



## Yewstock School

### Full Governing Board Meeting

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2022 via MS Teams

**Meeting started at 5.07pm**

Clive Padgett, Pete Lagden (Chair), Peter Bush, Phil Ryall, Mark Hughes, Seonaid Walton, Mandy Morgan, Jeanette Rogers, Lucy Ross

**Also present – Chris Chadwick**

**Clerk**

Vanessa Burton

**Apologies**

Linda Caride & Sue Lauterwasser

**Minutes of the last meeting**

No outstanding actions

**Agreed as a true copy and signed off**

**Report from Curriculum Committee**

A Subject Leader report was delivered by Oliver Turner on Science. A summary of which as follows;

- OT has now taken the lead on this subject for both Primary and Secondary which is seen as a positive change and enables a more joined up approach for delivery across the school.
- The subject is well funded and has good resources
- It has several accreditations

As Head of 14-19, OT also gave an update on plans for Careers Education.

- Jeanette Rogers has been employed for one day per week to meet the schools statutory responsibilities around this.
- There will be less focus on JR attending Annual Reviews and more work directly with pupils and parents which will give them the information they need before attending Annual Reviews
- JR will be a huge asset as she is extremely knowledgeable regarding the local offer.

The new Assessment System Evidence for Learning is being rolled out across the school to all subject areas.

**Report from the F,E & P Committee**

PB informed the board that the committee had received a very detailed report from BT covering Premises and a Budget update. The government had announced that teachers pay would be frozen but BT had budgeted for a 2% increase so this money was no surplus. The cost of supply will go over

the original budget by approximately £40,000. This may well increase further but BT will update the committee at the next Finance meeting.

PB said that the committee had also looked at the Value for Money documentation and Benchmarking reports, the Financial Control Checklist and the Disaster Recovery Plan. PB said BT had delivered a very comprehensive set of updates. PL agreed that BT was very good and that he had the LMT should be praised for how they are managing the school's finances during this very challenging time.

### **Head teacher's Report to Governors**

- Pupils – CP explained that there were places for 165 pupils however currently the school has 159 pupils on roll. MM corrected this as a pupil had been confirmed as having been taken off roll earlier today. CP informed the board that this pupil had not been at school for the last 2 years. Mum wrote to the LA confirming that she didn't want the place at Yewstock. CP said this was a shame as Yewstock was very appropriate for the pupil's needs and during the time that they had not been in school, there was a long list of children wanting a place. CP is confident that all 165 places will be filled in September and possibly go over, but CP explained that the current funding formula does not reward us for taking on additional pupils.
- Attendance – CP said that this had been very difficult this term with both staff and pupils having high levels of absence. Currently pupil attendance stands at 85% which is broadly in line with the national average for all schools, but significantly better than the national average for special schools which is 75%. Normally attendance would stand at around 91-92%. The school currently has 4 long term non-attenders, 2 which is down to their very complex medical needs and 2 (siblings) who have not been to school due to parents' severe anxiety around Covid. They are currently waiting for their vaccines when parents have tentatively agreed they can return to school. During their absence the school has provided learning packs and support.
- Covid Infections – This term there has been 17 pupils and 11 staff which is relatively low compared to other Dorset Special schools. There have been 25 pupils infected at a local special school and another special school has had to close due to high infection rates. CP went on to say that the Omicron variant seems to go through classes very quickly following the first infection. It has also caused some short-term disruption with 2 classes having to be temporarily closed. CP explained that the ability to back fill staff has been lost and supply agencies don't have staff available. The senior TA's who had recently left the School had now been replaced. CP said absence is being managed but this remained challenging. CP informed the board that CC, CKM and MM meet regularly to look at attendance. Anyone who drops below 90% will warrant further scrutiny and action to support attendance. A lot of pupils have genuine medical needs and will need to attend a lot of hospital appointments etc. Despite this, a close eye is kept on attendance.
- No Racial Incidents
- No Complaints
- Pupil Discipline – There have been no pupil exclusions this term. However, there are a small number of behavioural challenges.
- Staffing – CP informed the board that 2 teachers left at the end of last term. Carrie Tiley, who had been with the school for a number of years. She travelled daily from Frome and

was able to secure a teaching job nearer to home. Levi Dailey had also left to take up a position at Westfield. CP said he was happy with the cover arrangements for these teachers. Christine Cottrell who had taken over from CT, and Paul Cross who had taken over from LD. They will remain as cover until the current staff on Maternity leave return.

TAs – Tim Margetson who worked in Primary has left along with 3 STAs. There were six new starters who have all brought with them excellent training from previous care settings. Three new very good STA candidates have taken up their new roles following successful interviews.

Janitor Vacancy – This post was advertised, and an application was received from a very promising candidate. However, he subsequently received a better offer from his current employer and therefore will not be taking up the post.

