

The Blue Tangerine Federation

7.00pm Monday 31 January 2022 at The Collett School Full Governing Body

MINUTES

Present: Rachel Andrew (RA), Poppy Choudhury (PC)

Ian Dignum (ID, Chair of Governors), Stephen Hoult-Allen (SHA, Executive

Headteacher), Ebbah Kwambai (EK), Laura Lilley (LL),

Aurele Mes Boaye (AMB)

Not Present: Ruth Hammerson (RH), Andy Summerskill (AS) Parris Williams (PW)

In Attendance: Jamie Caple – JC, Head of School, St Luke's

Jenny Witter - JW, Head of School, Collett

Tracey Norris – HfL Clerk

Agen	da item	Action
1.	 Curriculum presentation: St Luke's Max Guiney, DHT at St Luke's shared the following overview of the curriculum at the school which was loosely based on the learning areas taken from the EYFS framework: The three core elements of communication, personnel development and understanding the world are supplemented with expressive arts, literacy, mathematics and physical development. Tiers had been created for each subject to allow progression from the lowest tier (tier 1 was equivalent to engagement model learning) through to tier 8 (equivalent to KS4 standard/GCSE level). Each tier had a clear end stage, i.e. an accreditation, either external accredited or delivered internally. STAPPS: is the school assessment model. A series of statements/objectives are linked to each tier (e.g. I can). Statements and objectives can be tailored for individual pupils and new statements added. A data drop is made each term. A pupil can be on a different tier for each subject, although typically this was not the case. Rachel Andrew leads a programme of interventions which are an important part of the curriculum (rather than an add-on), and reinforce the concept that pupils were being exposed to the curriculum everywhere in the building, not just the classroom. 	
	 Communication is a huge part of school life and a wide range of techniques were used ranging from Makaton, visual supports to SCERTs. 	
1.a	Curriculum Presentation: Collett Ben Linford shared the curriculum overview for Collett which, whilst similar to St Luke's, had a number of nuanced differences: The curriculum has been adapted to better reflect the changing cohort and is broken down in to four main areas: Areas of learning	

- o Pathways
- Assessment data
- Topics programme
- The pathways model allows staff to adapt each area of learning for the wide range of pupil ability.
- Areas of learning are broken down into:
 - o functional skills (literacy, maths, ICT)
 - Personal development: relationships, RSE, physical health and PE, life skills, citizenship.
 - Understanding my world
 - All the above are tied together with communication. Where the areas overlap, opportunities for learning are at their richest.
- Accreditations are taken at every opportunity from Yr 8/9 onwards.
- In the upper school, pathways were applied based on final outcomes:
 - o Pathway 1: pupils could achieve a GCSE
 - o Pathway 2 & 3: Entry level 1 or entry level 2/3 BTEC
 - Pathway 4: personal progress
- Pathways are not fixed and are allocated based on pupil's baseline, EP reports, teacher assessment etc.
- Progress and assessment data is recorded on CAPPS.
- Pupils follow a topics programme, themes included: faces, water, space, dragons, family etc and were set on a rolling two-year cycle.
- PHSE is taught at every stage.

1.c | Curriculum overview: Forest House Education Centre

Huw Bucknell shared the curriculum offering at FHEC which is located next to a residential psychiatric unit in the grounds of an NHS hospital.

- Curriculum aim: to meet the educational needs of the day and unit pupils. This
 covers a wide range of GCSE/A Level possibilities; FHEC aim to cover as many
 subjects as possible.
- Pupils are aged between 15-18 years old and are split into two groups, those that can manage a mainstream style of teaching and those that need more group learning.
- Over the last few years, the cohort of post-16 pupils who had not recently been in an educational setting was increasing.
- The Centre's enrichment curriculum (art, music, drama, humanities) is used as a "hook" to engage pupils.
- There is an increasing level of acuity in the pupils from the unit, some are too unwell to walk to the Centre; staff are often expected/invited to go into the unit (i.e. a hospital setting) to deliver an individual lesson.
- Most of the day pupils are struggling with mental health problems and are registered with CAMHs at Tier 3 level. Where possible, FHEC support them to achieve as many accreditations as possible to enable them to move back in to mainstream education at some point.
- During covid, the system of integrating the day pupils and the unit pupils was abandoned as the unit pupils were required to remain in a secure bubble. HB hoped this would return to normal shortly.

