



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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27/09/23

Minutes

Learning, Standards & Safeguarding Committee Autumn 2023
Wednesday 27th September 2023 at 9.30am at central office

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Margaret Savage (Chair), Will Hermon, Claire Paul, Steve Tavener, Graeme Barriball, Gill Shippides

In Attendance: Toni Martin (Governance Officer), Jo Callow (Ex-Officio)

The Trust Board have been informed regarding the resignation of Trudy Rudge. As TR was Chair of this committee, a new Chair is required. MS agreed to be Chair and the committee voted in favour of this.

2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests relevant to this Agenda

None declared relevant to this agenda.

3. Confirm minutes of previous TLA Summer (10th May 2023) and matters arising

No actions. Committee agreed the minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

4. Confidential Agenda Items

None.

All items below are responsibility of this committee and discussed by exception

5. Data

a. Internal & External Data on Attainment & Progress, including but not exclusively literacy and numeracy, include PPG/EAL & SEN

WH noted the attainment data that was made available to the committee at the end of the summer term. The progress data has now been released; PT all fine given it is a small cohort but keeping a close eye on writing; NP within normal parameters; SSCA within parameters as was last year which is positive given that Ofsted is imminent; SC within parameters and also Ofsted imminent; CG slight concern on writing and maths needs addressing, and it is a small cohort; WHA fine but maths will need to be carefully monitored because of the size of the cohort – but context may explain this (mobility, EAL etc); LT fine but will need to keep eye on writing; Wer looks slightly concerning but cohort is small and mobility is high, with new pupils that may explain these figures. **We need to keep in mind that this particular cohort of children were affected by covid when they were in year 4, mobility, pupils from Ukraine and so on could explain some of these figures. The Chair challenged whether there is any action required for this committee going forward?** Not at present. All of the data does not take account of context

such as SEND, EAL, and mobility which will need to be unpicked by the schools to identify real areas of concern and decisions made on what needs to be done. Once this is done, key areas of concern will be briefed to the LSS committee next term. **Add update on progress analysis and initiatives to spring agenda.**

b. SATs Results against Local & National Benchmarks

Discussed during the item above. It was noted that Ofsted inspections are no longer really about data and while monitoring progress is very important, it is not the only area that needs to be looked at as the curriculum is also a focus.

c. MAT/School Targets

See trust improvement plan.

6. Improvement

a. MAT Improvement Plan

WH updated the committee on the Trust Improvement Plan and the need to meet the requirements of the DfE Trust Quality Descriptors. Every school needs to understand this document and their part in it. **What does meeting these descriptors actually look like as far as the DfE is concerned and how do we measure that?** WH noted the trust as a whole has not done a self-evaluation (SEF) as this has only been done at school level. Doing a trust SEF against these descriptors will enable us to keep evaluating where we are. **WH will draft a SEF and it will go to the audit committee in Dec. Add to Audit agenda. What will be the conversation with the DfE regarding these descriptors?** We don't know that at this point. WH confirmed that sustainability remains a factor in the improvement plan as we need to keep on top of it going forward. Behaviour guidance has been issued by the DfE – although this is not an issue in our schools, it is in improvement plan to ensure we are doing everything possible to ensure good behaviour. Finance and keeping control of the budget will be important this year, and this should be doable assuming that nothing big happens like covid, RAAC etc.

WH noted school improvement schedule based on trust quality descriptors and school improvement requirements. JC now co-ordinating the work of the school improvement officers. Work also continuing with Duchy Trust and Chumleigh Trust who are paying for this improvement work. SC and SSCA will be frontloaded with support due to impending Ofsted inspection. **Is the plan as good as it could be and are we using the expertise across our staff to share best practice?** JC confirmed this is being done widely across the trust. WH noted that peer to peer working is considered positive and the trust has been doing this for a while now. The committee agreed that peer to peer working is collaborative, shares skills and is not judgemental and is therefore seen as positive. **Is the work in the school improvement schedule costed?** WH confirmed yes they are already costed and no additional funds needed at present.

