

**Coppice Primary Partnership  
Meeting of the Trustee Board  
Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 5.30pm**

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

**In attendance:** Andrew Lacey (COO), Carina Cuddington (Financial Consultant)

**Clerk:** Nicky Wheeler

Agenda Item & Discussion	Action / Decision
<p><b>1 Welcome &amp; Apologies for absence</b> CH welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that AM would be joining shortly. NM was not present at the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>2 Declaration of business interests</b> 2.1 No new interests to declare.</p>	
<p><b>3 Minutes of the last meeting (8<sup>th</sup> December 2021) and any matters arising</b> 3.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 were agreed and signed by CH. 3.2 Matters arising included the following points :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CH &amp; MC will be attending the LGB meetings at STK's to offer support to governors for the foreseeable future</li> <li>• MC had spoken to the HTs about the reporting of training and what should be included to ensure it is comparable. Trustees felt that they do not need details of training completed but the impact and evaluation of the results of training. MC will feedback to HTs to include impact &amp; evaluation in future reports</li> <li>• MC has reviewed the RSE policy, following questions from trustees, and confirmed that the changes to sexual harassment guidance are covered by the Safeguarding policy. Therefore, the RSE policy will be resubmitted to the TB for approval in term 4 <i>(AM joined the meeting)</i></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MC</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MC/NW</b></p>
<p><b>4 Trust Matters</b> 4.1 CH advised trustees that the finance restructure is now complete and working well with a full team in place. The job descriptions for CFO and COO have also been finalised. <b>Q: Are the HTs happy with the new arrangements?</b> CC &amp; CH advised trustees that the new system enables the trust to have an overview of budgets and challenge the HTs more effectively at the monthly meetings. With the correct procedures and checks now in place the trust finance team can ensure that the data collected is correct and accurate and ensure meetings with the HTs are more effective. <b>Q: Should the LGBs have more involvement in finance decisions?</b> CC explained that it is important for governors to have access to financial data to understand the decisions that the schools are taking and enable them to challenge the HTs effectively. Trustees agreed for the Finance Team to invite a representative from each LGB to attend a monitoring meeting three times a year and that finance papers will be shared with LGB's.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NW/AP</b></p>

## 5 Strategic Overview

### Trust Leader Report

5.1 MC advised trustees that over the last two terms he and BT (T&L Lead) have spent time monitoring the curriculum in schools to gain an overview of the current situation and upskill staff to understand the process as, going forward, the schools will be expected to monitor progress themselves. This term there has been a focus on English and History and all three schools have shown improvement. To assess progress the teacher chooses children of varying abilities and staff then talk to the child about what they have learnt and record the discussions. Senior leaders have been taking part to understand the process and enable them to train other staff in the necessary skills.

5.2 In English LPS had made significant progress with sequencing and learning in Years 1, 3, 4 and 6. Year 2 progress was weaker due to perceived pressure of the forthcoming SATs so staff need to be reminded to slow down. Year 5 is an anomaly and the issues are being address by the school. At CPS progress in year 6 is particularly strong but again year 2 progress is weaker and the school are looking at this. At STK year 1 and 3 are making the most progress, with year 2 being weaker in line with the other schools.

#### **Q: How are staff coping with the reviews whilst still facing issues due to Covid?**

MC advised that the trust are monitoring progress to get an accurate picture of what the children have learnt but not conducting reviews. The trust have been modelling the process to staff as they are using a new process but want the schools to conduct the monitoring in the future. Currently, LPS review a subject every Friday and he would like to see this happening in all schools. If staff are absent the monitoring is rescheduled for a more suitable time.

CH explained that it is essential for the trust to have a clear picture of the children's progress to enable them to move forward so monitoring needs to continue as it will benefit all of the children in the long term. PM commented that it is important to ensure that staff are aware that it is monitoring not a review to gain their support.

5.3 MC and BT recently met with all the HTs to share the results of recent assessments across the trust.

#### **Q: Why are there such wide gaps between teacher assessment and other data?**

MC explained that the NFER tests have standardised bands with 90-110 being the average score however, the trust found that children in the lower end of this band were not achieving expected by the end of the year. Therefore the trust set the expected band beginning at 105 which resulted in more children being assessed at below expected level by teachers. Following additional research into the percentile rankings of standardised scores, the average band (assessing children at expected levels) will now begin at 95. This is providing a more accurate picture of assessment.

#### **Q: Is the teacher assessed grade where the children will be at the end of the year?**

MC explained that this is where the children are believed to be now. Where the system allows entry at 'just below' this is masking the accuracy of teacher assessment. The NFER and comparative judgement data is accurate as these are nationally benchmarked. However, the teacher assessed grades are less reliable due to the time between assessments and the gaps in the curriculum over the pandemic. The data has been reviewed and a new scheme introduced to identify the bottom 20% nationally, those below average, expected and above expected. The schools have identified the vulnerable groups within these bands and have all developed action plans to address the issues. The schools are also drilling down into the data to identify SEND and PP children and the LGBs have all received school specific data.

5.4 MC advised that all of the schools will be collecting more data in the summer and, in addition, STK will also collect interim data at Easter. There will then be a monitoring

<p>meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> April with the Quality Of Education governor monitoring pair at STK to review and evaluate the impact of the action plan.</p> <p><b>Q: Are these results reflective of what the trust would expect at this time of the year?</b></p> <p>MC explained that the just below category has caused confusion but now that the trust have amended the banding on the NFER tests the results are more in line with those from the comparative judgement data.</p> <p><b>Q: How will trustees be able to monitor progress?</b></p> <p>MC advised trustees that once further data is collected later in the year comparisons will be available for trustees to assess progress.</p> <p><b>Q: Are SEND pupils across the trust performing at a similar level?</b></p> <p>MC advised that SEND results are lower than non-SEND but it is difficult to compare across the trust as the schools have very different demographics. Trustees believe it is important to compare SEND progress across the trust so MC will investigate this further.</p>	<p><b>MC</b></p>
<p><u>Internal Review Updates</u></p> <p>5.5 The SEND internal reviews had been circulated to trustees and MC explained that all of the reviews involve all of the HTs visiting each other's schools for half a day. All of the schools find the SEND related paperwork time consuming for SENCOs to complete. The Trust are looking at ways to improve scaffolding to allow all children access to the curriculum. The review also considered the term 'quality first' as it had many different interpretations and needs to be more clearly defined.</p> <p><b>Q: Are there action plans in place following the SEND reviews?</b></p>	<p><b>MC/NW</b></p>
<p>MC agreed to ask HTs to produce formal action plans to enable the LGBs to monitor progress and these will be added to the next LGB agenda's.</p> <p><b>Q: Is the TL happy with the SEND provision in schools?</b></p> <p>MC acknowledged that there is still work to be done and it is an area that will become more of a focus this year to ensure all children can access the curriculum. The trust want all children working towards the same outcomes but accessing the curriculum in appropriate ways. More work is needed to encourage independence whilst offering support to pupils.</p> <p><b>Q: Are all schools accessing High Needs Funding?</b></p> <p>MC explained that the proportion of funding to percentage of SEND at LPS is higher in relation to the demographic. All of the schools need to develop a strategic approach to writing the HNF applications and he is looking at how to support this across the trust.</p>	<p><b>MC/NW</b></p>
<p><u>Covid Update</u></p> <p>5.6 Covid absence is still causing disruption across the trust however attendance remains above the national average in all schools. Staff absence is having the greatest impact, slowing the opportunity for strategic focus as senior staff are often required to cover classes. The impact is greatest at STK where they also have staff on long term sick leave. CH expressed concern for the capacity at STK and advised trustees that it is being closely monitored by the trust.</p>	<p><b>MC/NW</b></p>
<p><u>Governance Structure</u></p> <p>5.7 CH advised trustees that there are certain link trustee roles that the trust is required to have in place and NW will circulate a TGP document which explains the role of link trustees to everyone after the meeting. It is a statutory duty to have a member of the trust board with responsibility for SEND and PM agreed to take on this role. NW will coordinate meetings with PM &amp; the SENCOs as required.</p> <p>In addition, the trust need a nominated trustee and a staff member to be named in the Whistleblowing Policy and AM agreed to be the link trustee for this role. NW will update the Whistleblowing Policy to reflect this change.</p>	<p><b>NW</b></p> <p><b>PM/NW</b></p> <p><b>NW</b></p>

