



MINUTES OF RIVERSIDE MEADOWS ACADEMY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

Thursday 27th April 2023 at 2.00 pm

Riverside Meadows Meeting Room

Present: Brian Roberts, Parent Governor – Interim Chair
Andrew Armstrong, Co-Head Teacher, St. Neots
Chris Carey, Co-Head Teacher, Wisbech Green
Alex Hughes, Community Governor
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: Michelle Elms, Staff Representative – Wisbech Green
Rebecca Dear, Parent Governor – Interim Chair
Lorena Vara, Staff Representative – St. Neots

1	Previous Minutes Reviewed previous minutes with no amendments. All in agreement. Behaviour Policy – collated by AA/CC and was agreed at the last meeting and has been forwarded to the Trustees. Can revisit at any time.	
2	Heads Presentation <u>Admissions</u> SN - are looking at 8 new potential students in Year 7 as of today. 7 have confirmed and we are waiting for one other once funding approved. This will increase SN numbers to 55 students. 5 or 6 other students will join before September across the other year groups. We have been very selective with over 300 referrals.	

	<p>A KS4 nurture group may be implemented which some of our students may benefit from.</p> <p>The maximum number of students for SN is 60 students.</p> <p>WG – currently 6 new students and still reviewing referrals. Full list to be provided by next week and will also look at recruitment needs. Filling up gradually and we have a target of 40 students by September 2023. Currently some students are not legitimate SMEH learners. Already admitted 4 new students in the past 2 months. Currently close to filling year 11; any KS4 students need to be in placed by July 2023. We have some capacity in Years 7 and 8.</p> <p>CC has put together an ASD group of students currently in school and currently reviewing where the gaps are and how well the new students will fit in. KS3 gaps currently reviewing referrals. ASD groups will be part of the school and not a specialist ASD unit and run in a slightly more ASD way. All students will have SMEH needs.</p> <p>If a child with ASD and no SMEH need they would need to go to an ASD only school (one facility in Cambridge) and there are other small facilities within an inhouse resource provision.</p> <p>Key Information provided to Trustees. Correct as of end of last term. 84 pupils on roll currently. High % of students are ADHD, ASD and FASD.</p> <p>Attendance for term 4 is averaging at 70.83% for the whole school, national average is 86.3% below by 10%+ and down to persistent refusal, (5 students at St. Neots). Several students have high level of anxiety and F&IW are working on this with alternative timetables. An update will be provided at the next meeting with 4 students looking to return to school on a part time timetable.</p> <p>School refusers have been refusing for a long time (prior to Andrew joining us) and based in North Northants, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. Some travel time is out of the LA travel timeframes. We have received positive feedback regarding those students who have started to return on a reduced timetable and are asking to come in for additional hours.</p> <p><u>Behaviour Report</u></p> <p>Solar system purchased last term and Andrew will provide an update at the next meeting. We will be able to identify what the problems are and act upon it quicker than previously.</p> <p>Physical Interventions - we are very clear on when this can take place. Would not expect to have no incidents at all.</p> <p>Suspensions/Exclusions – there were 15 students at the end of last term who were suspended for a period of time. 162 sessions is 81 full days for 17 students. Report to be forwarded to Governors on the practice and we can ensure it is being used appropriately.</p>	AA
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3	<p><u>RMA – Policies</u></p> <p>School policies are now with the Trust and can be reviewed at the next meeting.</p> <p>The appendices on the back of the Fire Policy just need to be removed, however this would be useful for the fire wardens. Agreed to approve as of today.</p> <p>Trips Policy – Chris to forward following today’s meeting and will be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	CC
4	<p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p>Health and Safety report to be forwarded by Andrew and will be reviewed at the next meeting. Strong compliance recorded at 80% with some small amendments.</p> <p>H&S Committee have checked the site and Chris Linnell completed the report. There were some concerns around house-keeping, tidiness of classrooms and cardboard not kept and ensuring fire exits are cleared.</p> <p>Learning Walks – are continuing on an ongoing basis. Brian and Andrew completed a walk today and results to be forwarded to Kim following the meeting.</p> <p>WG – moving location soon therefore an in-depth report was not completed. H&S Committee will also review the current site.</p> <p>Fire Review taking place on 3rd May which the Trust has commissioned by Barbara Noark (fire risk accredited assessor).</p> <p>12 members of staff are now trained fire wardens and all are very grateful to cover the safety of this building. There is good communications with the H&S teams and their co-heads. This builds staff confidence and additional training makes them feel worthwhile within the school and within the Trust.</p>	
5	<p><u>Updated Probation Process</u></p> <p>The first 6 months of probation the Trust policies do not apply. A new probation process has been implemented with a 4 week, 12 week and 20 week review. Previously there was not enough detail within the reports and there are now some specific headings to be populated.</p> <p>The process is fair and if the role is not the correct fit, then evidence is gathered and targets set.</p> <p>The teacher process is slightly different with a review after 8 weeks service. This is a useful system and currently one member of staff has outstanding tasks where he has been given an end date, (includes a paper trail). Improvements have made it easier as a manager in order to discuss specifics. Some members of staff have not been necessarily filling all of their roles but have managed to complete their probation period. Going forward will provide a more robust work force.</p>	