WH noted progress on transfer, hoping that 1st April as a goal all being well with due diligence. RDD's office assist with the application which then goes to the Advisory Board for a decision on the transfer (and our ability to do it). Application needs to be in by 1 Nov 23 for advisory board on 13 Dec 23. If that window is missed, then it will be 4 Dec 23 submission for a decision on 15 Jan 24, and everything will be pushed back a month. It was confirmed it is the Duchy Trust's application to join An Daras but we will need to assist heavily with its completion.

Once approval given, we can apply for funding to pay for the transfer (up to £100K) to cover the legal costs, due diligence and other activities. **Are there any issues with premises such as leasehold like we have had in the past?** No, all Duchy Trust properties are freehold and these land/property issues should have been dealt with when the schools formed into Duchy Trust in the first place. A consultation will be placed on the trust and all school's websites, and then feedback taken from this as good practice. TUPE will take some time but is a reasonably well-

known process. ST attended a meeting with Chair of Duchy Trust. It is possible that changes to our articles will be required but this remains a decision for the An Daras trust board. **Have we had an indication from RDD office that they will support this?** Yes, because we have been working with this trust previously and we were one of the 3 recommended for the transfer. Also our experience matches the needs of two RIs schools.

It was noted that the Head at Wer has successfully negotiated a strip of land adjoining Wer school to be donated from Werrington Park Estate. Although this is being donated free of charge which is excellent, there will be a need to find funding to fence the land. A CIF bid will be looked at on safeguarding grounds but it should be remembered that Wer has received a significant amount of CIF funding already so there are no guarantees.

b. Quality of Teaching

Covered under improvement plan.

c. Ofsted Actions

Committee provided with a list of areas for improvement from recent Ofsted inspections and these are being incorporated into the school improvement plans.

d. SIAMS Actions

SIAMS work is always ongoing and where relevant, incorporated into school improvement plans for the Church schools. Foundation Director noted the new system starting this academic year and that she will attend, by invitation, attend the SC meeting this term.

7. Curriculum & Learning

a. MAT Vision & Ethos (including Christian ethos)

Nothing further to report.

b. MAT EYFS Statutory Framework (including policies & procedures)

Nothing significant to discuss.

c. Visible Learning

The VL journey continues, aiming at the next level of certification which will make An Daras the only trust to be doing this. The process of the journey has helped staff with their personal development and has enabled the focus to be on the children's learning rather than the teaching. The impact is not always easy to quantify but overall, it can be shown to have had a positive impact. The committee acknowledged this and agreed that some of the observations on the Ofsted inspections are testament to the success of this provision.

d. Christian Character and Distinctiveness/RE & Collective Worship Compliance

Compliant with collective worship in schools. The RE curriculum is all compliant with statutory requirements. GS confirmed that all the requirements of SIAMS are well embedded.

8. Parents, Pupils & Staff

a. Discipline, Exclusions & Behaviour

No issues with discipline and behaviour in general but behaviour has been incorporated into the improvement plan nonetheless. Only one potential exclusion at SSCA and the committee discussed the issues surrounding this, and what is best for the child and agreed that the LA processes for getting the right provision for this child are flawed. It seems very unfair to label a child with permanent exclusion in order for the LA to react to the needs of that child.

b. MAT Pupil Attendance

Average 93-94% last year, this year is looking positive so far. **Is there any additional funding to assist with improving attendance?** Not presently. Things to improve attendance were discussed such as provision of nasal flu vaccinations. **What about unauthorised holiday absences as this is up nationally?** The inconsistency with fining and more affordable term time holidays do not help the situation, although savings on holidays often outweigh fines anyway. Also some children do actually have positive experiences while on holiday. It was noted that the national average for attendance has dropped since covid. It was agreed that it is something to keep monitoring and looking for ways to improve. The committee discussed transport to school and provision for low attendance children or children in areas difficult to walk from. **Attendance will be re-visited at the next meeting – add to agenda.**

c. Staff Job Descriptions

WH discussed the need to look at the responsibilities of current CEO of Duchy Trust when the transfer occurs. A job description was put forward for Deputy Executive Officer and Executive Head Teacher for the Duchy hub. The employment of staff, mentoring and support for Duchy staff was discussed in detail. The committee was content with the draft job description.

d. MAT Best Endeavour Expectations for Teachers

Noted and no issues.

e. MAT Best Endeavour Expectations for Learning Support Assistants

Noted and no issues.

