

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 12 March 2020 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Mr S Prince (in the chair)  
Mrs C Johnson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs C Coldham (Head of School, St Richard's); Mrs N Coyle (Lead Lay Chaplain); Mr G Shaw (Assistant Head of School, St Thomas More); Mrs K Siedle (Executive Headteacher); Mrs S Wilson (Safeguarding Lead)

CLERK TO THE CB: Tony Hammond, Independent Professional Clerking Services

61 OPENING PRAYER. Mr Prince led members in prayer.

62 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS. No interests were declared.

63 APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Donnelly, Mrs Eley, Mr Pickering and Mrs Ward.

RESOLVED: that consent be given to the absence of Mr Pickering and Mrs Ward.

64 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendment:-

minute 55: "Marist College" to read "Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel Parish Hall"

Mrs Wilson joined the meeting.

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

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

- Following the prayer days, the Chaplaincy Team had produced resources for schools, including prayer boxes and digital resources, which would be built on over time.
- The feedback in relation to the Mission Days (which had been led by academy chaplaincy co-ordinators) had been very positive.

Mrs Siedle joined the meeting.

.....  
Chair's initials

The Mission Day had been dedicated to The Year of the Word, with the theme of The God Who Speaks. The day had been split into three parts (celebrating, sharing and living the Word) and had resulted in some beautiful artwork.

- The Mini-Vinnies and YSVP Formation Day would take place on 18 March 2020.
- The Day of Adoration would take place on 25 March 2020 and information (including a lesson plan) would be circulated to schools shortly.
- All of the academies had now achieved the Fair Active award.
- Live Simply action-plans had been prepared, based on three strands: actions to live simply; actions to live sustainably with creation; and actions to live in solidarity with the poor.
- The work of the Junior Chaplaincy Teams and Mini Vinnies was ongoing.
- The Lent charity campaign would be supporting the CAFOD “Defend the Defenders” initiative.
- Planned projects included the following:-
  - Be Spirited days in June 2020;
  - Year 6 Reflection Day on 3 July 2020; and
  - First Holy Communion day on 8 July 2020.

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

67 COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES. Copies of reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Academy leaders were asked to identify up to three key points from the reports.

#### **St Richard’s VC Primary Academy**

Mrs Coldham drew attention to the following:-

- There had been twelve Operation Encompass notifications, which was positive in the sense that parents were reporting incidents and provision could be put in place. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) would be delivering more training in relation to domestic abuse. The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant was being provided with training so that she could provide more support for the DSL.
- The Academy had referred a family to the Cat Zero project, which provided a form of early help. More referrals would be considered.
- There had been whole-school training on neglect and domestic abuse.
  
- The number of behaviour incidents had reduced. Mrs Wilson had undertaken a behaviour review and had challenged the Academy to consider carefully the experience of each individual child.
- Two children with challenging behaviour had moved to the Whitehouse. One Year 3 pupil was on a part-time placement at the Whitehouse but was being reintegrated at St Richard’s.
- The Behaviour Hub had not been required this year.
- Senior leaders considered weekly CPOMS reports and had seen an increase in incidents in Year 6, linked to the fact that expectations had been aligned with those in Year 7.

.....  
Chair’s initials

- Attendance had been recognised as a strength by Ofsted.
- A walking bus was to be considered, to improve punctuality.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that pupils at the Whitehouse benefited from smaller class sizes.

#### **St Thomas More VC Primary Academy**

Mr Shaw drew attention to the following:-

- The DSL had left in February, but the new DSL would start next week and would bring a wealth of experience. Mrs Siedle and Mrs Wilson had been involved in the recruitment process.
- Leaders were working closely with a small number of families in relation to bullying/perceived bullying.

In response to a question, Mr Shaw confirmed that the five listed child protection referrals had in fact been requests for advice, none of which had resulted in referral.

- Attendance was good. The Administrative Officer was proactive in taking action and identifying issues for referral to senior leaders. Meetings had been held with some families and there had been a significant reduction in persistent absence.

It was noted that four children who had been PA had attended every day since meetings with parents, so letters of congratulations had been sent.

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

Mrs Siedle drew attention to the following:-

- Attendance was a priority for leaders. There had been meetings with the parents of 35 PA children and in 32 cases this had resulted in improvement.
- Chicken pox and holidays at the start and end of the Autumn term had impacted significantly on attendance.

It was pointed out that whilst the level of persistent absence was high, there had been improvements in some cases and there were contextual factors in many. It was noted that following up persistent absence was time-consuming, though the Trust's Policy helped.

#### **St Charles VC Primary Academy**

Mrs Siedle drew attention to the following:-

- Attendance had improved.
- 13 pupils were PA, but one had left the Academy.
- The DSL continued to drive improvement, supported by the Administrative Assistant.
- A pupil in Year 5 was cause for concern, but there were signs that progress was being made.

.....  
Chair's initials

- One child was subject to a child protection plan and was taking up a significant amount of DSL/staff time – though the plan was having a positive impact.

In response to a question, Mrs Siedle confirmed that the two fixed-term exclusions related to the pupil subject to a child protection plan. The pupil (who was in Year 2) had an education, health and care plan as a result of ASD and a life event had triggered aggressive and violent behaviour. The pupil had previously been at St Richard's and following discussion with the CEO and the Heads of Academy, was now dual registered and attended the St Richard's Hub each afternoon. He was currently settled and engaged.

Mrs Siedle was asked whether there was an exit strategy with a view to reintegration at St Charles and she confirmed that this was the case. She informed members that the pupil's EHC plan had been subject to early review and the Trust was awaiting a response from the Local Authority in relation to potential specialist provision.

Members asked what would happen if specialist provision was not a medium-term option and Mrs Siedle confirmed that the pupil would remain at St Richard's, as his needs could not be met at St Charles. It was suggested that leaders consider the possibility of a full transfer to St Richard's.

- 68 ACADEMY WEBSITES. Mr Shaw informed members that peer compliance checks had been undertaken and feedback provided. St Charles, St Richard's and St Thomas More were compliant and the status of St Vincent's would be reported at the next meeting.

It was noted that the Trust Board needed to decide whether governance information should be included at Trust or academy level, as practice was currently inconsistent.

Members were informed that new websites were under construction.

- 69 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that it be noted that the next meeting has been arranged to take place on Thursday 18 June 2020 at 2.00pm.

.....  
signature of Chair