

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

**The Cluster Board of Endsleigh Holy Child, St Anthony's and St Mary Queen of Martyrs  
Voluntary Catholic Primary Academies**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cluster Board  
held at St Anthony's RC Primary Academy on Thursday 9 June 2022 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Reverend W Massie (in the chair)  
Dr S James; Mrs K Reed

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs C Coldham (Head of School, St Mary Queen of Martyrs); Mrs N Coyle (Lead Lay Chaplain); Mrs D Hermann (DSL, Endsleigh Holy Child); Mrs M Ryan (Executive Headteacher, Cluster 1); Mrs E Smith (DSL, St Mary Queen of Martyrs); Mrs J Storch (Co Head of School, St Anthony's); Miss M Walker (Acting DSL, St Anthony's); Mr M Ward (Co Head of School, St Anthony's)

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Tony Hammond, Independent Professional Clerking Services

94 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie led attendees in prayer.

95 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS. No interests were declared.

96 APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Bentley (Interim Head of School, Endsleigh Holy Child).

97 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2022.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendment:-

minute 89(ii): "Miss Coyle" to read "Mr Coyle"

98 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

Safeguarding Review Recommendations (minute 91 (p56) refers)

Mrs Ryan confirmed that follow-up was monitored and that key issues arising from the monitoring would in future be shared with the Cluster Board.

99 CHAPLAINCY UPDATE. The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Mrs Coyle drew attention to key points, as follows:-

- Adoration on 30 March had been a highlight. All of the primary academies had been visited and Reverend Massie had kindly participated.
- Last term, there had been two Section 48 inspections and one Section 5, which the Team had supported. It was pleasing that the work of the Team had been recognised in the reports.

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Chair's initials

- The “Be Spirited” days had been planned and the first three would take place the following week, based on the Carlo Acutis “Be original, not a photocopy” quote. Resources had been uploaded to Sharepoint and it was hoped members of the Team would be able to visit all of the academies.
- The staff reflection evening planned for the last week of half-term had been postponed and an alternative date was to be identified.
- The staff retreat had been relaunched and the next would take place on the weekend of 30 September 2022. 35 to 40 places were available and 22 staff had signed up to date. The Team was grateful to the Trust for subsidising the retreat.
- Planning for next year had begun, but it would not be possible to finalise dates/ arrangements until Team staffing structure had been confirmed. There had as yet been no further information about the proposal to employ an apprentice, and if this proved not to be viable, an alternative means of increasing capacity would be needed.

Members were informed that the Chaplaincy Team’s work had been described in the Section 48 reviews as “exemplary”.

Mrs Hermann left the meeting.

Mrs Coyle was asked if all staff were aware of the retreat and she confirmed that she had sent a Trust-wide email. It was noted that, historically, most attendees had been from St Mary’s College, but an increase in primary academy representation was expected.

In response to a question, leaders confirmed that the Foundation Stones resources were useful and could be used how and when it suited individual academies.

Mrs Hermann re-joined the meeting.

It was noted that a new Priest (Reverend Marsden) would be coming to Cottingham in September.

Mrs Coyle was thanked for her report and left the meeting.

100 COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES. Reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Each included the following:-

- safeguarding overview
- behaviour overview
- attendance overview
- whole-school safeguarding
- website compliance checklist

Heads of schoolDSLs were each asked to highlight a small number of key issues.

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## Endsleigh Holy Child VC Primary Academy

Mrs Hermann drew attention to the following:-

- There had been a significant reduction in homophobic and racist language, with no incidents recorded since the last report. There had been a great deal of work with pupils on the Academy's new core values and the PCSOs had led workshops with the key year-groups. Following the safeguarding audit, the Academy had joined the White Ribbon campaign, which focused on respect and kind words.
- A child with multiple SEN needs and an EHCP was on a part-time timetable. His behaviour was highly challenging, but he was engaging with one-to-one support and his timetable was being increased. A review of the EHCP was ongoing.
- Persistent absence had reduced (from 27 to 22) since the last meeting and was likely to reduce further. There had been a significant amount of work to build relationships with families, which had impacted positively. Some absences had been linked to COVID-19.
- 23 pupils were receiving emotional literacy support (from Mrs Hermann and the trained ELSA), including check-ins, one-to-one support and friendship groups. Emotional literacy was becoming embedded across the Academy and Mrs Hermann would be undertaking ELSA training. Nurture provision was in place at lunchtimes, to provide a safe space where pupils could talk about their feelings, and number of them were now developing more resilience. In Year 6, there was a focus on preparing the pupils for transfer to secondary school.

In response to a question, Mrs Hermann confirmed that the child on a part-time timetable had been attending until 12.30pm, but was now in school until 2.00pm every day and was having lunch in the nurture provision. She informed members that it remained a challenge to get the child into class, but he was attending.

It was noted that the Academy had recently been subject to a Section 8 inspection and Mrs Hermann was asked about the safeguarding aspects of this. She informed members that:

- there had been a significant focus on the emotional wellbeing of the children;
- the inspector had looked at CPOMS logs, to check process and timeliness (rather than considering paper case studies);
- there had been a focus on contextual safeguarding and how the Academy linked curriculum work with the nature of the local community;
- provision and resources for children with medical care plans had been checked, as well as staff training;
- the approach had been professional, rigorous and fair; and
- safeguarding arrangements had been found to be effective.

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### **St Mary Queen of Martyrs VC Primary Academy**

Mrs Coldham drew attention to the following:-

- There had been an increase in incidents of sexualised behaviour the last report. This was in part because a child who had experienced significant trauma at home had joined in Year 6 had been over-familiar with his peers, leading to a significant amount of work with the pupil. Staff training on the Brook Sexualised Behaviour Tool had also led to an increase in incidents being logged.
- Ten vulnerable children were receiving pastoral and wellbeing support, including emotional literacy. There was a waiting list for ELSA support, but the children waiting were supported in other ways. Some of the issues were linked to behaviour at home/parenting.
- Attendance was lower than desired and persistent absence remained an issue. Trust procedures were followed rigorously as a minimum and first-day visits were undertaken, but persistent absence was stubbornly high, with a range of excuses from parents and a willingness to accept fixed-penalty notices. Where PA pupils did attend, there were regular check-ins.

It was suggested that the Academy explore strategies that had been used successfully in other settings, for example asking parents to sit with their children in class. Mrs Coldham confirmed that she would discuss potential strategies with Mrs Reed.

Members asked about the safeguarding aspects of the Academy's recent Section 8 inspection and Mrs Coldham informed them that:

- the approach had been rigorous and relentless;
- the inspector had not accepted anything on face value and had continually asked for additional evidence;
- after seeing case studies, the inspector had checked relevant CPOMS records and challenged the action taken;
- the same questions had been asked of staff and pupils;
- the approach had made less confident staff anxious;
- the inspector had praised the behaviour of pupils and the Catholic ethos; and
- safeguarding arrangements had been found to be effective.

Mrs Coldham was asked about gaps in the website compliance checklist and she confirmed that the Academy was fully compliant.

### **St Anthony's VC Primary Academy**

Mr Ward and Mrs Storch drew attention to the following:-

- The number of racist incidents had reduced following a significant amount of work in relation to equality, in lessons and with individuals. The two incidents this term had been non-malicious passing comments, but had been followed up.
- Five of the six homophobic comments had been made by one child, who was repeating language he had heard at home and not directing it at an individual. The

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pupil had an individual behaviour plan and support from the White House, and because he was in Year 6, there had been discussions with staff at St Mary's College. The other homophobic comment had been made by a pupil who had been questioning whether he was homophobic as a result of the language commonly used within his family. He had been provided with a book, which he had read.

- Internal exclusions were used as a last resort. When used, Academy staff worked closely with parents.
- Attendance (currently 93%) was lower than desired, but in many cases there was a context. There had been some family bereavements, including one leading to a four-week trip abroad, a pupil who had moved out of area and then returned, and a pupil with SEND, who had missed 40% of his lessons because his mother struggled to get him to come back to school after lunch. In the latter case, the Academy was seeking a review of the pupil's EHCP and staff were working closely with the family and their social worker.
- Trust attendance procedures were followed rigorously, including tracking, absence calls and letters.
- Sparkle assemblies were to be relaunched, to celebrate good attendance.

In response to a question, leaders confirmed that other local schools faced similar challenges in relation to attendance.

Members asked about the national attendance average and leaders confirmed that there was no figure currently but the target was 96%. Mrs Storch confirmed that pupils were aware of the target.

Leaders were asked what support was provided following bereavement and leaders confirmed that support included daily check-ins, close liaison with the families, the provision of resources and, where appropriate, referral to other agencies. All staff were notified of bereavements and pupils knew they could speak to Miss Walker if they needed to.

Members welcomed the reduction in racist incidents. They noted that staff believed the two incidents this term had been non-malicious passing comments, but asked whether this had also been the view of the pupil about whom the comments had been made. Leaders confirmed that the comments had not been made about an individual, and where this was the case, there would be regular check-ins.

Mrs Ryan referred to single central register checks and confirmed that training was being provided for DSLs, so they could undertake checks in addition to those already undertaken by office managers.

Members asked about gaps in the website compliance checklist and leaders confirmed that the Academy was fully compliant.

101 SYNOD RESPONSES. A summary of pupil, parent and staff responses to the Synod had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

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Mrs Ryan informed members that pupils had been shown a Powerpoint presentation and asked for their feedback, which she had collated. Academy leaders confirmed that they had sought parental views via Google Forms.

Members agreed that the exercise represented a useful piece of social research.

Mr Ward left the meeting.

102 DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS DURING THE 2022-2023 ACADEMIC YEAR. It was noted that the dates and times of meetings in the next academic year would be determined centrally.

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

103 SECTION 48 INSPECTIONS. It was noted that St Mary Queen of Martyrs had been judged outstanding in its recent Section 48 inspection, which was a credit to the children, staff and Chaplaincy Team.

Mrs Ryan informed members that St Anthony's would shortly be subject to a Section 48 inspection.

104 RETIREMENT. Mrs Ryan informed members that she was taking early retirement and this would be her last meeting. She thanked members for their loyalty and expertise, and confirmed that working for the Trust had been a great pleasure.

Members thanked Mrs Ryan for her work and wished her well.

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signature of Chair