9. Learning Related Staff CPD/Training/Qualifications

a. Senior leaders including (where appropriate) the CEO and CFO getting appropriate CPD

CPD around 'thinking matters' for staff will take place this year. School leaders can select CPD relevant to their schools. CFO has been completed online training regarding DfE requirements for managing school budgets.

The needs of training for governors and directors was noted and is in hand with CP and TM.

b. Well-being and Mental Health Champion or Process to Provide this Support

Each school has a mental well-being champion. Lots of work done in the last year on well-being and an external review completed. Nothing further to report.

10. Safeguarding

a. Latest KCSiE and re-assurance that it is being applied across the MAT

Issued across MAT to staff, Directors and Governors. No issues to report.

b. Safeguarding guidance and policy changes (dependent on when LA policy is issued)

See item 13 for new safeguarding policy. A safeguarding update was provided for the committee and this will be shared with LGBs.

c. MAT Single Central Record Compliance

A useful checklist of what is required in the management of the SCR was provided by Neil Swaite. It was noted that governors do not need to physically check the SCR but do need to ensure the SCR is being managed properly by the school leaders.

d. S157

Submitted for Cornwall schools, thereby fulfilling statutory duty, but no feedback yet.

11. Safety

Health and Safety arrangements [HSE Managing for H&S] including a policy, risk assessments, competent advice access, review of accidents, resources and control of contractors are regularly reviewed and no issues to report at this time. Exceptions report provided to committee including matters on asbestos, IOSHH and the reporting of a near miss. No reinforced concrete issues. All property compliance regarding statutory requirements is in order. Delays with fencing at SSCA due to waiting for planning consent. **With regard to sufficient resources to comply with H&S, given the age of the buildings and significant increase in costs, we note funding is a concern. What can we do about this?** WH gave an explanation of the state of the schools and that funding allocated to deal with maintenance falls woefully below what is required. This necessitates the need for CIF bids but as everyone is doing the same, they are increasingly difficult to get. WH briefly updated the committee on the checks on children attending alternative provision that is now much more comprehensive to ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

12. Compliance

a. Cyber Security

Full audit completed and Cyber Security accreditation will hopefully be achieved this term. However, there is now an annual requirement for training and checks to keep the accreditation in date. Training is for all staff, Directors and Governors.

b. GDPR

Any breaches report to Commissioner's office but no actions has thus far been required.

c. Website Compliance of MAT Schools

Completed by NS annually, no issues to note or picked up during an Ofsted inspection.

13. Policy Review

- a. Allegations of Abuse made against staff (WH) – no change. Approved.
- b. Health & Safety (SC) – no change. Approved.
- c. EYFS (WH) – no change. Approved
- d. PPG (LH) – no change. Approved.
- e. Child Protection & Safeguarding (CP) – new updated policy, safeguarding lead and whistleblowing lead have been changed to Steve Tavener and Gill Shippides respectively. Approved. CP noted that there are due to be some changes to working together to safeguard children at end of this year so changes to this policy may be needed.

14. AOB

Adam Broad from Thinking Matters to give short introduction/presentation (15 mins) of why we have chosen Thinking Matters and how we expect to see impact – with Debbie Saunders.

Action: add to Spring Agenda

15. DONM

Date of next meeting is Wednesday 7th February 2024 at the central office.

Meeting closed at 11.30am

TJH Martin
ADMAT Governance Officer

Distribution List:

W. Hermon – CEO Director
T. Rudge – Director (Committee Chair)
C. Paul – Director (Committee Vice)
S. Tavener – Director (Board Chair)
G. Barriball – Director
M. Savage – Director
G. Shippides - Director
J. Callow – Ex-Officio