

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 24 March 2022 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Mrs M Chorlton, Mr C Cuthill, Mrs M Hall, Reverend W Massie

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N Coyle, Chaplaincy Lead
Miss R Flanagan, Vice Principal
Mrs M Stead, Head of St Mary's College
Mr A Turner, Vice-Principal

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Mrs M Gibson, Independent Professional Clerking Services

105 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie led members in prayer.

106 ELECTION OF CHAIR.

RESOLVED: that Mrs Hall be elected Chair for the meeting.

107 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. No interests were declared, in addition to those already submitted.

108 APOLOGIES. No apologies for absence had been received (all present).

109 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

110 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

Chaplaincy Update – Changes to the Team (minute 100 refers).

Concern was expressed that Foundation Directors had not been involved with the appointment of the Head of RE. In response, the Head of School advised that there had been two applications for the post; interviews had been conducted by herself, Mrs Bailey, Diocesan representative, and Miss Flanagan. Invitations to take part had been sent to Reverend Massie and Reverend Marsden; no response had been received.

Members were informed that Mrs Fairbank, a former student of the college, had been appointed.

- 111 CHAPLAINCY UPDATE. Mrs Coyle presented a report which detailed chaplaincy activity since the last meeting.

Changes to the Team

New members of the team had benefitted from the use of SharePoint which allowed resources to be continually updated and shared.

In terms of deployment, Mrs Coyle advised that she was present at St Mary's College each day. Consideration was being given to the appointment of an apprentice who would work in school 4 days each week whilst completing a two year course resulting in accreditation. Expressions of interest would be sought internally in the first instance, to support chaplaincy and youth work. The post would provide an opportunity for an individual to develop into the role.

Seasonal Liturgical Events

Mrs Coyle detailed liturgical events held since the last meeting

- Advent – started with a main hall assembly on Hope; students had been encouraged to think about how they could bring hope to others during the season of advent. Unfortunately, due to Covid, the carol service had been cancelled; it had been replaced by a virtual carol service supported at short notice by students and the music department.
- Epiphany – volunteers from across a variety of departments had supported the service which again, had to be held virtually and celebrated in an extended tutor time.
- Lent – services were held across all year groups. Extra time was allowed for students to participate in two liturgies across the school; students received ashes in a very dignified manner.

In response to a question, Mrs Coyle stated that services had been arranged to allow all students to take part. The Chaplaincy Team had appreciated the additional time allowed for this.

- Feast of the Immaculate Conception – had been led by Years 10 and 11 Chaplaincy representatives.
- Collective worship – continued to be conducted on a weekly basis; resources were shared via SharePoint.
- Weekly Mass – conducted in school as often as possible.
- Prayer group – although a small group, it was regularly attended by students and others, who attended when they were able.

Members were informed that although the house system was not used in the sixth form, they had a team of Chaplaincy Ambassadors who supported a variety of activities and fundraising events.

A dedicated prayer room had been allocated for use by sixth formers; this was being well used throughout the day.

Staff continued to be supported by the Chaplaincy Team with reflection events; the next event would be arranged for the end of term. Newsletters were issued half termly which encouraged the use of available resources.

Details of activities arranged in the primary schools were presented for information; these would be shared with the Primary Cluster Boards.

Members commended the quality of the information presented and asked that it be shared across the Parishes.

Concern was expressed that a non-Catholic had been appointed as chaplaincy link for the sixth form. In response, it was confirmed that the individual was a graduate intern and support was being provided. Members were reminded of the struggle to recruit practising Catholics at all levels and a number of staff in key roles who were practicing were available to provide support and guidance; all were overseen by the Head of School.

Members conveyed thanks for the information provided which gave them assurance of the priority given to promotion of the catholic life of the school despite other pressures.

Miss Flanagan commented that the work of the Chaplaincy Team demonstrated the focus to support staff to benefit from the uniqueness and understand the history of the College.

112 COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES. Members received a report which outlined the current position in key areas.

Safeguarding

Members received detailed reports of safeguarding activity since the last meeting. They were reminded that numbers presented in terms of student categories were subject to change daily.

Single Central Record

- termly checks had been conducted by Mr Turner and Mr Sargeant, Trust Safeguarding link;
- the record would be transitioned to OnlineSCR; this would reduce workload and ensure compliance at all times;
- Mr Painter, LA Safeguarding Lead, had conducted a detailed inspection of the SCR; he reported that it met statutory requirements and was well maintained; and
- a further check on the register would be conducted before the end of term.

Staff Training

- the college had achieved accreditation for National Online Safety; this could be accessed by staff, Directors and parents;
- the safeguarding and pastoral teams would complete CPOMS training before the end of term;
- safeguarding newsletters were produced in-house to respond to contextual safeguarding themes; and
- FGM and Prevent training had been delivered to address recommendations from the safeguarding audit.

Child protection policy – had been updated and approved in January 2022. The revised policy had included sections on eating disorders; three students were currently affected by this.

Referrals to LADO and Social Care – an overview of referrals was presented for information.

Members were informed of two cases which had involved allegations against members of staff; both had been fully investigated and the allegations dismissed; staff had been supported to return to work. Systems had been put in place to avoid repetition of the allegations.

There had been 30 referrals for early help since September 2021.

Children subject to plans – the information was updated as it was received from Hull City Council. Updates were not received from East Riding Council and staff were reliant on information from students and their families.

Looked after Children – numbers had reduced following a move to guardianship for some students.

Operation Encompass – 33 alerts had been received since September 2021; tutors were made aware and CPOM records were updated.

There had been no Operation Pitstop referrals over the last three weeks. Details of how to access support were situated around the college.

Harmful sexual behaviour – 20 incidents had been logged since September 2021; those involved were challenged and supported. Not all incidents had occurred in college but had been addressed by staff.

The Head of School advised that assemblies had been held at the beginning of the year to emphasise the type of behaviour which was unacceptable. She added that the LA Safeguarding Lead had identified the college as an example of best practice for dealing with these issues and Mr Turner had been invited to speak at a conference.

Safeguarding Team – an overview was presented of the team, the way in which they were organised, and training undertaken. It was noted that they had partnered with Focus Counselling Services to receive supervision and support the well-being of staff.

It was reported that Mr Turner had completed a comprehensive training pathway recommended by the LA Safeguarding Lead.

Headstart – funding had ceased in March 2022 along with a number of other initiatives. Headstart had been rebranded and would be led by school based mental health leads. Funding had been allocated to this and a life skills hub to support the mental health of students.

A meeting would be held before the end of term to discuss the vision for additional provision to support students and families in crisis; this correlated with the catholic life of the school.

Members acknowledged the difficulties balancing the challenges faced by students alongside other pressures. In response, Mr Turner advised that it was essential to engage in external support and develop relationships with the LA and others.

Members questioned leaders' views of a recent, national high profile case involving a young girl and the police. In response, the Head of School advised that requests for interviews needed to be formally requested and, if permission granted, the child would never be left alone.

Attendance and Persistent Absenteeism

Attendance statistics were presented for all year and student groups. It was reported that:

- from September 2021 to February 2022, LA average attendance = 90.93%; St Mary's College = 94.1%;
- EHCP students were 10% above the national average;
- structured strategies were in place to address individual concerns;
- 20 students had attendance below 65%; the LA had not been particularly helpful to address this;
- reporting of Covid cases had changed and absence had to be recorded as illness; cases were being recorded separately; to date, 3474 days had been missed, affecting 400 students. Covid had previously been recorded using an X code; and
- the EWO was working with students with attendance between 65% and 85%. Positive relationships had developed, and she was supporting the most vulnerable families.

The Head of School reported on the difficulties identifying Covid cases due to changes in testing requirements. She added that robust checking systems were in place to ensure genuine PA cases were not masked by the changes.

In response to a question relating to missing children, the Head of School stated that there was no child who could not be found. There were five students who were regularly absent; twice weekly welfare checks were conducted, and support offered.

Behaviour (including sanctions and rewards)

Members were reminded that yellow cards were issued to address low-level disruption. Despite the increase in size of the college, the number of yellow cards issued had been comparable with previous years. The number of yellow cards issues per student varied daily and leaders monitored hotspots which were provided with additional pastoral support. Work was ongoing with staff to develop their understanding of the complex needs of a small minority of students, for students to reflect on their behaviour and provide opportunities to rebuild relationships. Training had been delivered to staff on avoiding confrontation and identify why PP students were more likely to receive a yellow card.

There had not been the same high level of repeat offenders as in previous years; this had been a result of meetings held which gave students the opportunity to reflect, discuss their behaviour and access support to address their concerns.

The use of managed moves had been used to assist students avoid exclusion and obtain a fresh start. For those who had joined the college, it had proved a success.

Exclusions – an overview of exclusions was presented. It was noted that of the seven repeat offenders, six were from Year 9 (four girls, two boys). Each student had a story, dealing with complex lifestyles along with social and emotional health needs.

Bullying and Racism

There had been eight incidents of bullying since September 2021. There had been one repeat offender, and all incidents had been investigated and clear expectations conveyed.

There had been three incidents of racism, all had involved Year 8 students. Assemblies had been held to target the year group in a specific way, and the PCSO had been invited to address students.

Bag Checks

Bag checks were conducted randomly and based on intelligence received.

Bus Incidents

46 bus warnings had been issued for unsafe/disruptive behaviour. Four students had received a bus ban.

Mobile Phone Confiscation Levels

There had been 332 incidents of confiscation since the start of the year; 84 students had their phones confiscated more than once.

The Head of School stated that there had been a change in attitude towards the use of phones in the classroom as a learning resource however, this needed to be well managed.

113 ACADEMY WEBSITES. Members were reminded to check the website for compliance.

RESOLVED: that the Governance Professional circulate website guidance to members.

114 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that the next meetings be held on 22 June 2022 at 2.00pm.

(Apologies for absence noted from Reverend Massie).

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signature of Chair