2. To receive apologies and approve absences

Ian Dignum (Chair of Governors) thanked Ben, Max and Huw for their presentations and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Parris Williams (covid), Ruth Hammerson (family commitment) and Andy Summerskill (holiday). The meeting was quorate. **Declarations of conflicts of interest** Long standing declarations were noted as: Stephen Hoult-Allen: DSLP7 Board member, HfL Non-executive director. Stehen Hoult-Allen: partner is currently a Trustee of the Blue Tangerine Charity and brother-in-law is currently the Headteacher of LINKS (see agenda item 7 and 11.a). To approve the minutes of the previous meeting The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 November 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Matters arising were considered: a. ID and JW to arrange drop-in session for staff to meet Chair of Governors: In progress. The meetings have been arranged, ID encouraged all governors to visit the school as often as possible and to always write up a visit report as evidence of governor monitoring/impact. b. JW/MS to arrange governor lanyards: completed and available at St Lukes School. c. AMB to create exit interview form: completed and circulated in advance of the meeting. ID asked Governors to review the form and provide any feedback. d. LL to write up safeguarding governor visit form: **outstanding**. e. SHA to share breakdown of staff absence levels at next meeting: **completed**, in meeting folder. f. PC to complete outstanding visit report to Collett School: **outstanding**. g. JW to create an executive summary of the self-evaluation document for governors including a visual representation of staffing structure (plus any vacancies). Governors to agree the new format: **ongoing**. The staffing structure had been shared. h. Staff survey: The comments added by 12 members of staff should be circulated to governors. **Completed**, in meeting folder. i. MS to advise Chair and School Link Governors when the H&S review by Governors is required (and what the requirement is of the Link Governors). As appropriate, date of visits to be agreed: **information sent.** ID will accompany PC on visits, St Luke: May and Collett: June. j. ID to arrange performance appraisal meeting for Executive Headteacher: **held**. ID noted that SHA had met his targets but had declined to accept a pay rise. SHA explained that he felt whist St Luke's was in such a vulnerable financial position, it was not appropriate for him to take this pay rise. ID thanked SHA for taking this position and congratulated him for achieving his objectives for last year. The Pay Review committee had met in December and reviewed the performance management processes in place for all staff. The Pay Review Committee was waiting on some answer to a few questions before completing the minutes of the meeting, but ID explained that they were happy that the correct procedures for

staff reviews / pay had been completed correctly.

Finance sub-committee: update on first meeting held in December 2021: see

	agenda item 11.	
5.	To note any other business	
J.	There were no items of other business.	
6.	School improvement priorities for spring term	
	School action plans had been uploaded to governor hub shortly before the meeting, governors were invited to submit questions on the notice board of governor hub so that the responses could be seen by all. ID recognised there have been significant challenges at all locations resulting in less time to complete report; however, he asked that all documents are posted in a timely manner to allow consideration before the meeting	Govs
7.	Federation-wide strategic update	
	SHA had shared the following documents in advance of the meeting: Executive headteacher's report Financial status of the schools (summary and appendices) Asset management plan (Collett and St Luke's) Risk register and accompanying commentary Staff absences (Collett and St Luke's) Update for schools from Integrated Services for Learning (HCC) Questions were invited: Q1 How was the banding review progressing? St Luke's School was part of a banding review by HCC. Two consultants were reviewing pupil need across a number of local special schools to see if current level of need continues to match banding criteria. Most special schools feel pupil needs had increased considerably over time and the banding levels have not kept up. Q2 Outcome of HCC meeting re FHEC (25th January)? HCC staff had indicated that FHEC would be a "better fit" at Roman Fields. SHA and the Chair had challenged them on this and asked to better understand the rationale/strategy behind the suggestion. A meeting is being arranged between SHA/Chair of Governors and the HT and Chair of Trustees of Roman Fields and HCC. Q3 What were the benefits of this move? ID had asked this in the meeting with HCC, they had not been able to give an adequate response. Q4 How did Roman Field's provision differ from St Luke's? Roman Field's model was of tutoring in small groups. SHA feels there is good synergies between FHEC and the schools in the Federation. Blue Tangerine Charities: SHA reported these are being merged to reduce administrative time and resources. The Friends of Collett School and St Luke's will merge into the Friends of the Blue Tangerine Federation. The Blue Tangerine Charity will focus on the community farm development. This is in the preplanning stage but agreement in principle had been received from Sports England. Q5 How could governors be assured that the community farm development was not a drain on SLT time? The Chair explained that whilst the farm development was an exciting and welcomed opportunity which the pupils would benef	
	 on many levels (curriculum, work experience etc); the operational running of the school should not be detrimentally impacted. SHA confirmed that the Trustees of the Charity would be driving this project forward. St Luke's would retain the ownership of the land, the charity will become a tenant. 	SHA

