



MINUTES OF RIVERSIDE MEADOWS ACADEMY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 2.00 pm

Riverside Meadows Meeting Room

Present: Rebecca Dear, Parent Governor – Interim Chair  
 Andrew Armstrong, Co-Head Teacher, St. Neots  
 Chris Carey, Co-Head Teacher, Wisbech Green  
 Lorena Vara, Staff Representative – St. Neots  
 Michelle Elms, Staff Representative – Wisbech Green  
 Hazel Gering, Staff Representative  
 Kim Taylor, Executive Head Teacher/CEO  
 Sue Bailey, Chair of Trustees  
 Jane Macdonald, Clerk to the Advisory Group

Invited: Mark Williams, Trustee

Apologies: Brian Roberts, Parent Governor  
 Alex Hughes, Community Governor

1	<p><b>Previous Minutes</b>          Reviewed previous minutes with no amendments. All in agreement.</p>	ALL
2	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>Chris Carey is our new co-head at WG. It has been an interesting experience for the first month, observing staff and pupils, looking at school culture and processes and has made some slight changes with lots of ideas for the longer term. Chris has a fairly clear idea of the direction we are going.</p> <p>Chris has worked within various mainstream and SEMH schools over the last 20 years, including a 2 year consultancy in East Anglia before being asked to open a new school in Ipswich and then joining our team and looking forward to supporting the opening of our new school.</p>	CC

3

**New priorities from SDP**

AA

Andrew issued a copy of the new priorities. KT/AA have reviewed and reprioritised our 3 main areas as follows:

- Transform the school learning culture - quality of education is sufficient, monitoring and tracking and the core curriculum have the 3 statements. Students are supported with self-regulation and quality assurance is also in line with where we should be.
- Improving our weekly attendance - working to the national absence for SEND. Attendance across the country is less than it has been in the past. We are doing extremely well considering the ongoing viruses/Covid. DFE reporting that there are a significant number of children who have lost their routine in attending school which is affecting all schools. Students with mental health issues are also on the increase. Domestic violence is also a big topic for discussion at the moment.
- Developing the clarity of roles – Chris onboard now. Discussion has been made by the Trustees to recruit a deputy head who will be based at WG and will assist SLT at both schools which has been funded in part by the Trust reserves and going forwards will be self-financed by the school itself. Caroline will therefore return to SCA with a need to support them going forwards. Will enable WG to have a lot more leadership capacity. Student numbers will increase to 40.
- Introducing the Horizon’s coaching and mentoring policy - upskill current staff and ensure that they feel supported.
- Quality assurance – take into account our new priorities and feedback will be provided in future meetings.
- Updating the annual training plan – looking at first aid and fire safety training, and looking to become a trauma informed school. Bronze Arts Mark school. Pride Mark already achieved, working towards the healthy schools award. This should be fairly straightforward to achieve especially at the bronze level. New caters coming on board following February half term. Certain criteria needs to be met however feel we should have no issues with achieving those awards. Will be a good boost for staff and parents.

Discussion took place regarding the priorities which were removed, and deemed to be normal practise.

HG advised that there are various strands to this, collecting evidence, engagement points, work scrutiny, pupil progress meetings, lesson visits, learning visits and deep dive through direct observation by senior managers. Report shared at previous meeting including what recommendations had been made. We have hit quite a lot of our priorities.

Attendance evidence is also used to monitor students who are improving or those who are not. Students achievement data will be measured shortly and shared at the next meeting.

KT, AA, CH and CP have also assisted HG with this process which is then collated, reviewed and improvements agreed and links directly to the Ofsted criteria covering both sites and follows the national expectations of the 2019 Ofsted standards.

	<p>A further review will be taking place in March to ensure we have enough evidence to meet the required standards with a push on obtaining as much evidence as we can this term.</p> <p>SB - how do Andrew and Chris get everyone on board to understand the statements and what you are trying to achieve?</p> <p>AA stated that discussions have been held with all staff, confirming the actions plans and what their roles are with training opportunities in the school CPD calendar in order to move forward with this. During this week's Deep Dive HG has asked all staff to be honest and not give her what they think she wants to hear. Feedback sheets have also been very informative. This can be challenging for staff as they are asked to give their full commitment. Mentors/line managers will follow up.</p> <p>Andrew felt it is really important to have fewer priorities and do them well.</p> <p>We have made inroads within safeguarding. AA/CC and other leaders have revised our school development plan, using same method as SCA and feel we are in a good place. External visits (Sam Abbs) completed our safeguarding audit, which is now virtually green. We have continued to follow that action plan, DSL's have put in a lot of effort with support from Carol McCarthy. Regular supervision meetings have been taking place every Monday. We all hold each other to account and are really positive and AA has every right to be proud of the report which will be shared with staff next week.</p>	
4	<p><b>Behaviour Policy (Final Acceptance)</b></p> <p>Currently in consultation with parents and staff. Has been to TLWC but not all Trustees, and will be going to full board shortly to be approved and passed.</p> <p>SB felt the accountability is not quite right. Is the Hierarchy correct? SB to forward email to KT to confirm amendments. Maybe reverse the order? KT will review. (page 3)</p> <p>The Board may make some amendments, so will hopefully be approved.</p> <p>There may be one possible change regarding behaviour forms. AA/CC meeting with <b>Sleuth</b> on Friday and will consider going down the electronic route. SIMS does not allow enough detail to be entered, therefore not fit for purpose. Further meeting Tuesday and Thursday next week to discuss.</p>	<p>AA/KT</p> <p>SB</p>
5	<p><b>Review Trust Policy – Fire Safety and Health and Safety Policy</b></p> <p>Updated the H&amp;S policy and fire safety policy which is currently waiting for approval. Completing a H&amp;S audit currently and will be submitted to KT shortly.</p> <p>An internal thorough audit will be taking place and an external review to be organised.</p>	<p>KT</p>

