



Hilltop Academy Council Meeting Friday 25th November 2022 at 10:00 Hilltop School

Those Present:		
Rob Mulvey	Headteacher	RMu
Ruth Milburn	Governor - Wellbeing & Behaviour Link Governor (via Teams)	RM
Fiona Featherstone	Governor	FF
Christopher Spowage	Staff (Teaching Governor)	CS
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Strategy & Partnerships (Chair)	JH
Catherine Tansey	Parent Governor	CT
Also Present:		
Sacha Schofield	Executive Regional Director	SS
Vicky Hawksley	Governance Clerk	VH
Apologies:		
Sharon Biggin	Governor – Finance Link Governor	SB
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Sandra Rosado	Parent Governor – T&L Link Governor	SR
Gaynor Higham	Support Staff Governor	CS
Paula Williams	Executive Regional Director	PW

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
<p>1.1. To receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received for CEO, SB, SR, PW and GH.</p> <p>RM explained that H Weinhold has resigned from the Academy Council due to work commitments. The Academy Council noted their thanks to Hannah for the time, commitment and energy she has given to Hilltop since being a governor and agreed she will be missed.</p>	
<p>1.2. To accept apologies for absence</p>	

<p>Apologies were accepted for CEO, SB, SR, PW and GH.</p>	
<p>1.3 Discussion/Confirmation of Chair/Vice Chair</p> <p>JH chaired today's meeting as a temporary measure. RMu explained that many schools are having difficulties appointing governors at the moment so the school is adopting a hybrid model in terms of Chairs. SS and PW, as Regional Directors, are picking up the chairing of Academy Councils where there is no Chair coming from the existing governors and where they are not the line manager of the Headteacher.</p> <p>It was suggested that PW could act as chair for this Academy Council but as PW is not present today no decision can be made at this point.</p> <p>RMu invited governors to consider taking on the role of Vice-Chair, or Chair, now that HW has stepped down. If anyone is interested in this role they are invited to let the Headteacher or Clerk know before the next meeting.</p> <p>RM asked about the role of Chair and what this would involve in the Academy Council model. It was confirmed that responsibility for statutory elements such as safeguarding lie with the Trust and the new model should reflect that more accurately, however the Academy Council can and should still ask questions about these important areas. We would therefore not expect chairs of academy councils to be speaking with Ofsted on their own and therefore hopefully the role does not put people off.</p>	
2. OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS	
<p>2.1. Presentation to Staff Nominee(s)</p> <p>Not applicable at this meeting.</p>	
3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>3.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business</p> <p>Transition resources (RM).</p>	
4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
<p>4.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>None.</p>	
5. HILLTOP SCHOOL LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MINUTES	
<p>5.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held 1st July 2022 were approved as a true record with no amendments.</p>	

<p>5.2. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.</p>	
<p>5.3. Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
6. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
<p>6.1. Headteacher Report</p> <p>RMu noted the revised report format and the attachments which accompanied this report. The main points to note are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school currently has 134 children on roll and is over-subscribed with limited space available and this continues to be a challenge. Over the last 7 years the school has benefitted from having access to two classrooms at another school but this school will no longer have these classrooms available. However, Craggs have space available from September 2023 which they have kindly offered to us. • The Rowan Centre building is empty and we are hoping to be able to use this facility for our post-16 provision along with another school in the Trust. We have expressed an interest in this to RMBC who have to complete a number of processes before a decision is made. • School performance dashboard – RMu stated that the school is graded Good across the board. We have a strong leadership team in all roles and RMu is confident that all leaders are committed to taking the school in the right direction. There are areas within curriculum development which are Insecure Good but these are being addressed. • Behaviour and attitudes and personal development – all are strongly good with outstanding features and we offer a really strong extended curriculum to our pupils. • RMu is confident that the school would retain its Good judgement if an inspection were to take place tomorrow. Our judgement was confirmed by C Garbutt during a monitoring exercise. • Staff absence is a challenge at this school and absences are followed up in conjunction with HR. We are doing everything we can to try to address this and RMu noted that there are some long-term absences but also there are a lot of odd days of sickness which cause problems across the school. • Quality of teaching – we are just at the end of a 4-week observation period and RMu will share the outcomes of this in due course. The majority of staff have now been observed and the outcomes are pleasing overall. • Behaviour and attitudes – the school has a very strong behaviour support team in school and all behaviour incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. We have good training processes in school and can offer this training to other schools in the Trust and in Rotherham. • One student was suspended for 5 days and this is the first time this has happened in this school. We are not equipped to provide the right learning environment for this young person and we are seeking an alternative place for this young person. 	

