

OATLANDS SCHOOL

FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

MINUTES

Held on Friday 4th November 2022 at 3.30pm at the school

| <p>Present: Cecile Dorvault (CD) (Chair) Keven Bader (KB) (Vice-Chair) Tanya Mooney (TM) (Headteacher) Hannah Nicholas (HN) Kathryn Friend (KF) Chrissy Prebble (CP) Sara Nursaw (SN) (arrived 4.30pm) Charlie Langley (CL) Hilary Butler (HB) Kate Howells (KH) Rosanna Leney (RL) Claire King (CK)</p> | <p>In attendance: Moya Tytherleigh (MT) (Clerk)</p> | |
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| <p><i>The meeting started 3.40pm and was quorate</i></p> | | |
| | | ACTION |
| 1 | <p><u>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> CD welcomed all to the meeting thanking them for their attendance on a Friday afternoon. The meeting had been called at short notice due to both the findings of a recent report from the SEND Governor and at the request of the Headteacher.</p> <p>Due to the nature of an emergency meeting being called at short notice, apologies of absence had been received from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devina Mistry • Carolyn Neale • Alison Skeffington <p>These apologies were accepted.</p> | |
| 2 | <p><u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u> No governor declared any interest in specific agenda items at this meeting.</p> | |
| 3 | <p><u>SEND</u> The meeting had been called to discuss the current level of high need children and its impact on the whole school, staff and children’s wellbeing, quality of provision and to consider next steps. TM thanked all present for turning out on a Friday afternoon showing that governors actively wanted to support the school.</p> <p>TM made governors aware of the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding – Only 50% of high needs children have an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan). • The challenges of getting the correct number of hours for a child highlighted in the provision. • The first half term had some really challenging children who had not been as challenging in their previous years. The transition of moving up to the next year group to more structured learning had caused anxiety and behavioural issues. • The school has continued to be as inclusive as possible wanting the very best for these children and to support their needs. • It has now come to a point where a number of staff are getting bitten and kicked on a daily basis. Some members of staff have had visible bruises and have been upset, crying coming into work. • Classes have been disrupted by behaviour making teaching difficult. • Class displays and rooms have been damaged. • The current situation is impacting the whole school. • Suspensions – 3 days had been applied since the beginning of the school year (2 days for 1 child, and 1 for another). They were kept to a minimum due to the understanding and empathy of the members of staff working with them and were trying to keep them in school. • Children are scared of some of the children with SEND because of their behaviour and unpredictability. • Recruitment was challenging and would be short lived if new staff started under the current | |

circumstances.

What had been done so far:

- Converted the Voysey room into a safe space for those high need children
- Staffing had been rejigged where TAs were working with more than one of the high needs children.
- The role of Nurture Lead had been developed giving Kelly Matthews the capacity to support more children, staff and families around the school but Kelly is regularly interrupted in this role to support the high needs children.
- STIPs (Specialist Teachers for Inclusive Practice) had been deployed to deliver behaviour support and training to the SENDCo and all staff.
- Working closely with families to look at how to best support their children. There has been mixed engagement from the families, influenced by their own understanding and accepting of the needs of their child.

TM provided an anonymised list of the 10 highest needs children, their EHCP/hours, their year group, the support currently in place and the challenges faced.

Governors questions and discussion covered the following:

The process of obtaining an EHCP was explained.

An Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document, which describes a child's educational, health and social care needs and sets out the provision required to meet those needs and to achieve agreed long-term outcomes. The EHCP process is in stages, which can take up to five months (20 weeks) from the time the local authority (LA) is asked for an EHCP to the point when the EHCP is ready to begin.

| Education Health and Care Needs Assessment Timeline | Status | Week | Action | |
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| | Decision to Assess | | 1 | Parents or school request an EHC Needs Assessment |
| | | 2 | School prepares a one-page profile or 'My Plan' | |
| | | 3 | Information and reports requested from different support agencies | |
| | | 4 | Agree to assess meeting | |
| | | 5 | Decision to assess is YES | Decision to assess is NO |
| | | 6 | Proceed to next stage | Parents have the right to appeal |
| Assessment Process | | 7 | | |
| | | 8 | Local authority requests more reports and information | |
| | | 9 | | |
| | | 10 | | |
| | | 11 | EHC Plan assessment meeting | |
| | | 12 | Decision to issue EHCP is YES | Decision to issue EHCP is NO |
| | | 13 | Draft EHCP commences | Parents have the right to appeal |
| | | 14 | | |
| | | 15 | Education Health and Care Plan is drafted | |
| | | 16 | | |
| Consultation | | 17 | Draft EHCP is issued to parents. Parents have 15 days to comment and request school to be named | |
| | | 18 | Consultation with school about being named on draft EHCP. School has 15 days to respond. | |
| | | 19 | | |
| | | 20 | Final EHCP is issued | Parents have the right to appeal |