	<p>Appraisals for teaching staff take place on a regular basis along with a number of informal meetings if we have identified an issue.</p> <p>Good relationships with staff to be built, and these processes will assist us.</p> <p>Currently we have referred 3 members of staff to OH for further advise and staff are clear this is a supportive measure.</p>	
6	<p><u>SEF Update</u></p> <p>Kim completes a SEF review each term with the last review completed in March 2023 which ensured we were ready for the Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>We made a decision to have a rapid improvement plan in place and have focussed on that this term, and the team have worked incredibly hard to actually get a lot of things in place and are continuing to work on this.</p> <p>We have put in place a 2 week cycle regarding quality assurance and will feedback to Kim on week 2 who will reviews the outcomes; which has already improved the quality of teaching, with different priorities for each school.</p> <p>This week we are working on short term planning which the SLT review and complete learning walks. We have identified that there are variances in preparing of planning from teachers which has identified a training need.</p> <p>Andrew to forward the latest version as soon as possible.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Action Plan is currently being reviewed and will be updated at the next meeting.</p> <p>Quality of Education is Good. Currently working on our curriculum to ensure this improves. Teacher strategies are not the best at the moment and have paired up (buddies) with another teacher to support this.</p> <p>WG has introduced reading as part of the timetable and takes place during registration 2 mornings a week with no complaints so far and some students have brought their own books in. This could not have gone any better!</p> <p>Chris stated he has sharpened everything up, making it easier for students and will confirm to SN staff that it needs to happen and we need to start being more proactive.</p> <p>Flow chart to be created regarding attendance and the various letter stages (letter 1 and 2) and letter 3 invites parents to a meeting. Refer to EWO if necessary who will start working with the family, however could result in fines being issued. We can reissue letters 1 and 2 and F&IW can also meet with parents. So far, lots of parents have started to engage with just 4 core students going down the EWO route. The flow chart can highlight the work of the support workers.</p>	AA

	<p>Evidence gathering – one member of the team is supporting us with this and also developing her leadership skills. TLM's are also evidence gathering and reintroducing the blue book, which has been inherited from SCA.</p> <p>There has been lots of work regarding restorative practice taken place with further training to be organised.</p> <p>Our new PE Teacher will pick up the Sensory Circuit materials going forwards.</p> <p>A Handbook for parents on school expectations will be produced as communication has recently been an issue.</p> <p>WG staff have worked very hard and Chris is really mindful of trying not to overload staff with requests but so many items needed instant attention and they have pulled out all the stops which has not gone unnoticed.</p>	
7	<p>Ofsted Review</p> <p>Kim is currently working on the report inaccuracies which Ofsted will either accept or not.</p> <p>A copy of the report was given to Hazel, Brian and Alex for confidential review.</p> <p>Kim was very pleased that the report reflects our self-evaluation. Very honest about where the school was/is and we were in a different place a year ago, with no inadequate judgements, but room for improvement. We are a school on a journey and more time for the impact of improvements.</p> <p>Teaching and learning was very positive however did not review WG as they advised it was too far away. Chris recognised that SN did the bulk of the work regarding the Ofsted report and is fully aware of this.</p> <p>Quality of teaching - we have employed more teachers which has impacted the quality and takes a while to obtain consistency.</p> <p>Personal development - should have more time for people to show that a lot of development is very good. F&IW has had an impact on students.</p> <p>There were no challenging behaviours in school when the inspectors were on site and pupils reiterated that they felt safe in school.</p> <p>There were a few admin problems regarding the questionnaires from staff and parents with some unable to access from mobile forms.</p> <p>Huge strides have been made in regards to safeguarding.</p> <p>A need for a parent strategy to be put in place and work on how we can improve this area.</p> <p>Leadership - could see how it was and how it is now, by talking to students and other people.</p>	