MDSA – CP said that for the first time in some years, Yewstock had a full complement of MDSA's which has made a big difference to the pupils during lunchtimes. CP went on to say that this is a very difficult role to fill as the hours are very short and in the middle of the day.

- School Organisation – CP said the school had continued to work in Bubbles since returning in January. This decision was taken primarily to reduce movement around the school. The timetable was also collapsed as a result. This did not have impact on Primary or Complex Needs classes. This has now ceased but with continued focus on handwashing and mask wearing. Teachers are getting their PPA time and CP will try and avoid a return to Bubble working.

Several Air Purifiers and Co2 Monitors have been installed across the school to aid in ventilation and the whole school Risk Assessment has been updated. Overall, CP said the school is as safe as it can be.

- Training and Development – Three Inset days and planned activities have already taken place. The next one is due in April which is the TADSS conference. CP explained it had not yet been decided if this would go ahead as it would involve all staff from all of the TADSS schools gathering in one place. A curriculum development day was planned for the last Inset day in the summer term. CP said that a lot of training was crammed into each of the Thursday staff meetings (schedule for these is attached to the back of the Heads report) and that CC needs to ensure that all statutory Safeguarding training is completed.
- Curriculum Development – Claire Donohoe was appointed to this role with a TLR 3.1 to support CC. She was the only candidate, but CP said he was very happy as she had already been an active member in the Assessment Working Group. The Yewstock Curriculum was in good shape, but he is looking to the future and taking into accounts possible new cohorts and Assessment Systems.
- Evidence for Learning (EFL) – CP said that a recent Head Teachers Conference he had spoken to an Ofsted inspector who had said that Ofsted were not interested in endless assessment data on progress, but rather what has been done with it. CP went on to say that EFL will make the data much easier to interrogate.
- Interventions – The LRC is now functioning again and a school led tutor has been appointed. Covid has however, continued to have an impact on this due to staff absence. This is currently financed through the Governments Catch Up funding and Pupil Premium.
- Alternative Provision – CP said that ideally every child should be attending school but Rylands Farm (the school's current alternative provision) has been instrumental in

preventing the exclusions of 3 pupils at Yewstock. This provision is monitored regularly by Oliver Turner and plans are in place to ensure it is for a limited time as possible.

- School Development Objectives – CP is working with Lyn Gaudreau on this and will update Governors at the next meeting. LG will also work with CP on the School Development Plan and CC for Curriculum development as well as carry out scrutiny of Teaching and Learning.
- No Data Breaches reported.
- No Staff Requests for Governors.
- Finance – The school’s finances remain in a good place and will be carrying forward a healthy surplus. Special Schools have been allowed to keep surpluses as money has been ring-fenced for projects. Costs will also be rising in all areas.
- Schools Forum – CP informed the board that he has been nominated by the Head teachers of Dorset special schools to act as the special school representative on the Dorset Schools Forum for 2021-2022.
- Safeguarding – CP said that CC does an excellent job as DSL. She also has a good DSL Team supporting the work across the school.
- Community – CP explained that activities over the Christmas period had taken place but not all of them face to face. The Nativity was outdoors but parents were able to attend. Christmas Dinner and the class parties all went ahead but the Cabaret had to be held online. CP thanked PR for him stepping into the role of Santa, to give out presents to all the children. Special thanks were also given to Ruth Lagden and the MDSA Team for the fantastic Christmas Dinner and Party food.

CP concluded his Head teachers report.

PL thanked CP for his report.

### **Policies**

#### **Curriculum**

Curriculum  
Supporting Children with Medical Needs  
Moving & Handling

#### **Finance**

Accessibility Plan  
Recruitment & Selection  
Nut Allergy  
ECT

### **All Adopted**

#### **AOB**

SW – asked if it would be possible to send a letter out to parents and taxi companies to highlight an issue that she has become aware of. When waiting to pick up children their cars are left with the engines running for up to 30 minutes. This is not good for the environment or our children’s health. CP said he has previously taken action on this, however it should be noted Taxis are sub contracted from County and there are a lot of different providers. He has spoken to Nick Baber (The transport Compliance Officer) regarding this issue and has asked for anyone vehicle waiting to pick up to line

the road that goes up to the college. CP will write to parents again on Friday to highlight the problem again.

PB – said that last year there was an agreement to have Academisation as a Standing Agenda item. Are there any updates around this? PL said it had all gone very quiet due to Covid but that it isn't going away and will pick up traction again. CP said that it was the governments line of steerage, but details were very woolly at the moment and there has been little information in the way of process. This could change potentially, very rapidly. In the meantime, he thought it prudent to consider the type of academy group Yewstock would like to be part of and to reinsert Academisation as a standing agenda item going forward.

CP – said that JR was now the school's independent careers advisor but as such she can no longer be the link Governor for Careers. MM volunteered to take over the role from JR.

**Meeting closed at 6.11pm**

Signed as a true copy..... Date.....