- Action: Trustees to make a presentation to governors at a future meeting, providing details of the plans and timelines.
- Q6 Timeline of farm development? SHA hoped that the farm would be completed by 2024.
- Q7 How were staff absences impacting the delivery of the SDP and the school's safeguarding duties? Due to high levels of staff absence in both schools and the lack of suitable/available supply staff, members of SLT were regularly teaching lessons and supporting in class. Both schools have stayed open and safeguarding remains the highest priority. DSLs were monitoring all safeguarding issues (some of which have been significant).
- Q8 Was the school ready to implement remote learning if required? Yes, if this is needed. Adult to pupil ratios were being monitored daily, but ideally the school will remain open as this was the safest environment for some pupils.
- Q9 What were the main safeguarding issues? Online bullying outside of school remained a recurrent theme of stress for pupils within school.

8. **Staff Survey Responses**

The following documents had been shared in advance of the meeting:

- Staff survey questions v2 and v3 (with new drop-down box responses)
- Additional feedback from Collett staff
- Additional feedback from St Luke's staff
- NAHT article
- Kemball special school questionnaire (for comparison)

The following was discussed:

- Governors felt that all the proposed new questions were relevant and if surveys were taken regularly would provide meaningful data over time (as long as questions were not changed again).
- The survey in October demonstrated that the school's induction process was not as robust as it could have been.
- Questions are linked to the OFSTED questions for staff; governors challenged the
 use of "taking risks" in the context of Q9 and it was agreed that this should be
 changed to "taking creative risks".
- Discussion was held on the need for an even number of response options; to avoid staff selecting the 'middle' option.
- The sensitive issue of asking staff how long they had worked at the school was considered; this was being asked in relation to pre-federation experience but it was suggested that this might be misinterpreted by staff.
- Governors suggested that the responses for sections of questions should be set out in a different order with prompts for extra comments.
- The guestion relating to governors should remain.
- SHA described how staff at Collett had skewed the last OFSTED questionnaire;
 there had been more responses than staff.
- Governors and SLT did not want to add to the work burden of staff and it was suggested that time could be given in a staff meeting for completing the survey.
- Action: Heads of school would amend the staff survey questionnaire, taking into account the discussions above.

9. **Attendance Action Plan**

Governors had asked for an update on the school's attendance action plan. This had

SLT

been an area of improvement identified by OFSTED at the last inspection. The following update had been provided by Josh Pollard (Safeguarding leader) within the safeguarding report:

- There has been a lot of work with two students in particular who are currently unable to attend school for medical reasons. Both students are under Hertfordshire's Educational Support for Medical Absence team (ESMA). Meetings have been held with our link Attendance Improvement Officer where we have discussed attendance data for the whole schools as well as individual cases.
- The impact of this is evidenced through figures for 'Present' marks which have improved across both school for the second half of the autumn term as well as lower figures for 'Unauthorised Absence'
- Year to date attendance data St Luke's:

o Autumn 1: 87.9%

o Autumn 2: 88%

o Spring 1: 87.3%

- Year to date attendance data Collett:
 - o Autumn 1:88%
 - o Autumn 2: 88.2%
 - o Spring 1: 89%
- Unauthorised absences: St Luke's
 - o Autumn 1: 3%
 - o Autmn 2: 2.7%
 - o Spring 1: 3.8%
- Unauthorised absences: Collett
 - o Autumn 1: 2.6%
 - o Autumn 2: 1.1%
 - o Autumn 3: 1.3%
- Governors noted the improvements in some attendance data (one class had achieved 100% at one point). Data was in line with other local special schools.
- It was suggested that Josh Pollard attend the next meeting so that governors could look further into persistent absenteeism and look at:
 - The breakdown of unauthorised absence in terms of vulnerable/disadvantaged pupils; were there any trends?
 - How did PP children's attendance compare to non-PP? Was this being tracked.