	<p>Amendment's - postcode; reflect changes to teaching and support staff. Symantec thing and use tenses in the wrong way, all staff know we need to make changes to parent communications. Parent survey is anonymous, need to find out why they are unhappy and possibly complete our own survey.</p> <p>BR amendment – part time timetables - are they reflected in EHCP plan and approved by the parents and LA. Kim will add to amendments already submitted. Alternative to reduced timetable is a permanent exclusion and we are about supporting the students and there are no services to monitor that the children are safe. We are the last stop for special needs students.</p> <p>Communication – timeliness of communication and targeted communication. Easy read for parents/pupils. Weekly calls from teachers on how student is doing, communication styles need to be trained on calls/emails and not always trustful/honest from staff. KS3 more likely to get into dialogue and KS4 will often not respond. Communication in past was not often valuable. System could be put on place to record calls etc. or write down that communication has happened and can be proved later.</p> <p>Some parents have condoned absences from school and other parents want to get it right. School refusers have had home visits and unless on an authorised site attendance is not linked.</p> <p>We will never get it completely right until we are able to deal with the most difficult parents, support and help the problems parents are concerned about. Lots of parents are now starting to communicate with the heads and need to know what they are facing.</p> <p>Looking to put in place 'Town Halls' a fortnightly online/F2F session. For parents and staff.</p> <p>Two further actions – will try and change the designation that we do not take sixth formers and Kim to follow up with the DfE and Trustees as this will change our funding and will also be taking steps to work towards the de-amalgamation and will update the DfE officers. Kim will distribute a press release for staff, advising the inspection criteria has changed and lots of schools have gone into improvements following the pandemic. It would be wise to complete our own press release and confirm we are on a journey to improve the school. Publication date is not yet known. When final version received can give to staff and governors etc. Will be within the next few weeks.</p> <p>Brian and Alex to prepare a quote for press/parents regarding the press review and will forward to Kim. Alex Hughes is not available from 9th to 21st May.</p>	
8	<p><u>Safeguarding report and action points</u></p> <p>External consultant working with both sites and an action plan almost completed, multi-agency links to be worked upon.</p> <p>DSL team have improved with confidence in their role and very complimentary about SCR/training. There will be another LA inspection 22nd June specifically to look at record keeping.</p>	

	<p>Both sites have made rapid improvements regarding safeguarding. The next inspection should move us on within the report.</p> <p>Allegations regarding staff have been followed up with LADO. We have had some complex cases recently with suicidal thoughts etc. Home visit, police and agency working to support those students. Important to record drift and delay.</p> <p>Weekly DSL meetings are taking place and if needed referred to MASH team.</p> <p>A Safeguarding Trust member meeting will take place with Carol shortly.</p> <p>Good procedures are in place.</p> <p>There have been lots of daily referrals and the DSL team are making sure actions are picked up and are communicating with lots of other people, resulting in a lot of work.</p>	
9	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>We need to grow as a governing body, therefore, a Uniliver MD will be coming on board shortly who will have the potential to coach and mentor staff. DBS still to be organised.</p> <p>Looking at opportunities to get other people in to talk about the strengths of ASD.</p> <p>Following the enterprise/careers fair other employers could be invited in to provide students with updates.</p> <p>Alex has been donated a commercial ice cream cart and looking at 4 week programmes for students to trade at venues including Tesco's etc.</p> <p>Alex discussed the social enterprise hub in town and funding for a citizen hub (where old job centre used to be). Street food festival taking place on 28th May at Rugby Club. Raised money for CPSL £20k so far. 200 funded places for either parents or staff on stop suicide training in customer facing roles or leadership positions if like to use.</p> <p>Advertising for Deputy Head/Assistant Head both based at WG. Eventually get a model where every school has a deputy. Alex can distribute positions if needed.</p>	
	<p>Date of Next Meetings</p> <p>26th May 2023 / 23rd June 2023 Governor only meeting / 14th July 2023</p>	