

BEST Trustees' Meeting

20th June 2018, 15:30-18:00

Etonbury Academy

Attendees

Ilona Bond (IB), Alan Lee (AL), David Shelvey (DS), Paul Walker (PW), Claire Mycock (CM), Sharon Jeffs (SJ) and Craig Smith (CS)

Apologies: Tony Sanderson

Minute taker: Yvonne Humphryes (YH)

Notification of any perceived conflicts of interest: None

Approval of Minutes: Previous minutes (9.5.18) approved and signed

Agenda items:

1. Matters arising
2. Performance Committee Update - CM
3. Finance Committee Update – DS
4. ETA Principal Appointment – AL
5. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust (see Trustee minutes 9.5.18)
6. Langford Nursery – CS
7. Approval of Governance Handbook – AL
8. Policies – CS
 - Sickness Absence Policy
 - Grievance Policy
 - Recruitment & Selection Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct Policy
9. AOB
 - Update from HR/Trade Unions
 - Pay Deal
10. Commercially Confidential Item

Performance Committee Update

Principals' predictions suggest that 98% of the targets set should be achieved. SJ is working with the Principals to address any targets that are at risk of not being achieved.

SJ is obtaining impact feedback from the Principals over the summer; this together with the 2018 results will help the teaching school devise a plan to ensure the needs of the schools are addressed.

AL has supported ETA since May half term and will be acting Principal, from 1 September until 31 December 2018.

Key areas identified by AL are:

- Tracking has been successfully implemented and the teaching & learning has improved.
- There are inconsistencies across the departments and an unaffordable curriculum.

Ruth Wilkes will be a mentor and help support the new RBA Principal, SF, when he joins in September.

ETA Principal IE is very experienced and will join BEST on 1st January 2019.

SJ is retiring in the summer but will continue to support the Trust during the autumn term. The new Director of Education role will commence 1st January 2019 and will have Vice Principal experience as a minimum.

Finance Committee Update

This year all schools needed a balance budget which has resulted in a small surplus of £100k; this is a much better position than last year. All schools with the exception of SCA - who have a deficit, have successfully achieved a balance budget this year.

The Trust will not submit a deficit budget for the next three years.

Pix Brook Academy will be funded by Central Bedfordshire and as such, there is no need to prepare a budget until there is a school.

ETA Principal

The Principal recruitment process for ETA has been completed. There was a strong field of 12 candidates; Ian Evason (IE) has been appointed. IE is very experienced and a Local Leader of Education.

B.E.S.T

Bedfordshire East Schools Trust (B.E.S.T) is a charity; of which the nurseries are a subsidiary. The accounts for both B.E.S.T and the BEST Nurseries have been incorporated into the BEST accounts and as such, the BEST Trustees now have overall responsibility. The finances are managed by Nafia Baust, the BEST Chief Finance Officer.

As a separate limited company, B.E.S.T has its own board of Directors' who are responsible for its running; information relating to B.E.S.T will be fed up to the BEST Trustees as and when deemed necessary.

Action: CS to seek clarity with regards to where the responsibility lies in the event of a legal case.

The nursery contracts/salaries and T&C's can be different/separate to school contracts.

LVA

The LVA Principal (DR) approached HH from BEST nurseries to review options for a nursery at LVA. It was thought that this would help improve pupil numbers and make the wrap around provision easier for parents (only one drop off).

DR and HH have discussed the details of the arrangement, details of which will be shared with the LVA LGB. **Action:** CS to update the Trustees on the feedback from the LGB at the September Trustees meeting.

Governance Handbook

The 2018-19 Governor Handbook/Scheme of Delegation has been revised; changes include:

- Inclusion of the Chief Operations Officer
- Introduction of School Improvement Advisor, David Bray (DB)
- Principals to serve on another LGB
- Compliance Calendar
- Introduction of 'Cause for Concern' – Page 36

Schools are at risk of falling into the 'Cause for Concern' category for any of the following:

- DB thinks the school is at risk of becoming 'RI'
- Financial concern
- If compliance is not being followed in a timely manner

The Trustees felt that whilst the document is lengthy, it is concise and all references are within the one document. AL was commended on the quality of the handbook.

Any further changes to the document will be reviewed at Christmas.

Policies

Sickness Absence Policy

To ensure clarity and understanding, it was proposed that BEST continue with the existing policy.

Decision: The Trustees unanimously agreed to continue with the existing policy.

Grievance Policy

Decision: The Trustees unanimously approved the Grievance Policy.

Recruitment & Selection Policy

Decision: The Trustees unanimously approved the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Staff Code of Conduct

Decision: The Trustees unanimously approved the Staff Code of Conduct Policy in Principle, subject to LL checks for compliance and correct formatting.

AOB

Facilities time: Advice received from Horizon HR and Trade Unions with regards to the operational delays encountered as a consequence of BEST not signing up to Facilities time e.g. Unions not attending hearings.

Decision: Trustees have agreed that they'll review a paper should unions wish to present one.

Pay deal: Trustees confirmed that they have signed up to the support staff two year pay deal in line with national guidance.

Lawnside: There may be potential delays in Lawnside joining the Trust, owing to additional clauses requested by CBC on the Commercial transfer agreement. The DfE have advised that BEST is at risk if they sign up to these clauses and have agreed to support BEST in challenging CBC. CS is in the process of seeking legal advice.

Pix Brook

CBC would like Pix Brook open September 2019 and have resubmitted a feasibility report. CS has a call scheduled with the DfE contact managing the Pix Brook project to discuss further.

Next Meeting: 19th September 2018

J. Bowd 19.9.18

