



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

Central Office
Unit 4 Tamar Business Park
Pennygillam Way
Pennygillam Industrial Estate
Launceston
PL15 7ED
01566 777503
Email: governance@andaras.org

CEO: W. T. Hermon

27/01/2021

Minutes

Resources, Staffing and Safeguarding Committee Spring 2021 Wednesday 27th January 2021 at 9.30am virtually via zoom

1. Check Audio and Video Link

All participants had audio and video connection.

2. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Carol Green (Chair), Jon Sharpe (Vice), Steve Tavener, Graeme Barriball, Will Hermon

In Attendance: Jo Callow (Ex Officio), Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

3. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests Relevant to this Agenda

None declared.

4. Confirm Minutes of previous RSS meeting Autumn (14th October 2020) and Matters Arising

- Summary of fire and H&S action points trust wide to show high, medium and low priority should be included in the exceptions report (WH). *Complete but needs refining.*
- Amended Health and Safety Policy – presented to full Board for approval. *Done 9 Dec 2020*
- Update on First Aid & Asbestos Training (WH). *Covid has affected training again, some first aid training as been completed but asbestos training on hold.*
- Remaining school condition surveys to RSS (WH). *Schools have been assessed but awaiting report.*

Committee agreed the minutes [no actions from confidential minutes]. Chair will sign a copy when normality resumes.

5. Confidential Agenda Items

Three items were discussed and recorded under confidential minutes.

6. Review Risks and Improvement

a. MAT Improvement/Recovery Plan

Trust Improvement Plan on hold at the moment as agreed by the TLA. Recovery plans have been reviewed but this lockdown has not helped. That said, the remote learning offer has improved from the last lockdown with provision of resources that enable this to happen. Blended remote learning is going well overall but it does put a great deal of pressure on the parents to make sure the children are engaged. All SATs and external testing has been cancelled, so there will be more reliance on internal data to ascertain where the children are. **Given the doom and gloom reported on the media, where are our children likely to be after this lockdown and how is it likely to affect them in future?** WH explained his thoughts on this, it is an interruption to learning but he doesn't believe it will have the impact that is being

portrayed. The ability to make up ground with the recovery schedule is proven and the engagement with children/parents is more robust this time.

b. Individual School Risks

School risks are all centred around standards (due to Covid/lockdown), pupil numbers and resulting financial implications, and staffing levels/staff & children welfare. **Given the potential threat of the free school on our school numbers, how are the numbers looking for next academic year?** WH confirmed the numbers currently as SC – 51 applications for 30 places (35 were first choice); SSCA has between 25-28 applications out of 30 (depending on intake for SC); PT is currently 8 (more than first thought); NP has 11 applications (more than recent years, and believed to be first choice); Wer currently has 9 applications for 10 spaces; CG only has 5 applications and only 3 are first choice which is a concern; WHA figures are to be confirmed but hopeful that this is positive.

c. Staffing and Resourcing Benchmarking Data

Nothing recent available for comparison.

7. Staff Structure & Budgets

Most schools will balance out their budgets for next academic year, showing that most school staffing levels are about right in terms of efficiency & cost, leadership is secure and good teaching is in place.

8. Staff Welfare

WH noted his concerns around staff welfare given the situation during the last year. He noted in particular that school leadership have been under particular pressure with numerous changes to government policy, increased DfE issued guidance to read and action, constant requirement for returns, constant reviews of risk assessments and so it goes on. He noted that also the younger Heads have a great deal of responsibility and feel they should be getting everything right, particularly regarding the safety of the children, which puts additional pressure on them and is very tough. **Is there anything the Trust Board can do to assist the staff?** WH discussed this but noted that there is still work to be done and cannot remove some things, but they have been told that certain things can be put to one side (such as website updates and policy updates) and to prioritise their work. **Are their working hours being monitored, including the work done at home?** WH noted that informal checks are done and although he has told staff to prioritise, it is difficult to ensure that they are. WH noted that the staff do not complain to him but he is concerned that as the staff are going the extra mile, all of the time, that they will burn out. The committee discussed at length and directed that a letter of thanks be sent to staff, noting some of the issues causing concern. **Action: Draft and send out a letter with input from the Directors and WH (TM)**

9. Staff CPD/Training

Staff are still getting PPA time and NQT requirements are being met. Weekly staff meeting at the schools and only relevant CPD is being conducted.

10. Other Staff Matters

No MAT complaints received. Whistleblowing policy and procedures are in place. Whistleblowing Director is Trudy Rudge.

11. Safeguarding

S157 safeguarding return will be completed once the request is received from the local authority. WH noted safeguarding concerns and procedures during lockdown. JC noted that there are more instances of families unable to cope during this lockdown period and mental health is more of a concern. This is being monitored.

12. Health and Safety

Fire risk assessments in schools are up to date and termly fire drills are completed, even during lockdown. The new risk assessment system is in place. WH noted the latest health and safety report. **Are there any concerns with the tree surveys and are they a concern?** WH explained why they are done, that some schools are more affected than others with more trees and the importance of acting on the results to avoid potential injury to staff and children.

13. Insurances

WH confirmed that sufficient insurance arrangements are in place for the following and the cost to the Trust for this insurance, which is a significant sum:

- Property, Premises insured for £16million and Contents for £2million with excess of £500. The main issue this time around is for flood cover as we have made claims on this in the last year in LT and PT (for these schools, the excess has now increased to £15K for flood damage)
- Employer Liability – covered up to £25 million
- Trustee Indemnity – covered up to £5 million
- Public Liability – covered to £25 million
- Others – insurance for staff to travel between sites and business interruption cover.

Noting that £500 excess is quite low, would paying more excess decrease the annual premiums?

Action: WH will investigate when the insurances are next due for renewal.

14. Premises and Resources

Latest fixed asset register made available to the committee. **Noting there is a depreciation column but not re-evaluation column, do we ever get the assets re-valued?** An answer will be sought from the CFO and sent out to the committee.

15. Policy Review

- a. Safer Recruitment (SC) – minor changes - approved
- b. Security (WH) – minor changes - approved
- c. Staff CPD (JC) – minor changes - approved
- d. Fire Prevention & Precaution (SC) – minor changes - approved
- e. Tackling Extremism & Radicalisation (WH) – minor changes - approved
- f. Staff Leave & Absence Policy (SC) – some changes made due to Covid – approved

16. AOB

Launceston Pre-School process is on-going. WH gave a brief update on an on-going matter at LT, brief update recorded at confidential minutes.

17. DONM

Next meeting is Wednesday 19th May 2021 at 9.30am in central office or via zoom.

Meeting closed at 11am.

TJH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

W.Hermon – CEO/Director	J. Callow – Ex Officio Observer
C. Green – Director (Chair)	E. Gilbert – Chief Financial Officer

J. Sharpe – Director (Vice Chair) G. Barriball – Director S. Tavener - Director	C. Paul – By Invitation (in Child Protection Role)
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