	<p>KT has been in consultation regarding the asbestos register, RMA was refurbished in 2015/16 and during that time a lot of works were completed and an asbestos survey would have taken place. Phil Hill for WG will prepare a report to advise that there is NO asbestos on site. Asbestos survey taking place at SCA currently.</p> <p>All new schools/or new constructed buildings were all post 2000 and regulations regarding asbestos has been amended. A contractors file in reception will include a note regarding asbestos.</p> <p>We have a good system in place with Chris Linnell at RMA for all H&amp;S processes.</p> <p>Exclusion policy updated following DFE guidance 2022. Makes it really clear about the governing boards.</p> <p>Behaviour Policy – Michelle felt their feedback had not been considered, however AA confirmed the form will become obsolete if we decide to go down the electronic route.</p>	
6	<p><b>Admissions Update</b></p> <p>126 consultations received so far over both sites. We have accepted 6 with various conditions and waiting to hear back if funding will be increased with the majority of students being placed at St. Neots.</p>	AA
7	<p><b>MyConcern Update</b></p> <p>There has been some increase in quality of use recently. DSL's have taken part in additional training, filing concerns and using the online system in a much more efficient way. Louisa and Chris had a short training lesson this week with HG. Current trends have been sexualised behaviour which PSHE will be addressing.</p> <p>School assemblies have been covering inappropriate language.</p> <p>Mental Health is becoming a big issue with Children's Mental Health Week taking place on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb. HG will also work alongside Amy, our F&amp;IW who is our wellbeing champion.</p> <p>There has been an increase in Year 11 mental health issues due to functional skills exams which have taken place recently and as they prepare for college, leaving school and preparing for GCSE exams which we will provide support to assist students undergoing this transition.</p> <p>DSL's ensure that all actions have been taken, discuss with key members of staff who were involved and update the MyConcern log.</p> <p>There has been an increasing number of referrals regarding situations at home and within the community which DSLs are discussing with staff and following up with multi agencies which will help to support the strength of the community.</p> <p>The number of concerns with sexualised behaviour are levelling out, but some staff are also not completing any however Lorena does pick a lot of this up.</p>	HG

Further training and support may be needed. There is an increased awareness of how to track data and the ability to review the gaps and support with accountability.

This week 3 people have reported the same concern, which highlights that staff are being vigilant.

Name of new building was discussed with the trustees last night - Riverside Meadows - Wisbech Green, part of Riverside Meadows Academy. We have to ensure that the Horizons logo, name and company and contact details are visible.

KT is concerned about the attendance at RSM and will review data following the Deep Dive.

Damage to property – for some individuals this is a learnt behaviour, however some students had been in crisis at the time. Decision has been made to leave some doors open with classrooms changed to key locks rather than maglocks as cheaper to fix. WG – has been better following CC discussion with students and starting to understand each other better. Both heads are working on this and strategies are being put in place to change behaviours.

KT confirmed that all new staff members need to ensure they have completed the cyber protection training and will ask JP to forward the link. We were fully compliant at the end of December and would like to keep this up.

Lots of work has taken place at Trust level in regards to tenders on catering, cleaning and furniture. Catering/Cleaning we tend to complete our own tendering with furniture orders being submitted through ESPO or the original provider. We have requested that Kier are to go ahead with the original plan which KT has reviewed and due to increase in costs will try and negotiate additional funds.

Interactive boards will be funded by the local authority, however we need a clear perspective on how long the school will take to fill. CC advised will be in full use by September 2024.

Uniform - will follow up with this after half term.

Complaints procedure – management team have worked hard on this process and KT felt that staff were working in a positive way. AAG to be used as a listening ear before contacting the Trust. Relationships with parents is good.

HG advised F&IW are a great support/team, however it has been noted recently that tutors are not contacting parents regularly enough and this needs to be followed up.

Some staff feel they are not the lead (especially supply staff) and clarification is needed on their roles and responsibilities. Need a stronger parental/teacher strategy and the expectation of parents. Some parents receive tutor contact but no information regarding subjects and how to support them at home.

	<p>The next staff training day will focus on how we work with parents and building strong relationships with continued training of staff.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding homework and it was felt that tutors should be asking if parents would like homework going home, especially year 11 students, however, this is sometimes not filtered through to the rest of the staff. Tutor books, although used in the past could also be reinstated for parents to read, however, will need to remain in school as they tended to be damaged in previous years.</p>	
8	<p><b>RSM Data Update</b></p> <p>76 students on role, attendance is 72.88% down from 75.3% last year. 44 pupils are pupil premium.</p> <p>27 of our students have a SEMH diagnosis and ties in with what CC has found at WG. Data on SIMS is 100% accurate as it was taken from the students medical and EHCP files. We have lots of pupils who should be in alternative provisions, with vulnerable children in a setting where other students wish to bully and intimidate them and who should have been placed in AP's. Currently cleaning up the mess that Horizons have been left with. Historically not allowed to recruit as we were in special measures, as soon as we came out of this, lots of placements given including out of county students as received more funding and no checking of systems and what was included in student EHCP.</p> <p>KT thanked the Trustees for their support and allowing us to move certain students onto other provisions.</p> <p>Carolyn, Virtual Head at Cambridge, met AA this week and now has a better understanding of what we do here.</p> <p>We have recorded 20 physical interventions and 2 formal complaints which have been resolved (from September 2022).</p>	AA
9	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>BD really enjoyed the end of term production. Lot of staff effort from Steve and Hannah.</p> <p>Once the new school building is in place, AAG meetings will take at each site every other meeting.</p>	
	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>24<sup>th</sup> March 2023</p>	