

ST MARTIN'S CE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

FULL GOVERNING BOARD		DATE:	15th January 2024
CHAired BY: Brian Gravenor (BG)		CLERKED BY: Jacqueline Brooks (JB)	
GOVERNORS PRESENT:		Also Present:	
Brian Gravenor (BG) Gemma Tozer-Howe (GTH) Jennifer Elliott (JE) Amy Hardinge (AH) Ruth Marsh (RM) Phil Wales (PW) Lynette Bickers (LB) Vicky Harris (VH)		Jo Westney (JW) – Family Advocate (part)	
APOLOGIES: Rev. Jon Holder (JH)			
Absent without apology: None			

Governor questions are highlighted in grey.

Agenda Items	
1.	<p><u>Opening Prayer & Welcome</u></p> <p>1. Opening Prayer taken by BG. BG welcomed all to the meeting, and particularly VH, who has just been appointed as a Parent Governor on the Board.</p>
2.	<p><u>Apologies and sanctions of absence.</u></p> <p>1. JH had sent apologies, which were sanctioned by the GB.</p>
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>1. No declarations of interest.</p>
4.	<p><u>Level 2 Safeguarding: Annual Refresher – delivered by Jo Westney, Family Advocate</u></p> <p>1. JW confirmed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All school staff received their annual L2 Safeguarding training at the September inset day – this included discussing case review examples. • Safeguarding policies are all in place and meet statutory requirements. • An effective safeguarding framework is in place in school and practice is very effective.

- Staff are very skilled at building relationships with young people.
- Mental health needs are high in school – there has been a significant increase since the pandemic, with raised levels of anxiety in both parents and children. The Mental Health in Schools Team comes into school regularly to work with families. Referrals are processed relatively quickly and do not have the same waiting lists as other external support agencies. Children really benefit from this service.
- Online safety is a key area that the school has a strong focus on, and the school is compliant with requirements in this year's KCSiE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) guidance. Conversations are ongoing with children and guidance is provided to parents. The school's IT technician has ensured that appropriate filters are in place in school, and he is alerted if any searches of concern are undertaken.
- The school follows a system of Recognise, Respond, Report, Record. CPOMS is used effectively and works well to provide reports and identify patterns of behaviour/need/concern. AH and JW review all CPOMS incidents that are recorded. Most incidents relate to behavioural matters. Staff have been encouraged to add the actions they have taken in response to any incidents.
- The At Risk meetings held by SLT work well to monitor and identify children who may need specific support or where there are potential/ongoing concerns.

LB asked if any changes to support service provision (e.g., Early Help) would occur if the school does join a Trust. AH confirmed they would not. JW advised that Early Help overall is changing its system, and Lead Practitioners for a case will now be allocated depending on the key area of need. JW feels that this will be a better system and ensure that the most appropriate service is leading on supporting a family.

The GB discussed contextual safeguarding, identifying key vulnerable groups of children in school and local issues that also have safeguarding impacts for the school. Processes for responding to a disclosure were revisited, so governors were clear on how this is managed in school (TED – Tell Me, Explain, Describe). Staff understand the need for prompt recording, retention of handwritten notes and the need to be sensitive around how many staff are involved in talking to the child. Sometimes it can be helpful for a child to talk to several people as this can demonstrate consistency (or inconsistency) in the disclosure. If a child chooses to disclose to several people, then this would not be discouraged by staff.

JE asked if mental health needs were higher in the older age groups. JW advised that there is need across the school, and that the Mental Health in Schools team will work with children from Year 1 upwards. There are children in Year 1 in school experiencing high anxiety who are being supported. Higher level concerns continue to be referred to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

LB asked what safeguarding arrangements are in place for Parents' Evenings and for when staff meet with parents to ensure staff feel safe. AH advised that year group teachers undertake Parents' Evenings together, so they are not undertaking them alone. Meetings in school are usually held when other staff are near in case any support is required.

The GB discussed the process the school has for whistleblowing, and it was confirmed that the whistleblowing policy is available and shared with all staff and governors.

It was noted that the staffing details on the red emergency cards staff and governors wear in their lanyards need to be updated.

Action: JW to arrange for red emergency cards to be updated.

JW advised that there is now online training around Prevent available to staff and governors.

Action: JW to share details of online Prevent training course with JB and JB to share with governors.