10. **Safeguarding Report**

In additional to the weekly safeguarding update which was provided by Josh Pollard (DLS Safeguarding leader) and shared with all governors, a written safeguarding report had been shared in advance of the meeting. Highlights were:

- Currently no live CP cases, although some initial child protection conferences were being planned.
- Safeguarding (level 1) and prevent training were up to date for most staff with safeguarding induction delivered to new joiners in September.
- Action: LL to arrange safeguarding meeting with Josh Pollard
- The chair had a number of questions for the DSL regarding harmful sexual behaviour training and ongoing support and it was agreed that JP should attend

LL

JΡ

the next FGB meeting. Action: Josh Pollard to attend next FGB meeting. 11. **Financial overview** The following documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting: Budget summary St Luke's (including FHEC) as at January 2022 Budget summary Collett as at January 2022 Federation wide premises update Federation wide H&S update Folder of accompanying finance documents for all three schools (P7 and P8 monitor, monitor commentary, cash flow) The following was noted: St Luke's projected in year deficit as at P8: £498,123 HCC were notified on the 20 December 2021 by email of the predicted cash flow position. Susan Provenzano (HCC) responded on 23 December 2021 (Please see the email response shared in the report). HCC are providing the school with a rolling cash advance and then will claw it back each month through the biscuit. This would allow HCC to adjust the advance depending on the position of the bank each month. The biscuit is the name given to the transfer of funds each term/month from HCC Despite the high current cash advance of £100,263 HCC finance staff had not yet been in touch with St Luke's to arrange a meeting. Manda Sides anticipated that they were waiting until the end of the financial year. The Chair expressed his significant concerns about the school's financial position and the potential risks this raised. He noted the hard work of Manda Sides and her team to ensure all funding was maximised and the level of detail shared in the report outlining the reasons for the current financial situation.

He acknowledged that the deficit budget had been approved whilst aiming to deliver safe staffing levels at St Luke's but suggested that as this was beginning

to embed, governors should now consider, with the operational team, if savings

could be made in other areas. A finance working party had been created to review the financial review report undertaken by HfL but he felt that a Finance committee is needed to review expenditure lines in more detail and gain a deeper understanding on the cost pressures the school are facing. He suggested that this would be a termly meeting via MS Teams. The Finance Committee would take the form of a traditional Committee with a new Terms of Reference and ID asked for volunteers to join, to ensure the FGB can deliver the financial scrutiny required from our role. Whilst it is incumbent on all governors to understand the financial performance

of the school, the Finance Committee will be able to scrutinise the information in

- Governors agreed that this was necessary, many governors feel overwhelmed with the level of financial papers they receive.
- The final details of the composition of the committee will be considered.
- Action: ID to finalise finance committee composition and terms of reference, this committee would met at least termly and ideally before each FGB so that an update could be provided.

11.a **Contracts register** ID

more detail and update the FGB.

The following documents had been shared in advance of the meeting and were discussed:

- Quotes for:
 - o Grounds maintenance
 - HR & Payroll
 - Financial control
 - o Phone system upgrade

Phone system

- Upgrade required due to BT terminating analogue lines in June 2022.
- All alternatives were expensive in comparison to the current system.
- Although the on-premises solution had higher initial costs than the cloud-based system, when calculated over three years the cloud-based system was cost prohibitive (it was not anticipated that the phone system would be changed for another ten years).
- The school's recommendation of the ICS on-premise system was approved:

St Luke's: £7,071Collett: £6,979

Ground maintenance

- The current grounds maintenance contract is with Perfect Pitch but the service is poor and the company is happy to release the schools from its contract.
- Quotes had been obtained and the school's recommendation; Gold Leaf was approved.
- This was the most cost effective of all the quotes and the company had received good reviews from other schools.

HR & Payroll Services

- SHA explained how the current HR provider (Herts for Learning) were often risk adverse in their advice which over the years had cost the school a considerable amount of money in terms of the length of time it took to negotiate staff exit strategies.
- Luton County Council were now offering a traded service for HR and Payroll and the initial meeting and level of support on offer had been impressive. The team would also provide support with policies and staff disciplinary/capability procedures. Governors noted that the timeframes for these procedures were much shorter than was currently the case. The team would track employee actions against policies and were available to make presentations to staff explaining the robustness of these procedures and policies.
- Luton School Support Services also offered a payroll solution.
- Q10 would there be any repercussions from HCC if the Federation moved to another payroll provider, given the current vulnerable cash flow position at St Luke's? HfL was a traded service and not part of HCC. Identifying an alternative provider of HR services demonstrated the school's desire to get value for money and good service. (SHA noted that LSSS had been recommended by the Headteacher at Links School, St Albans.)
- Governors were happy to approve the appointment of Luton School Support
 Services for HR support but were uncomfortable to authorise a change in payroll provider at this stage. They were nervous about the process flow for ensuing

- there was cash to cover payroll each month and did not want anything to jeopardise this.
- Governors accepted that it would be a "neater "solution to have both payroll and HR services delivered by the same provider but would need significant assurances on the payroll service before agreeing to change provider.
- Q11 Had feedback from other customers been reviewed? AB offered to assist with this to complete the due diligence process.

Financial Services Contract

- FSS had re-branded their service from Plan A to Diamond (which was a fully remote package). Costs had risen as follows:
 - o Collett, based on 225 hours: £9261.74
 - o St Luke's, based on 275 hours: £10792.64
- MS reported that the FSS adviser was still making errors in the monthly monitor.
- Reluctantly, governors agreed to remain with FSS for the coming financial year. It had been hoped that the move to the Plan A package would demonstrate that the school's figures were accurate and it was disappointing that this was still not the case. MS had planned to revert to the Plan B package by now (Plan B package: school staff input data and FSS provided the monitor only).
- An SLA had now been produced by HfL.
- The Governors asked the SLT to seek to enhance the service level agreement to include reimbursement for errors caused by HfL, especially a check is currently made each month in order to check their accuracy

12. **Equality and Diversity**

Rachel Andrew, link governor for equality and diversity had developed a link governor role descriptor in consultation with SHA and the Chair. She summarised her action plan which would look at:

- Equal access to learning opportunities for students
- Attainment and progress of disadvantaged groups (CLA, PP. EAL etc).
- A review of curriculum resources
- Review of the equality and diversity statement on the website and the schools' accessibility plans.

The Chair noted that:

- Equality and diversity would be on the agenda of alternative FGB meetings going forward and this would be a good opportunity for RA to challenge governors to ensure consideration was given to equality and diversity matters in all discussions. As such this will be added to the role descriptor.
- The following areas of focus were suggested:
 - Were minority groups adequately represented within the curriculum eg what artists or scientist were referenced?
 - Were the school's reading books suitably diverse in terms of ethnicity, disability, race, religion, gender etc.

13.	Policies	
	The following policy had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was	
	approved:	
	Schedule of financial delegation	
	The Chair noted that he had a number of operational questions arising from the SFD	ID/MS
1.4	and he would raise them separately with Manda Sides. Governor visits	
14.	The following visit reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting:	
	 Ebbah Kwambai: curriculum visit. SLT would respond to the questions raised in 	
	EK's report.	SLT
15.	Governing Body Effectiveness	
	a. Skills Audit: ID had collated the results of the skills audit and would use this	
	information to recruit new governors and identify training needs. He will upload	
	the results to Governorhub	C I I
	b. Financial Skills audit : this was required for the SFVS. To date only SHA and ID	Clerk
	had completed this. Action: Clerk to recirculate financial skills audit.	
	ID asked Governors to ensure that they complete these type of activities	
	when requested so we get a full Board response / outcome	
	c. OFSTED question: Is the size, composition and committee structure of our	
	governing body conductive to effective working? See earlier discussion on the	
	creation of a Finance Committee.	
16.	Meeting dates for 2021/22	
	Spring term	
	Wednesday 30 March 2022 ** NEW DATE**	
	Summer term	
	Monday 23 May 2022	
	Monday 4 July 2022	

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Governor Attendance Record							
	29 Sept	22 Nov	31 Jan	30 Mar	23 May	4 July	
Aurele Mes Boaye	Р	Α	Р				
Poppy Choudhury	Р	Α	Р				
lan Dignum	Р	Р	Р				
Debbie Dorman	А	Р	Term of office expired December 2021				
Ruth Hammerson	Р	Р	Р				
Stephen Hoult-Allen	Р	Р	Р				
Laura Lilley	А	Р	Р				
Josh Pollard*	Р	Α	Α				
Pauline Mills	Α	Resigned 7 November 2021					
Andy Summerskill	Р	Р	Α				
Parris Williams *	Α	Р	Α				
In attendance							
Huw Bucknell	Р	Α	Р				
Jamie Caple	Р	Р	Р				
Manda Sides	Р	А	Р				
Jenny Witter	Р	Р	Р				

^{*}Associate governor (responsibility finance and safeguarding): not required to attend FGB meetings

Key			
Present	Р		
Apologies received	Α		
Not present	N		