

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust

Minutes of a meeting of Cluster Board 3 (St Mary's College)
held at St Mary's College on Tuesday 3 December 2019 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Mrs A Ward, in the Chair,
Mrs M Chorlton, Mrs S Marsh, Reverend W Massie

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs H Leech Chaplaincy Lead,
Mr D Walmsley (Chief Operating Officer, Secondary)

CLERK TO THE DIRECTORS: Mrs M Gibson, Independent Professional Clerking Services

51 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie led members in prayer.

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. No interests were declared.

53 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR. Members were asked to note that the Trust Board had appointed Mrs Ward as Chair for the Cluster Board.

54 APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Cuthill and Mrs Hall.

RESOLVED: that consent be given to the absence of the above named members and Mr Davison.

55 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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

57 CHAPLAINCY UPDATE. Mrs Leech presented the chaplaincy report, copies of which were tabled at the meeting.

Daily and weekly activities: the Chaplaincy Team met each Wednesday; this was particularly beneficial for primary school staff who were supported to plan activities.

Mass: celebrated each Tuesday; this was supported by six priests who attended on a rota basis.

Members asked if attendance at Mass was good. In response, Mrs Leech reported that attendance fluctuated dependant on other activities; a cohort of between 5 and 12 from across all age groups attended regularly.

Chaplaincy Reps: a team of 15 students met with Mrs Leech on Monday's to plan and prepare events. They had played a valuable role to prepare collective worship sessions and tutor based assemblies.

Fair Trade: activities arranged by students have contributed to evidence to support achievement of the Fair Active Award.

Prayer Group: the group remained small however there were a number of regular attenders. Students led on different areas of focus each week.

Youth SVP: the group had been enhanced by additional members from Year 7 and the sixth form. Sr Maria galvanised the group and welcomed their suggestions. The group was very active and had planned visits to a local nursing home and hospital.

End of year Mass: the end of the academic year had been celebrated with Mass led by Fr Philip Cunnah; the weather had allowed this to be held outside.

Staff Spirituality and Formation: the staff retreat had been held at the end of September and had been attended by staff from across the Trust. Based on its success, the event had been booked again for next year. Staff who were not strong in faith had commented that they had benefitted from attending.

Adoration: the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel had been supported by Fr Peter Taylor; it had been well attended by staff and students.

Extraordinary Month of Mission: each year group had adopted a charity for the month of October. Various fundraising activities had been arranged for local and national charitable organisations.

Year 7 reflection day: had been held on 19 November 2019. Students had been given an opportunity to explore the theme 'being the best version of ourselves' supported by the Chaplaincy Team. Fr Peter Taylor celebrated Mass in the afternoon and gave a catechesis alongside; students had commented this had been very helpful to understand as it had been the first Mass attended by many of them.

Sixth Form: Lydia continued to provide support for students' mental health and well-being. This had been well received and students were engaging with the support offered.

Collective worship: Members received details of changes to the way in which prayer time was led across the school. Dedicated time had been given to students during tutor periods, to engage in and reflect on their faith in more depth. In addition, senior leaders had changed the way they lead collective worship in assemblies to follow the liturgical calendar and include scripture and other prayer.

Mr Walmsley reported on the use of SISRA to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and identify training needs. The system had been adapted to be used for collective worship to allow peer evaluation and improve delivery. Mrs Leech added that the system was also used by staff to develop confidence in delivering acts of collective worship. The system had been well received by staff and had encouraged discussion amongst peers.

Mr Walmsley stated that use of SISRA provided evidence of monitoring by senior leaders and the chaplaincy team.

Members asked if there had been a response from non-catholic staff to the use of SISRA in this way. In response, it was reported that it had been well received in a supportive way and they were finding delivery easier and had been encouraged to increase student interaction.

Upcoming events: details of events planned to the end of term were presented. Members were invited to attend the Christmas Carol service arranged for 19 December 2019.

Mr Walmsley drew Members' attention to a letter from Anthony Finnerty which outlined the main findings of the interim review visit carried out on 7 November 2019. The review had been conducted by three diocesan inspectors who had vast experience across a wide range of organisations. The process had been rigorous and had provided staff with an opportunity to demonstrate the good work conducted daily; it also provided good experience in preparation for a full inspection due in summer 2020.

Members commended staff for the outcome of the review which provided a very positive and encouraging picture of activity across the school.

Mrs Chorlton and Mrs Ward reported on their visit to St Mary Queen of Martyrs Primary Schools to review a range of areas pertinent to the brief of the Cluster Board including behaviour, safeguarding, SEN and the Catholic life of the school; the visit had been very encouraging and positive.

Members asked if there was any proactive action to be taken to increase the level of involvement with sixth form students. In response, Mrs Leech reported that students were aware they could take part in all events and activities. There was room for expansion in terms of numbers and Lydia was working on this as her relationship with students developed. She added that Parish Priests would be welcome to increase their involvement if their other commitments allowed. **It was suggested that a discussion be held with Fr Peter Taylor to establish if his good relationship with students could be enhanced.**

RESOLVED: that a discussion be held with Fr Peter Taylor to establish if his relationship with students could be enhanced.

Mrs Leech was thanked for her continued good work and presentation, and left the meeting.

58 HEADSTART. Mr Walmsley reminded Members of the principles and aims of the Headstart project.

It was reported that the project was more than halfway through the funding period and a series of evaluations were underway.

Members' attention was drawn to the outcome of the Year 9 annual survey which outlined three broad themes. The results had been encouraging and presented a healthy picture for the cohort.

A booklet was tabled which provided details of the funnel plot displays; this outlined the average score of schools within the partnership on a selected measure against other Headstart schools nationally. Mr Walmsley advised that St Mary's College could be

identified due to the large cohort. The data was consistently positive across all areas of measure and demonstrated students were being equipped in terms of resilience and support.

Mr Walmsley reported that the survey was conducted privately, on line. The information showed the significant number of students involved and demonstrated staff were aware of health and well-being issues.

Members questioned the sustainability of the project in the event of funding being withdrawn. In response it was reported that funding had supported a pilot project to establish the impact of activities on young people. Hope was expressed that sufficient evidence had been generated to secure continued funding. Mr Walmsley stated that regardless of the funding, he would expect many of the initiatives to continue in line with the strong pastoral support and catholic ethos across the school.

Members received information in relation to peer and parent mentoring. It was reported that mentors were working with the most disadvantaged students, and parents who were difficult to engage. Parents had been approached to establish a target group; those who had responded had been selected although other parents could be approached in the future. The initiative was supported by Child Dynamix and would be evaluated to establish impact.

Members asked that thanks be conveyed to staff for supporting the well-being of students.

- 59 COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES. Mr Walmsley tabled copies of a detailed report providing information in relation to the key areas of the Cluster Board's remit. He advised that Miss Booth was unable to attend the meeting due to a teaching commitment.

Safeguarding

- All staff training was up to date; training records were continually reviewed by Miss Booth;
- the safeguarding team had been expanded to include Mr Foster, Site Manager, for the duration of the building work;
- weekly meetings were held to discuss individual student cases to ensure appropriate support was in place;
- incidents reported in line with Operation Encompass had increased from 9 to 13; staff continued to check on students involved;

Bullying and Racism

- no racist incidents had been reported
- four minor bullying incidents had been reported; these had been investigated and appropriate action taken;
- PSHE themes had been set for all year groups for the autumn term; programmes were also in place for sixth form students

Attendance and Persistent Absenteeism

- Exceptional levels of winter illness during week 11 had impacted negatively on attendance:
 - week 7 = 97.3%
 - week 10 = 96.09%
- Advice had been received from the local health authority regarding management of health and tutors had been asked to reinforce winter hygiene routines;

Members commented that the situation was not within the control of the school and there needed to be a balance in terms of encouraging students to attend against ensuring prevention of spreading infection.

Members asked if staff had been affected by the virus. In response it was confirmed they had, but not to the same level.

Mr Walmsley stated that in view of the current position, the target of 97% would be very challenging.

Behaviour (including sanctions and rewards)

Half term 1 (8weeks)

- Yellow cards – 271 = 0.42% of the population (previous year = 0.41%)
- of the 271 yellow cards issued 26.20% = female; 73.80% = males
- 36.9% of the cards issued to 19 students, 15 of whom were male;
- 29 students on repeat offender list; five of these students were female;

Half Term 2 (to week 12; 4 weeks)

- Yellow cards – 129 = 0.40% of the population (previous year = 0.49%)
- of the 129 yellow cards issued 33.33% = female; 66.67% = males
- 15 students on repeat offender list; six of these students were female;

Members questioned the high level of yellow cards issued to Year 8 students. In response, Mr Walmsley advised that historically, Year 8 had been a challenging cohort, particularly boys.

Members commended Year 10 students who had no external fixed term exclusion this term. They expressed disappointment at the increased number of Year 11 students on the list. Mr Walmsley responded that a group of Year 11 boys had been involved in a serious breach of cyber security; the sanction had been regrettable however, they had failed to understand the enormity of their actions and the impact it had on the whole Trust.

In terms of permanent exclusions, it was noted that the school continued to perform below national average.

Bag Checks

Details were presented of bag checks conducted by year group. The vast majority were conducted for cigarettes; six searches had been conducted for illegal drugs; these had been found on one occasion.

Bus Incidents

Mr Walmsley reported on the significant time taken to investigate and process bus related incidents. He advised that staff relied on reports from bus ambassadors and the number of incidents had declined considerably. Students were constantly reminded of expectations in terms of behaviour on the bus.

Mobile Phone Confiscation Levels

There had been a significant reduction in second time confiscations. 25 students had been logged on the register for unkind, inappropriate or threatening messages via phone or social media; six of the students involved were Year 11 students involved in the cyber security incident.

Members commented that during their visits they had evidenced the good behaviour and politeness of students across the school. Mr Walmsley stated this echoed comments received from members of the public regarding good behaviour displayed within the community.

60 ACADEMY WEBSITES. It was reported that the web-site had been revised and made more user friendly.

Members commented that they continued to have access issues with their trust-wide email accounts.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk liaise with the Chief Finance Officer to bring attention to the continued email account issues.

61 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that the next meetings be held on 17 March and 2 July 2020 at 2.00pm.

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signature of Chair

Minute No	Action	By Who	By When
57	Contact Fr Peter Taylor to establish if his relationship with students could be enhanced	Mrs Leech/ Mr Walmsley	3.3.2020
60	Contact CFO to highlight continued issues with email accounts	Clerk	3.3.20