- Governors all agreed that they had a duty of care to the staff and the rest of the children. It was agreed that Safeguarding children and staff must be the first priority.
- In one case an EHCP draft had been received with 19 hours despite the supporting documentation evidencing Full Time support had been provided for this child since they commenced at Oatlands (which was insufficient and was being appealed with a request for specialist provision).
- The LA needed to quicken up their processes and trust that the school's judgement and recommendation.
- In one case, an EP (Educational Psychologist) had performed their assessment of a child at home (not in school).
- Parents have to appeal a draft EHCP, and this requires the parents to engage in legal process (buying the LA more time). The stress and financial impact on the family is huge and the pressure is untenable at school whilst they try to provide education for the child.
- Surrey is not meeting the 20-week process timeframe.
- There is a shortage of EPs, which is delaying assessments.
- Governors asked if there was a safeguarding risk for staff and children and were there means to

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| | <p>escalate a next level of appeal on these grounds?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TM said there was an option to offer a 6-week reduced timetable and if the same risks continued, an emergency panel review can then be called. ○ There would be the risk of suspension and/or permanent exclusion if parents did not comply with the 6-week reduced hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Governors discussed whether some children are in the right education setting as their needs clearly indicate a maintained school such as Oatlands is unable to support their need profile. ● TM confirmed that members of staff's bruises and the room where displays had been ruined had been photographed and recorded officially. ● KH suggested looking at any case studies of similar scenarios as guidance. ● KH asked if they should revisit pupil voice about safety in school to provide evidence if needed. ● Techniques in place for dealing with challenging situations included using walkie-talkies and a red card system. ● TAs were being swapped around to offer respite and staff were supporting each other admirably, which was testament to the school ethos but was not sustainable. ● Governors discussed their priorities asking which came first; inclusion and creating provision for the few, or safeguarding the staff and all the other children in the school. It was established that Safeguarding must be the priority. ● GB will not tolerate any violence against the staff and children and will support the school to take immediate action to protect those. ● The clerk made governors aware that should an exclusions panel be required, this must consist of 3 governors who have no prior knowledge of any specific case. Governors' role in exclusion is to ensure the school complies with statutory regulations regarding behaviour, discipline and exclusions and to provide hearings for exclusions. ● KF and TM had met the Deputy Director of North East Surrey, Julia Catherine, whom they would consider writing to as a contact. ● Each school is allocated a Case Worker and Oatlands had had 4 in the last year, meaning the school nor families have not had the right support. <p>Lengthy discussion took place around short term action plan and a longer one with the outcome of the following actions as next steps:</p> <p>ACTION: Strengthen the Behaviour Policy To include revised wording such as 'If there are concerns around a child's behaviour some of the consequences the school may consider are....' This should include a 6-week reduced timetable and should use words around context.</p> <p>ACTION: Employ consistency of risk assessment Create consistency of approach regarding the frequency of safeguarding events. It was agreed that 6-week reduced hours and suspensions are 2 tactics and not necessarily linked to each other where one has to happen before the other.</p> <p>ACTION: Investigate if / how GB can write a letter of complaint to the LA ACTION: KF to reach out to her SCC contact. Regarding their incapacity to meet their statutory requirements for EHCPs and the inconsistencies in issuing EHCPs.</p> <p>ACTION: Add as an agenda item to the next 3-school partnership meeting</p> <p>Governors fully supported TM in her proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to offer a 6-week reduced timetable to 2 children with severe needs to reduce anxiety and stress for those children and relieve some of the pressure for the school - to suspend high needs children for rest of day when being aggressive to protect and offer respite to the staff and other children <p>ACTION: TM to take prompt action on suspensions if staff and children are hurt ACTION: Create a Working Party to provide support to the HT and create draft letter to the LA ACTION: Clerk to canvas and determine members of the working party ACTION: CD to write to all staff</p> <p>It was agreed that a supportive email/visit to a staff meeting to convey governors actions and next steps to help address the current situation would help morale.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to contact governors absent from the meeting to give guidance on the exclusions appeal process in case it is needed</p> | <p>TM</p> <p>TM</p> <p>WP KF</p> <p>MT</p> <p>TM WP MT CD</p> <p>MT</p> |
| 4 | <p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS There was no further business</p> | |
| 5 | <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> | |

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| The clerk confirmed the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 22 nd March 2023 at 6pm. | |
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The meeting ended at 5.15pm

CD thanked all present, and wished them well.

| TABLE OF AGREED ACTIONS | | By Whom | By When | Complete |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| 3 | Review the Behaviour Policy | TM | ASAP | |
| 3 | Employ consistency of risk assessment | TM | ASAP | |
| 3 | Investigate if / how GB can write a letter of complaint to the LA | WP (Working Party) | ASAP | |
| 3 | KF to reach out to her SCC contact | KF | ASAP | |
| 3 | Add as an agenda item to the next 3-school partnership meeting | MT | 16.11.22 | |
| 3 | TM to take prompt action on suspensions if staff and children are hurt | TM | On going | |
| 3 | Create a Working Party to provide support to the HT and create draft letter to the LA | Working Party | ASAP | |
| 3 | Clerk to canvas and determine members of the working party | MT | ASAP | |
| 3 | CD to write to all staff | CD | ASAP | Complete |
| 3 | Clerk to contact governors absent from the meeting to give guidance on the exclusions appeal process in case it is needed | MT | ASAP | |