<p><u>Terms Of Reference</u></p> <p>5.8 Updated ToRs had been circulated to trustees for comments. As discussed earlier, everyone agreed that the LGBs need to have access to financial data to allow them to challenge HT decisions. JE agreed to amend the ToRs and SoD to include an invitation for an LGB representative to attend the quarterly finance monitoring visits. CC offered to provide finance training to governors if required.</p>	<p><b>JE</b></p>
<p><b>6 School Reports</b></p> <p><u>Feedback from LGBs</u></p> <p>6.1 Contained in confidential annex</p> <p><u>Ratification of changes to LPS staffing structure</u></p> <p>6.2 Trustees confirmed <b>APPROVAL</b> of the appointment of a DHT at LPS which had previously been agreed by email. MC advised that two candidates applied for the role and one has been successfully appointed.</p>	
<p><b>7 Policies and key documents</b></p> <p>7.1 MC explained to trustees that the trust have received advice from the ESFA that our current Complaints Policy does not comply with regulations. Therefore, an updated policy, which follows the DoE model, has been circulated for approval. Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> the policy in principle subject to a few further amendments. MC will circulate the final version for approval by email before uploading it to the website and confirming compliance with the ESFA.</p> <p>7.2 Trustees received and <b>APPROVED</b> the following documents :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Children in Care</li> <li>• Exclusions</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Online Safety</li> <li>• Risk Register</li> <li>• SEND</li> <li>• Staff Absence</li> </ul>	<p><b>MC/NW</b></p>
<p><b>8 Finance &amp; Audit Meeting</b></p> <p><u>Report from F&amp;A Chair</u></p> <p>8.1 Trustees had received the draft minutes of the F&amp;A meeting and AM highlighted the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The £693k forecast outturn is mostly due to balances carried forward. STK's budget is concerning due to the low pupils numbers forecast.</li> <li>• F&amp;A agreed to recommend approval of the Broadband proposal to trustees</li> <li>• F&amp;A agreed to recommend approval of the change in Communication &amp; Payment systems provider to trustees for approval</li> </ul> <p><u>December Management Accounts</u></p> <p>8.2-8.3 Contained in the confidential annex.</p> <p><u>Schools Resource Management Self-Assessment Return</u></p> <p>8.4 <b>APPROVED</b> for submission to the ESFA.</p> <p><u>Ratification of Broadband Proposal</u></p> <p>8.5 Trustees confirmed <b>APPROVAL</b> of the Broadband Proposal which had been recommended by F&amp;A and agreed by email.</p> <p><u>Ratification of Communication/ Payment Systems Proposal</u></p> <p>8.6 Trustees confirmed <b>APPROVAL</b> of the Communication / Payment Systems Proposal which had been recommended by F&amp;A and agreed by email.</p> <p><u>Gender Pay Report</u></p> <p>8.7 <b>APPROVED</b> for submission to the ESFA.</p>	

<p><b>9 Governance</b></p> <p><u>Member vacancies</u> 9.1 CH advised trustees that there are still two member vacancies and she continues to investigate ways to fill them.</p> <p><u>Ratification of decision re STK LGB</u> 9.2 Contained in confidential annex.</p> <p><u>Access to LGB Minutes</u> 9.3 NW will amend GovernorHub to allow all trustees access to the LGB minutes.</p> <p><u>Election of Vice Chair</u> 9.4 CH thanked AM for all his support and help as Vice Chair. She advised trustees that she had received a nomination from JE to step into the role and all trustees <b>APPROVED</b> his appointment.</p> <p><u>Ratification of LPS Associate Governor</u> 9.5 CH explained that following his recent appointment as DHT, the LPS LGB have recommended that Sean Johnson is appointed as an Associate Governor. Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> his appointment.</p>	<b>NW</b>
<p><b>10 Safeguarding Matters including Health &amp; Safety and Disability Matters</b></p> <p>10.1 AL advised trustees that he has arranged for NM to visit all three schools during half term to finalise the Business Continuity Plans.</p>	<b>NM/AL</b>
<p><b>11 Any other urgent business including Chair's Actions / Correspondence</b></p> <p>11.1 The Chair had no further actions to report.</p>	
<p><b>12 Confidential Items</b></p> <p><u>Strategic Direction</u> 12.1 -12.2 Contained in confidential annex.</p> <p><u>Staff Audit</u> 12.3 Contained in confidential annex.</p>	
<p><b>13 Confidentiality and action points</b></p> <p>13.1 Confidential items were agreed and are contained in the confidential annex.</p>	
<p><b>14 Next Meeting Date</b></p> <p>14.1 Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 5.30pm</p>	
<p><b>15 Meeting Outcomes</b></p> <p>15.1 Ensuring clarity of the vision, ethos and strategic direction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic Direction</b></li> <li>• <b>Link Trustees</b></li> <li>• <b>Staff Audit</b></li> <li>• <b>Model finance agendas</b></li> <li>• <b>LGB agendas</b></li> </ul> <p>15.2 Holding the executive Leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and the effective and efficient performance management of staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HT reports</li> <li>• Modelling monitoring questions</li> <li>• SEND action plans</li> </ul> <p>15.3 Overseeing the financial performance of the schools and making sure that money is well spent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Audit</li> <li>• Governors invited to attend finance meetings</li> </ul>	

Signed .....

Date.....

<b>Para</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
3.2	MC will feedback to HTs to include impact & evaluation of training in future reports	MC
3.2	The RSE policy will be resubmitted to the TB for approval in term 4	MC/NW
4.1	Trustees agreed for the Finance Team to invite a representative from each LGB to attend a monitoring meeting three times a year and that finance papers will be shared with LGB's	NW/AP
5.4	Trustees believe it is important to compare SEND progress across the trust so MC will investigate this further.	MC
5.5	MC agreed to ask HTs to produce formal action plans and circulate them to LGBs	MC/NW
5.7	NW will circulate a TGP document which explains the role of link trustees	NW
5.7	NW will coordinate meetings with PM & the SENCOs as required	PM/NW
5.7	NW will update the Whistleblowing Policy to include AM	NW
5.8	JE agreed to amend the ToRs and SoD to include an invitation for an LGB representative to attend the quarterly finance monitoring visits	JE
7.1	MC will circulate the final version for approval by email before uploading it to the website and confirming compliance with the ESFA	MC/NW
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