposed the appointment of Chairs of LGBs (LPS/Sam McMahon, SKPS/Richard Dalton, CPS/Clare Nursey) for the next academic year - APPROVED</p> <p>11.2 Code of Conduct – following discussion it was agreed by trustees to amend the required attendance figure to 75% per rolling year. NW to amend.</p> <p>11.3 Governor Hub – papers had been successfully uploaded and accessed for this meeting, however the issue of marking and restricting access to confidential documents had come to light – how to prevent confidential information being made available to the public, either on request or via a FOI request. One possibility was to mark all trustee documents as confidential until the meeting agreed which documents could be made available to the public. CH, NW & CN to investigate further.</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>CH/NW/ CN</p>

<p>11.4 The Academies Trust Handbook (previously the Academies Financial Handbook) had been updated and AL had circulated a summary of changes. Trustees noted the ESFA's letter dated 14 July advising of changes to the Handbook.</p> <p>11.5 Articles of Association – A briefing note on amendments was provided to Trustees. CH & AL would update the Articles in September 2021 and seek approval from Members.</p> <p>11.6 CH proposed the appointment of Hacker Young as auditors for 2021/22 – APPROVED.</p> <p>11.7 CH proposed the appointment of Tim Williams (HT FAW, Loose site) as a co-opted governor at LPS – APPROVED.</p>	CH & AL
<p>12 Safeguarding matters including Health & Safety and Disability matters Nothing urgent to report.</p>	
<p>13 Chair's Actions/ Correspondence and any other business</p> <p>13.1 Governance calendar to be updated to include Chairs' catch-up meetings.</p> <p>13.2 Trustees agreed that LGBs should be allowed to decide for themselves whether their future meetings took place in person or via zoom, although they recommended alternating each type of meeting to maintain personal contacts. Trustees agreed however that monitoring meetings should be carried out in person, as feedback had shown virtual monitoring to be less effective than that undertaken in person. CH to advise LGB chairs.</p> <p>13.3 Trustees agreed that the next TB meeting would be held in person unless circumstances changed to make this inadvisable.</p> <p>13.4 JE asked whether the T6 LGB meeting dates should be moved to allow SATs results to be discussed. MC advised that even if meetings were pushed back in T6 there would still not have been enough time for HTs to analyse data and revise plans for the following year to address any issues. He would ask HTs to advise local governors of results when they become available next July but suggested discussion was more appropriate to T1 meetings when the new strategic documents would be available.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>[19.49 AL, NM and CN left the meeting prior to discussion of Item 5]</i></p>	NW CH
<p>14 Confidentiality & Publication of minutes Review of Trust Support Services and individual school budgets in confidential annex for Trustees only.</p>	
<p>15 Next meeting Wednesday 20th October 2021 at 5.30pm – in person at Loose Primary School (staff room).</p>	

Signed.....

Date.....

Para	Action	By whom
Carried forward again from last meeting		
4.2	Trustees will start to contribute to the Newsletter with CH to submit information for inclusion this term	CH
4.3 (annex)	Discuss SLT contracts with HTs	MC
4.3	Review Complaints policy/include that governors for panels can be drawn from any school in the trust	CH

4.3	MC to mail ILD re subject support available from FST – T1	MC
4.3	Develop criteria for checking/challenging business continuity plans	NM/AL/CC
4.3	Circulate paper on proposal for Standards Committee – during next academic year	CH
4.3	MC to suggest date for governor training on curriculum – T1	MC
	From this meeting	
6.3	Trustees asked MC to circulate his proposed evaluation sheet, and to report back on the new appraisal system in T1 or T2	MC
6.5	MC agreed to meet RP and the new Chair of SKPS LGB to discuss further.	MC
7.2	Figures for attendance differed and made comparison difficult (FSM/Ever 6 or Pupil Premium?) – MC would ensure one standard measure (PP) was included in future	MC
8.1	LGBs had commented that they felt out of touch with trustees - MC & CH (or any other trustee) would aim to visit LGBs in Term 1 2021/22 to develop continuity and offer support	MC / CH
8.2	JE will continue to work on the Scheme of Delegation document and bring an amended version to Trustees for review in October 2021	JE
8.2	NW to circulate clean copy of the Scheme of Delegation to Trustees and upload to website	NW
10.6	ILD would forward a copy of the Kent Commissioning Plan, which showed local plans, forecast birth rates and information on competition in the area, to MC to help inform decisions on SKPS	ILD
10.11	Business Continuity Plans – to be carried forward to next meeting. CH to discuss with NM	CH / NM
11.2	Code of Conduct – Following discussion it was agreed by Trustees to amend the required attendance figure to 75% per rolling year. NW to amend	NW
11.3	Governor Hub – Further discussion required regarding confidential documents. CH, NW & CN to investigate further.	CH/NW/CN
11.5	Articles of Association – A briefing note on amendments was provided to Trustees. CH & AL would update the Articles in September 2021 and seek approval from Members	CH/AL
13.1	Governance calendar to be updated to include Chairs catch up meetings	NW
13.2	CH to advise LGB chair that they can decide where meetings take place but monitoring visits to be carried out in person	CH