<p>However, finding an alternative and suitable place for this young person is very difficult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance data – regular attendance meetings take place where we look at individual data and levels and ways of improving this. • Pupil Parliament – a class teacher in school has taken on the role of developing this across the Trust and will be released for four days to do this. This will incorporate Pupil Voice and we will listen to feedback and see how we can improve. The Pupil Parliament meeting was held yesterday and feedback will be given to governors in due course. • British Values, Respect, Tolerance etc are at the heart of everything we do in this school. We hold Proud assemblies and do lots of fundraising activities and we celebrate and support others. We are in the process of working towards the SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural) Quality Mark Audit. • Website – we are in the process of cloning the format of the websites done across the Trust for our own use and we hope to launch this by Easter 2023. • Space – we are looking at how we measure rooms and assess how many young people with SEN needs should be in these spaces as part of developing processes and evidence given we are expecting more tribunals for students to come to the school, although we are already over-subscribed. <p>6.1.1. Appendix 1 - Updated SIP</p> <p>Copies were circulated in advance to governors.</p> <p>The SIP will be reviewed next week and will be discussed with governors in due course.</p> <p>6.1.2. Appendix 2 – School SEF</p> <p>A copy was circulated in advance to governors.</p>	<p>ACTION: RMu 17/3/23</p>
<p>6.2. Community Voice Report</p> <p>RMu reported that Family Voice is a real strength of the school and the family support group meets regularly with parents and we listen to their views and concerns. We offer parents access to post-16 events for their children and we have received very positive feedback on our family support.</p> <p>Community engagement – we have a minibus timetable and we encourage students to be out and about as much as possible and we also invite speakers and organisations in to talk to our students etc.</p> <p>Governors will be sent a copy of the school newsletter containing dates and details of future activities and events.</p>	<p>ACTION: RMu 17/3/23</p>
<p>6.3 Budget Report</p> <p>This item was minuted separately under confidential cover. CS left the meeting for this item.</p>	

<p>6.4 Teaching Staff appraisal outcome report</p> <p>This item was minuted separately under confidential cover. CS left the meeting for this item.</p>	
7. TRUST MATTERS	
<p>7.1. Trust Verbal Update of Key issues</p> <p>JH explained that the Central Trust team is being developed as the Trust expands and grows. We are already working with another special school in Rotherham and they have applied to join the Trust with a decision expected in December. We are also supporting an SEMH school in Sheffield as a sponsor.</p> <p>All schools are facing financial pressures relating to increases in staffing costs, energy costs and other price increases. The LA determines how much funding special schools receive and we were successful in a legal challenge in spring that made sure funding for increasing costs at that point was passed on.</p> <p>A Staff Parliament is being created using the same model as the Pupil Parliament.</p>	
8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>8.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair</p> <p>FF gave very positive feedback on her recent visits to the school. One issue raised was around transition points as children move through the school and whether the school could pinpoint where transition points happen and measures we could introduce to support children during these transition periods.</p> <p>FF attended a staff training meeting yesterday and was impressed by the positivity of the staff.</p> <p>RM also raised the issue of transition and the importance of ensuring that the school has the right resources for the children who are coming into the school in EYFS particularly. The EYFS lead will meet the child's parents initially to start the process of transition and ensuring that the right resources are in place.</p> <p>RM also raised the issue of therapy equipment for pupils and whether the school has the appropriate equipment to support its children to be ready to learn as soon as they join the school. RM reported that the therapy team would love to purchase a meditation bowl which would cost around £200.</p> <p>One issue which arose during RM's visit was ensuring that staff disseminate their knowledge to everyone, especially in therapies and ensuring that the EYFS lead has time to carry out learning walks.</p>	
9. CONFIDENTIALITY & RISK	

9.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting	
None.	

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10. DATES OF NEXT MEETING	
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Friday 17 th March 2023	10:00 – 12:00	Hilltop School
Friday 30 th June 2023	10:00 – 12:00	Hilltop School

Minutes approved

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE