

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The Cluster Board of St Charles, St Richard's, St Thomas More and St Vincent's Voluntary Catholic Primary Academies

Minutes of a meeting of Cluster Board 2
held at St Charles Primary Academy on Thursday 16 June 2022 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Dr S James; Mr M Pickering; Mr S Prince

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J Bell (DSL, St Vincent's); Mrs E Cook (Head of School, St Richard's); Mrs M Coyle (Lead Lay Chaplain); Mrs E Griffin (DSL, St Richard's); Mrs M Longman (DSL, St Charles); Mr G Shaw (Head of School, St Thomas More); Mrs S Woodmansey (Head of School, St Charles)

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Tony Hammond, Independent Professional Clerking Services

102 OPENING PRAYER. Mrs Coyle led members in prayer.

103 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR.

RESOLVED: that Mr Pickering be elected as chair for the meeting.

104 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS. No interests were declared.

105 APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Childs, Mrs Donnelly (Head of School, St Vincent's), Mrs Siedle (Executive Headteacher, Cluster 2) and Miss Stansfield (DSL, St Thomas More).

106 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

107 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.

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

- A Section 48 inspection was currently taking place at St Anthony's Primary.
- The "Be Spirited" days were ongoing.
- The team had been stretched recently. Most activities had gone ahead, but the staff reflection evening planned for the last week of half-term had been postponed. It would not be possible to sustain current levels of support without additional staffing capacity, particularly in view of the expansion of the Trust, and there might be a need for restructuring.
- In the recent inspections the work of the Chaplaincy Team had been recognised.

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Chair's initials

Dr James joined the meeting.

- Adoration across the primary academies had been a highlight. Reverend Massie had kindly participated and the children had responded respectfully.
- Suggestions for additional scripture storytelling resources would be welcomed.
- The Mini Vinnies had been busy, though the Team hoped to achieve more consistency across the academies.
- She would be visiting the academies to seek feedback on the support/resources provided by the Team.

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

109 COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES. Three reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting and copies of the report for St Charles were tabled. Each report included the following:-

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

Heads of school/DSLs were each asked to highlight a small number of key issues.

St Richard's VC Primary Academy

Mrs Griffin drew attention to the following:-

- There were five children on child protection plans.
- There were 12 children in need.
- A "parenting" category had been included under Early Help referrals.
- The number of Operation Encompass notifications (4) was slightly lower than previously, but there had been significant risk involved and they had all resulted in multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). The children were being supported through emotional literacy sessions, daily check-ins and the availability of lunchtime nurture provision.
- Staff had been made aware of the emotional needs of identified children and there had been a focus on relationships.
- Staff had regular training in relation to domestic abuse as this was a significant issue.
- The lunchtime nurture provision was a strength.

Mrs Cook drew attention to the following:-

- There had been an increase in verbal incidents (mainly swearing), so a zero-tolerance approach had been adopted and awareness raised during assemblies.
- There had been no exclusions, positive handling incidents or racist incidents, which was pleasing.
- There was now a focus on low-level behaviours (including swearing).

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Chair's initials

- A Trust behaviour deep dive had been positive.
- Persistent absence (PA) was high (81 children).

Mrs Griffin informed members that 24 of the PA children were in F1 or F2 and the staggered start in F2 had impacted. Of the remaining 57, 8 had left, 7 had been late starters, 10 had experienced significant trauma and 9 had significant medical needs. Members were informed that the attendance of five significant PA pupils had improved following letters, meetings and action-plans. It was noted that there had been an outbreak of chicken pox.

St Thomas More VC Primary Academy

Mr Shaw drew attention to the following:-

- A significant challenge had been the lack of response/communication on the part of the Police and Social Care. Communication tended to be one-way and school staff had to continually chase responses. The DSL continued to undertake check-ins and home visits, but a number of cases had been escalated to the Local Authority's Education Safeguarding Manager. There had been cases of pupils being stepped down from care plans without the Academy being notified.
- The pupil who had brought sculpting blades and matches into school had been attempting to impress his peers. Other children had quickly removed themselves and informed staff. The Academy had worked closely with the pupil's parents (with whom staff had a good relationship) and had arranged for Humberside Fire and Rescue to provide fire safety training for all pupils.
- It was frustrating that attendance was below target after all the work that had been undertaken in recent years. There had been absences due to illness, including COVID-19 (sometimes multiple) and chicken pox, and family holidays. There had been a number of fixed-penalty notice referrals to the Local Authority.

Mr Shaw was asked about Downright Special and he confirmed that this was a local charity that supported children with Down syndrome.

St Vincent's VC Primary Academy

Mrs Bell drew attention to the following:-

- There were four children on child protection plans.
- There was one child in need.
- There had been two referrals to Early Help.
- The main safeguarding concerns were domestic abuse, neglect and mental health.
- There had been no Operation Encompass notifications, which the Academy had questioned as there had been a disclosure in school. The system was being reviewed by the Police and Local Authority.
- Two children had been reported as missing in education, which was high for this point in the year.

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- There had been 24 physical behaviour incidents. These had mainly involved children who were new to the Academy, some of whom did not speak English. One child with no English had never been to school and had been encouraged to join the football club, which had helped. One child had special needs and was in receipt of additional support, including lunchtime provision. A new playground games area had been built, which had helped reduce behaviour incidents.
- Verbal incidents tended to be the same children as involved in the physical incidents. They were largely unkindness, so the importance of kindness was continually reinforced.
- Emotional behaviour incidents related to the SEND child involved in the physical incidents, who was on a part-time timetable.

- There were 29 persistent absentees, excluding Foundation Stage.
- Some children were PA as a result of family holidays.
- A number of children from Romanian families were PA, despite every effort by the Academy (including fixed-penalty notices) and improving relationships.

St Charles VC Primary Academy

Mrs Woodmansey drew attention to the following:-

- There had been one child protection referral, for emotional support. The child lived in Cottingham and the Hull Local Authority had advised the Academy make a referral to the East Riding, but the East Riding Local Authority had advised that because the child was not in secondary education he should be referred back to the Hull Local Authority. It was disappointing that the child was not able to access the counselling he needed.
- There had been no Operation Encompass notification, despite two disclosures.
- There had been a reduction in behaviour incidents, which was due to the streamlined Behaviour Policy. There had been a behaviour deep dive and the Academy was focused on low-level incidents, as there were now very few major incidents.
- Two pupils involved in physical behaviour incidents were receiving external support because of issues in the home.
- Two children were on part-time timetables and receiving SEND support from the Local Authority. Both needed specialist placements.
- The number of persistent absentees had reduced to 37. Some of these had joined the Academy in January, so a small number of days absence had a disproportionate impact. There had recently been an increase in family holidays during term-time, including Polish families attending Baptisms for significantly longer than had been authorised. Some Romanian families had struggled to get back to England as a result of passport issues. Illness, including chicken pox, had also impacted.
- A local block of flats had been repurposed to house homeless people and there had been a number of Police and community meetings because of antisocial behaviour, including drug-dealing.

110 SYNOD RESPONSES. A summary of pupil, parent and staff responses to the Synod had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the exercise represented a useful piece of social research.

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Mrs Woodmansey informed members that there had been a good rate of parental response, including from non-Catholic families.

- 111 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.

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signature of Chair