(JW left the meeting)

5. Training: St. Martin's Model for Great Teaching – to be delivered by Amy Hardinge, Acting Headteacher.

1. Background

The Model for Great Teaching was created by senior leaders based on evidence from research which identified what makes key impacts/outcomes for children. The Model focuses on improving outcomes for children as whole people, and not only on academic progress. It incorporated the nurturing ethos and Christian values already in place in the school and tightened up on expectations, teaching, and outcomes. It aimed to create shared consistency of good practice, encourage more professional conversations between staff and to empower teachers to be better at what they do and at identifying what is making the most difference for children.

The Model is split into five key areas with twenty elements within these. The five areas are:

- Understanding the curriculum
- Developing a supportive learning environment
- Making every minute count
- Quality-first instruction
- Building life-long learners

AH was clear that these elements are not treated as a tick box format. It was also noted that the Model is not linked to the assessment of teachers' performance, but it is being used to drive an area that teachers want to improve (teachers have been asked to pick one element to improve as one of their appraisal targets). The Model is a long-term piece of CPD for the school and will continue to run throughout this year and potentially further.

2. Progress

The GB discussed what staff had seen as their strengths and areas for development and AH explained what strategies/techniques had been used to improve practice. The majority of staff see their strengths being in developing a supportive learning environment, with Year 6 teachers feeling their strengths to be in making every minute count. Areas for development were identified by teachers as understanding curriculum and quality-first instruction. A key area of development has been around sharing practice and staff observing and reflecting on each other's practice. The CPD journey around this Model has been carefully monitored and recorded. Staff are increasingly confident in reflecting on and writing about improvements in their practice.

Improvements in practice are being seen in books and classrooms and is heard within staff conversations. AH shared some of the feedback from staff about the Model and how they feel it has really built on positives in place to improve the quality of education.

LB asked if there had been evidence of improvements made from implementing the Model. AH advised that evidence of improvement could be seen in children's books, in teachers' planning (e.g., in the fluency of their knowledge of the curriculum) and how feedback processes to children have developed as a result.

LB asked whether/how parents are given feedback on improvements that their children have made. AH advised that this happens in a variety of ways:

- Immediate feedback on the door at pick up time.
- Sending a 'You're a Star!' postcard and sticker to the child's home.
- Having books available at parents' evenings for parents to look through.

3. Next steps

Governors discussed the SIP priorities and how these link directly to the Model. This ensures consistency in the school's approach to all aspects of its work. It was noted that the work undertaken by staff already in improving on reflecting on practice, observing each other, and sharing practice have laid good foundations for the introduction of the incremental coaching that will

	<p>begin shortly.</p> <p>The GB discussed that it has been challenging ensuring that the number of teachers returning from maternity leave are kept up to date with the CPD related to the Model. To address this, AH has been using Keeping in Touch days as an opportunity for staff to work with the Model, and SLT have also been careful in decisions around year group teacher partnerships, aiming to partner those returning with teachers who are familiar/more experienced with the Model.</p> <p>Action: JB to send out links to the research and evidence which underpins the Model for Great Teaching.</p> <p><i>(AH left the meeting)</i></p>
6.	<p><u>Headteacher Recruitment planning</u></p> <p>1. BG had requested an item be added to the agenda to discuss planning for the recruitment of a substantive headteacher. BG explained to the GB that he has taken advice from HR at DCC, the Diocese and Ventrus MAT and detailed how the process will be undertaken to ensure it is conducted fairly and to ensure the GB can be assured that that whoever is appointed is right for the job. BG will be writing to staff so that all are informed of the process to be taken. It was agreed that the governor interview panel will consist of BG, LB and GTH.</p>

<u>ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING</u>		
<u>Action</u>	<u>Person responsible</u>	<u>Date to be completed by</u>
1. Arrange for staffing details on red 'Emergency' cards to be updated.	JW	10.2.24
2. Share details of Prevent online training course with JB	JW	31.1.24
3. Send governors Prevent online training course information.	JB	5.2.24
4. Send out links to the research and evidence which underpins the Model for Great Teaching.	JB (via AH)	5.2.24

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

- None

Next meeting: Monday, 5th February 2024, 6.15pm - 8.15pm
*(To be preceded by a meeting of the Management Partnership
 Joint Committee 5.45pm – 6.15pm)*

Signed as accurate by the Chair:

Name of Chair:

Date: