

Avanti Schools Trust (AST)

Meeting Title:	AST Southwest Hub Board		
Date:	Monday 27 th January 2020		
Time:	11:00am – 1pm		
Location:	Avanti Hall School, Cowley Bridge Road, Exeter, EX4 5AD		
Documentation:	SW Hub board minutes 161219 DRAFT SW Hub board minutes 161219 part 2 DRAFT Item 5 Staffing update SW hub board (tabled) Item 6 Finance update		
	Item 7 HD update and report Item 8 SEND lead update and report		
Attendees:	Dr Molly Warrington (MW) (Chair) Stephen Howe (SH) (Until 12.15pm) Fran Russell (FR) Carolyn Dickinson (CD)(SW Hub Director) Kayleigh Mancini (KM) (Clerk) Suzanne Flack (SF) Andrew Quayle (AQ) Pearl Barnes (PB) (SW Hub SEND lead) Mike Ion (MI) (Director of Education)		
Apologies:			

Colour Key: Red: Questions Blue: Decisions Purple: Action

Item	Agenda Item	Led By:
No:		
1	Welcome, Introductions and apologies	MW
	All welcomed to the meeting.	
	Welcome to CD & PB, and thank you for attending today.	
	Apologies from SH who will need to leave half way through the meeting.	
2	Declarations of interest	MW
	SF still a trustee at Steiner Academy Frome (SAF).	
	AQ still a trustee at Steiner Academy Exeter (SAE).	
	FR is still Executive Director of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship.	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising	MW
	Minutes:	
	Part 1: Approved	
	Part 2 Confidential: Approved	
	Matters Arising:	
	FR conversations with Kath Bransbury from Steiner Fellowship and two Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) still yet to happen.	
	Exclusions policy changes have been made, to go to the next meeting of the trustee board.	
	Medical policy to go to the next meeting of the trustee board.	
	Admissions policies for each of the schools to go to the next meeting of the trustee board.	
	Terms of reference (TOR) were approved by the Hub Board at the last meeting, but MW apologies that some changes still need to be made, MW will bring back to the next meeting.	

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	ACTION: MW to amend TOR and bring to next board meeting,	
	FR at the last meeting there was a discussion about the huge importance of Kindergarten children eating their lunch with their teachers. FR referred to a review by Jani Nicholl in November 2018, which concluded that it was unsafe practice and advised that children should eat lunch in the dining hall.	
4.	Curriculum update (tabled)	MI
	The curriculum review team were at each of the three schools last week completing stakeholder workshops, and are due to complete workshops again next week:.	
	The parental workshops were extremely high in numbers.	
	MI to meet with James Biddulph this afternoon.	
	James Biddulph to be invited to next AST SW board meeting with final draft of curriculum.	
5.	Staffing Update - CONFIDENTIAL	
6	Financial report	MI
	Pupil Numbers: Avanti Gardens: pupil numbers are 259, dropped by 7 across years 1 to 5. Avanti Park: numbers are 399, dropped by 8 [upper school] but increased in reception and year 1 by 4. Net drop was 4 pupils. Avanti Hall: numbers are 346, dropped by 12 across all year groups.	
	SEND Provision at Avanti hall is currently being underfunded of around £177,000, PB is meeting with Devon County Council (DCC) to discuss this issue. There are currently 22 Education Health Care Plans (EHCP's) that are not in motion, this was previously over 40. Resource has been agreed to be brought in for one term placement to meet turnaround.	
	When you say not in motion? They are being processed, but in process at school level, and a minority at LA level.	
	At Avanti Park the EHCP process is also taking too long, but PB is working with the school to find ways to get them through quicker.	
	Suggestion: Going forward: tighter figures on how many EHCP's for each of the schools, and where they are within the EHCP process e.g. any close to the 20weeks.	
7	Development opportunities for spring and summer term	CD
	CD's first reflections of all three schools, is that they have many things in common which relate to a lack of systems and structures.	
	 Areas of concern: There is high level of staff absence, establishing routines are difficult due to the amount of agency staff required. Attendance levels particularly low at Exeter and Bristol, where systems are weak. Behaviour, pupils currently have the understanding they don't need to follow instructions. Some pupil/staff relations are over – familiar and there is some verbal abuse of staff by students. Access to school for parents on an ad-hoc basis. Outside structures unsafe at Exeter. 	
	The emerging priorities for each of the schools, over the next term are:	



- Attendance
- SFN
- Safeguarding
- Behavior
- Pupil outcomes Curriculum
- Site Branding/ maintenance

8 SEND provision

PB

Safeguarding across all three sites is a critical area of concern.

Safeguarding/ SEN audit was completed by Jayne Lowe, which highlights significant safeguarding concerns at each of the schools, e.g. physical environment unsafe on sites for example: water bog at Frome and fire pit at Exeter not fenced off.

Are the areas of safeguarding concerns of physical environments, being dealt with?

Yes, currently managing through systems in the short-term.

In the long term, physical changes will be made to each of the sites.

High level of SEN across the three schools, with Exeter being a particular concern with 50% SEN support and EHCP's.

Interventions provided for some of the children aren't working.

Suggestions:

Breakdown of how many children are Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) within each school. Spreadsheet for SEN children, what funding they bring in and how it is being spent.

Attendance figures of SEN students across all three schools is far too low, being a significant safeguarding issue.

Exclusions for SEN students is too high, behaviour support plans need to be followed more closely to circumvent dysregulated behaviour.

Our team's initial response is to improve both attendance and exclusions for SEN students through the provision of family link workers, and a Hub based Educational Psychologist to work with families to address problems such as school phobia and school refusal.

There is a lack of teaching materials/resources within Lower School.

Avanti School House has provided Maths materials for Years 2-6, which Bristol have started to use. However with lack of teaching materials highlights a huge challenge across the three schools, with the Curriculum review due to conclude in March, this should give more clarity in the near future.

Discussion ensued on issues regarding the curriculum across all phases in each of the three schools, and how it can be supported.

SH left the meeting at 12.15pm

There is a lack of consistency within teaching across all three schools as there is a very high staffing turnover, which exacerbates poor behaviour.

How are you managing safety?

Staff duty rotas, and children to line up.

Emerging priorities for each school and Hub-wide.

- Safety Action plan for each of the schools identifying high risk areas and how they are going to minimize risk.
- Safeguarding systems need to be more robust.

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	- Behavioral support plans for children with SEMH need to be urgently implemented to reduce exclusions.	
	- Improve attendance for each school to come in line with national average.	
	- Stabilise staffing issues.	
	- Key policies revisited (SEND, Safeguarding, Behavior and Exclusions)	
	How are you going to stabilise staffing issues?	
	Presence at each of the schools, and allay fears. Support vulnerable staff.	
	Once curriculum review and restructuring complete, then hopefully staffing should stabilise.	
	Staff that are calling in sick? Are they agency/teaching/support staff?	
	A mixture.	
	There is a huge concern amongst staff around Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment	
	(TUPE) and salaries.	
	Good feelings across the schools:	
	Pleasant to be in each of the schools.	
	Good people doing great things.	
9	AOB	MW
	AQ/SF have each received a letter from the DfE inviting them on the 12 th March, to a post re-	
	brokering lessons learnt day.	
10	Date of Next Meeting	MW
	23 rd March 2020, Frome – Avanti Gardens School	
	In the selection Piddy labourd Kirit Data	
	Invitees James Biddulph and Kirit Patel.	
11	Meeting Close	MW
	1pm	
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