

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee
held on 9 November 2021 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Mr C Cuthill, Mr M Davidson, Mrs L Dyas, Mr P Fearnley, Mr G Fitzpatrick,
Mr M Gallagher, Reverend W Massie, Mr J Sargeant (for Part B).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs P Thomas, Director Designate

Ms L Adams, Mr D Flack, Mrs G Olsen, Mr D Perry,
Mrs K Siedle, Mrs M Stead, Mrs S Teasdale

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Mrs M Gibson, Independent Professional Clerking Services

Prior to the meeting, a number of documents were circulated for discussion and reference. Trust leaders acknowledged the extensive information presented and invited comments and questions to be presented at the meeting and afterwards; in addition, a number of suggested questions had been included in the packs to instigate thought at a deeper level.

| Secondary | Primary (for each primary school) |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Outcomes Analysis 2021 | School Summary |
| Subject Learning Journeys | Summary Self Evaluation Form |
| Summary Self Evaluation Form | School Improvement Priorities |
| School Improvement Priorities | Intervention and Tutor Led Support Plans |
| Assessment Rationale | Curriculum Intent |
| Sample Assessments | Reading Strategy |
| Literacy and Reading Strategy | |
| Quality Assurance Overview | |

As Mr Davidson was attending remotely, it was agreed for Mrs Dyas to Chair the meeting.

110 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie opened the meeting with a prayer.

111 APOLOGIES. It was noted that all Directors had been invited to attend the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Holtby and Mrs Ward; apologies for lateness were received from Mr Cuthill; Mr Sargeant had agreed to join the meeting remotely for the Part B item.

Mr Nolan, Director designate had been invited to attend but had been unable to do so.

Mrs Thomas was welcomed to the meeting and introductions invited.

112 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. No interests were declared in addition to those previously submitted.

113 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW.

Directors received an overview for each school which included cohort demographic, current inspection status and staffing.

In terms of the curriculum, it was highlighted that the expectation was for 'all students to receive a broad, progressive and ambitious curriculum which enables and empowers' as outlined in the trust strategic aims.

Although flexible to meet the needs of individual cohorts and communities, there were a series of specific curriculum directions across the trust:

- Early reading
- Early writing
- Primary maths
- PE and music – support provided by the secondary school in these subjects

Other notable considerations:

- Recovery and tutoring funding linked to Pupil Premium – specific plans for each school included in the packs
- Curriculum model and structure – each primary school detailed their curriculum to meet the needs of their community/population; there was no preferred approach. The secondary school approach was applied to meet the needs of a large and complex organisation. Significant investment had been made to provide maximum flexibility and fluidity, to respond to individual need and performance; this had been maintained despite expansion of the college.

Aims, values, mission and strategic priorities were outlined on page 9.

Principles for effective teaching – had been developed based on critically assessed evidence and reflected across the trust in policies and procedures for each school.

SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORTS.

114 EXAMINATION RESULTS – SUMMARY ANALYSIS 2021. Mr Flack drew attention to key points in the report:

- Students' attitudes had been very pleasing despite the difficulties;
- The cohort summary demonstrated an equally distributed gender split and a lower than national average Pupil Premium cohort. This was not reflective of the high level of deprivation for students at the college.

Directors considered the headline trends for DfE measures. **They asked if girls had outperformed boys.** In response, Mr Flack explained that although girls had outperformed boys in progress and attainment, the gap between them was much smaller than national.

It was pointed out that PP students had performed better than non PP students nationally.

In response to a point for clarification, Mr Flack and Mr Perry explained the way in which scores were calculated and how these were used to measure performance. It was highlighted that there was a gap between PP and non PP performance at the college and ways to address this continued to be explored.

Directors asked why PP students performed better at St Mary's College than they did nationally. In response, it was explained that the Catholic ethos of the college, alongside the curriculum, pastoral care and the ambition displayed for each student, contributed to students' success.

Directors questioned the number of PP students and the way in which they were allocated to the college. In response, it was emphasised that deprivation was not a criteria for admission. PP funding was allocated based on free school meal eligibility however, the pastoral information available evidenced levels of deprivation were considerably higher especially amongst EAL families who worked in low pay employment and failed to qualify for additional benefits.

Mr Fitzpatrick added that St Mary's College was a true comprehensive establishment which admitted students from all areas.

Directors asked if the number of Catholic students had increased over time. In response, it was explained that numbers had increased although because of the expansion of the college, the percentage cohort had remained relatively stable. **Concern was expressed that many students were not practicing Catholics.** In response, it was acknowledged that the number of families involved in the church was not as good as they would want however, it had been pleasing the Bishop had adopted the view to provide schools as an opportunity for evangelisation and had not taken the decision to reduce numbers and close schools.

Key Headlines:

- EAL Progress 8 score = 1.78; almost two grades above students nationally;
- SENK/E – both cohorts performed very well compared to national; SEN students nationally were two thirds of a grade lower; at St Mary's College they achieved on average one point above;
- EBACC entry was at the highest level ever = 90%; the DfE target had been 75% by 2022 and 90% by 2025; 63% of students had achieved a standard pass and 39% had achieved a strong pass.

Mr Cuthill joined the meeting.

- An exceptionally high number of top grades had been achieved; this had been especially evident in RE which was the highest performing subject in the college.

Mr Fitzpatrick explained that the outcomes presented were not based on examinations. Teacher assessment had been conducted over a period of 10 weeks; this had been subject to internal and external moderation. The examination boards had judged submissions to be sound and only two student appeals had been submitted.

It was pointed out that outcomes for KS5 followed a similar pattern.

Mr Fitzpatrick reported that Progress 8 for KS4 = 1.28; this was significantly above national. He added that this needed to be considered cautiously as the score had been based on 2019 outcomes; all schools were expected to achieve improved outcomes and it was expected the national figure would increase.

Directors asked what support students received to prepare them to progress to a working environment. In response, it was reported that students received training on personal statements and interviews; these were delivered by appropriately trained staff. Working professional mentors were allocated to students studying at the Medical Health Academy. Introduction of the Academy had resulted in an increased level of state school students entering the medical profession at all levels.

It was proposed that a presentation on careers, information and guidance be received at a future meeting.

Directors were reminded that a measure of success included the level of NEETS (not in education, employment or training). Current destination data was very strong with only one student designated NEET in 2021.

In response to a further question, it was explained that very few students failed to be admitted to the university of choice.

115 SUMMARY SELF EVALUATION FORM.

Mrs Stead reported that the key areas of measure included in the SEF had been judged outstanding and the report presented outlined evidence to support the judgements.

Quality of Education – sustained levels of high performance have resulted from a knowledge and skills rich, ambitious curriculum.

Behaviour and Attitudes – students respond positively to high standards expected in respect of attendance, behaviour and conduct. Attendance had been impacted by Covid but remained above national average.

Personal Development – students were provided with extensive experiences and opportunities which extended beyond the classroom. Safeguarding procedures had been audited by the LA Safeguarding Lead who had confirmed systems in place were robust and provided examples of best practice.

Leadership and Management – leaders displayed an ambitious and inclusive vision to provide a world class education to all students. There was a strong culture of challenge and support which extended to governance.

Sixth Form – provided a robust and inclusive curriculum; student numbers were the highest on record.; retention from Y12 to 13 was higher than national.

116 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. Mrs Stead drew Directors' attention to the priorities of the plan outlined in pages 1 to 5. She advised that there had been particular emphasis on addressing the impact of lockdown on Year 7 students.

Mr Fitzpatrick commented that although the self-evaluation judged the college to be outstanding, there were areas for improvement. He emphasised the need to ensure Directors were assured that standards would be maintained whilst continuing to address the priorities identified. He asked that Directors seek evidence at meetings of progress against milestones outlined in the school improvement plan.

Directors asked if there was a prescriptive format for the SEF and SIP. In response, it was advised that there was no prescriptive format. The model used had been developed to provide maximum information in a succinct and accessible way.

Directors asked if progress of objectives outlined in the SIP had been hampered by Covid. In response, it was explained that elements of the plan had been written post-covid and particular emphasis had been placed on the impact of Year 7 and PP/disadvantaged students who had been more adversely affected.

Directors asked how the tutoring scheme would be applied. In response, Mrs Stead explained that tutoring would be delivered during the school day and would not be optional; students had been enthusiastic about the sessions and had acknowledged the value of the additional input.

- 117 CURRICULUM OFFER. Directors received reports which outlined curriculum intent, implementation and impact.
- Intent – was distinctively ambitious, coherent and enriched.
- Implementation – classroom practice, reading and ambition for all, assessment and feedback, professional development and pastoral enrichment.
- Impact – outlined in the data summary document.
- It was reported that trust leaders had confidence the curriculum, as outlined, served the community well; this was evidenced in outcomes. It had been designed to ensure full curriculum and subject coverage, supported by a strong academic core and enriched by sports, art and creative opportunities.
- Learning journeys (copies circulated for all subjects) were ambitious, coherent and enriched; they focused on skills and knowledge development for students across all year groups.
- 118 ASSESSMENT RATIONALE. Directors' attention was drawn to a report which summarised the formal assessment structure and guiding principles for assessment across all phases. Particular attention was drawn to the Year 8 baseline assessment example which was applied in all subjects. The information generated from the tracker was used to identify areas in which students were struggling to ensure gaps were addressed.
- It was explained that the learning cycle had been developed based on research, what worked for students and best practice. The system in place was applied consistently across all subjects.
- 119 LITERACY AND READING STRATEGY. Details were presented of the intent and implementation of the literacy and reading strategy.
- Directors were reminded that reading skills continued to be a limiting factor for SEND and PP boys in particular.
- It was reported that the impact of the strategy would be reported following collation of autumn term data.
- 120 TEACHING AND LEARNING SUMMARY. Mr Perry highlighted QA practices which were aimed to support professional development, inform CPD, drive improvement in the quality of learning and create a culture of support and transparency across the college.
- Mr Fitzpatrick outlined key changes in the Ofsted Inspection Framework which included the expectation of Directors to have involvement and understanding of the curriculum in place across all schools in the trust. He advised that implementation of the curriculum could be contentious due to the decision to provide a two-year KS3 and three year KS4 (the preferred model was three year KS3 and two year KS4). He stated that an inordinate amount of time had been spent testing the model and this would be contextualised to evidence it was in the best interests of students to continue in this way.
- Directors sought clarification on how the three-year KS4 worked in the best interests of students.** In response, it was explained that humanities ended at Year 10; MFL continued to be offered as a core subject and it was believed the model provided a focused, broad and balanced curriculum across both key stages.

Mr Fitzpatrick pointed out that some schools had introduced a similar model at the expense of narrowing the curriculum; this had not been the case at St Mary's College although it was acknowledged some compromise had been needed; this did not impact on curriculum time and subject coverage but did reflect the mindfulness of the impact on students' mental health and well-being.

It was highlighted that in previous years, English language had been completed in Year 10 however, the impact of lockdown had identified a need to review this and changes had been made to provide additional teaching.

It was noted that although students selected options in Year 8, these were re-visited in Year 9 to ensure they were on the right track.

Directors asked if students were given the option to drop MFL. In response, it was explained students could select to study two languages; where students studied on a bespoke pathway, MFL could be withdrawn. It was emphasised that students who could not access some elements of the curriculum were given latitude in their options however, this was a small minority and the majority of students followed an EBACC pathway.

Directors questioned the high level of subjects offered, compared to other schools. In response, Mr Fitzpatrick reported that some schools had reduced their offer to improve Progress 8 scores. St Mary's College students studied an average of 10 subjects, but this could be decreased or increased to suit the needs of students and demonstrated the broadness of the curriculum offer.

Directors asked if parents' views of the curriculum had been sought. In response, it was explained that information of parents' views was available although it was the right time to retest views from students. Parents were given opportunities to submit views although the curriculum was not an area which received significant feedback

It was suggested that a parent survey be conducted in readiness for the impending Ofsted inspection.

Secondary School colleagues were thanked for their presentations and left the meeting.

121 PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORTS.

Mrs Siedle advised that the information for primary schools replicated that for the secondary school. She did not intend to go over all information presented but would focus on St Anthony's, St Charles and St Richard's primary schools.

Mrs Olsen reported that the secondary team had described the various plans available; she wanted Directors to be assured that plans were in place for the primary phase, all of which were robustly quality assured by the School Improvement Team.

St Anthony's:

- the school was situated in a highly deprived area although this was not reflected in the Pupil Premium element, with only 50% of the cohort eligible for funding;
- levels of deprivation were masked by low income working families which presented a variety of challenges;
- there was no current Ofsted grade due to the school being a convertor; at the last inspection in 2016, the school had been judged to be good;
- national data was not available to provide comparisons;

- targets had been based on KS1 outcomes (age 7) and projected to the end of KS2 (age 11);
- changes to the way in which pupils were assessed had created a gap in the way progress was measured; progress data had not been included for this reason; and
- value added data had been included however, this had only been available for 2019 due to Covid.

Directors asked if data was compared across the trust. In response, it was explained that it was in addition, information available from local schools was used as a comparator. It had not been possible to obtain credible national data due to Covid.

Directors commented on the demographics of the cohort pointing out high levels of deprivation on the estate. Mrs Siedle stated that pupils were expected to perform well due to the high-quality pastoral support and high quality teaching they received.

Directors asked how Ofsted would judge standards given the situation over the last two years. In response, it was explained that inspectors would not seek to receive internal data although this would be available; they would focus on progress in books, what was happening in the classroom and would talk to children, to identify if their learning had improved.

Recovery Premium

Directors received for information an overview of specific interventions and tutor led support. They were informed that additional funding received would be used to provide resources to deliver actions to address the identified barriers. It was noted that funding had been received to specifically support catch up lost during lockdown; it would be targeted towards PP pupils but could also be applied to others who had been identified for catch up. Resources supplied would be regularly reviewed and adapted.

Directors asked if the interventions outlined had been costed. In response, it was confirmed they had and this would be analysed and monitored to ensure it was correctly allocated and reported on regularly.

Directors asked that expectations and progress of 'catch up' pupil be presented at the next meeting.

Directors asked if additional funding had been received during lockdown. In response, it was clarified that although no additional catch up funding had been received, a number of additional devices had been received.

In relation to the headline data, Directors asked what action had been taken to address areas judged to be red. In response, Mrs Olsen reported that explanations had been presented in detail to the Trust Executive Leadership. She pointed out that each child = 4%; the red areas reflected the performance of two boys and strategies were in place to address the barriers for those pupils.

Mr Fitzpatrick added that there was a robust system in place to ensure all areas of underperformance were challenged.

Self Evaluation

The school was judged to be good; this judgement had been validated by the School Improvement Team. The personal development judgement had been validated externally by the LA. Leadership and management had been judged to be good+; this was an area of strength with five future catholic leaders working in the school, all with ambition to be catholic leaders.

In response to a point for clarification, Mrs Siedle advised that they would be able to demonstrate how the school had been deconstructed and developed to get it to its current position, following the last inspection which had judged the school to be good.

Headline SIP Priorities

The key driver for improvement was to deliver quality education across all areas of the school.

Curriculum Offer and Intent

It was reported that in terms of breadth and quality of the curriculum, the offer was equal to the secondary offer.

Directors asked how schools were being held to account for the achievement and progress of learners new to the country. In response, Mrs Siedle advised that strategies had been identified to address barriers particularly those for vocabulary and writing. She added that Inspectors would have an understanding of issues schools had faced although they would not accept excuses. There would be an expectation all pupils were provided for and supported; schools needed to provide evidence of this.

It was explained that the way in which curriculum intent had been described for the secondary school mirrored the principles for the primary schools.

In response to a point for clarification, Directors were advised #STAsparkle which focussed on risk taking, resilience, reflection and independence, was common language used across the school.

Subject on a Page

Mrs Siedle advised that lesson sequencing mirrored that outlined by secondary colleagues. She drew Directors' attention to the variety of examples included in the pack. She drew particular attention to the reading page which outlined the key intent and the way in which the subject would be delivered.

Directors questioned the use of two different systems across the trust (Letters and Sounds, and Read, Write Inc). In response, it was explained that the Intent for each school was different to meet the needs of the community. Flexibility had been allowed in terms of specifics as long as the requirements of the National Curriculum were met. It was emphasised that the principles of the curriculum were applied consistently across the trust.

Mrs Siedle added that each primary school was very different; this needed to be reflected in the curriculum whilst meeting priorities and expectations, which were non-negotiable. How this was delivered was the responsibility of school leaders who were robustly challenged and monitored by the School Improvement Team.

Directors asked if there was quality library provision in each school. In response, it was explained that schools had their own libraries which provided a strong reading environment and encouraged reading for pleasure. In terms of books in school, it was confirmed that schools shared class sets to ensure each child had their own book. A variety of reading activities were held throughout the day and teacher led reading was held every day.

In response to a question relating to impact of the reading curriculum, Mrs Siedle advised that early indications reflected success although reading had been impacted by Covid. Progress data would be available for presentation at the next meeting.

St Richard's Primary School

The school had received two Ofsted monitoring visits during the Covid period; both visits had indicated the school was on a sound trajectory to achieve a good rating at the next inspection.

Directors were reminded that St Anthony's and St Charles Primary Schools had not been inspected since they joined the trust.

Due to time constraints, it was acknowledged that information on the schools would not be presented in detail. Directors were asked to review the information circulated and submit supplementary questions and comments via the Governance Professional.

Directors sought clarification in relation to the staffing position at the primary schools. In response, it was explained that St Richard's was in a good place with a number of 'home grown' leaders in situ who had managed to develop and improve from within, supported by the central team. Issues at St Anthony's had been resolved although there were areas to address at St Charles.

Mr Fitzpatrick reported he had visited St Richard's recently and had been very impressed by the vibrancy of the school and the potential demonstrated by the leaders.

Directors acknowledged the primary school falling roll position which was being addressed city-wide, and the potential risk this posed to the trust. In response, Mr Fitzpatrick advised that the plan had always been to secure good outcomes and good Ofsted judgements to attract parents and make the schools a provision of choice within their community.

School leaders were thanked for the detailed information presented.

- 122 REVIEW OF POLICIES. Directors were asked to consider amendments to the safeguarding policy which had been made to reflect changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance.

It was confirmed that all associated policies and procedures had been updated to reflect the changes.

RESOLVED: that the policy be approved, as presented.

- 123 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

- 124 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.

- 125 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that dates and times of next meetings be confirmed as 3 March and 7 June 2022 (time to be confirmed).

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signature of chair

ACTION

| Minute no | Action | By Who | By When |
|-----------|--|--|---------------------|
| 114 | Presentation on CIAG to be delivered at future meeting | Gov Professional – agenda School leaders - report | Spring term meeting |
| 121 | Expectations and progress of Catch Up pupils be delivered at spring term meeting | Gov Professional – agenda School leaders - report | Spring term meeting |

IPC/MH/minutes/StCuthbert's_CTL_2021_autumn