

Message from Bob Elsey - CEO

Introduction

As we are approaching the end of our third year as a Trust, we are pleased with the way we have evolved and the manner in which we all collaborate to develop our strategies. This is evident in the way we continue to work together through this pandemic. Unfortunately, we don't seem to have moved away from Covid-19 and it continues to affect our schools.

Many thanks, once again, to our colleagues for managing such a changing and challenging situation. Going forward, please be aware that any closure of classes or year groups would be a last resort and would mean the school has gone beyond the 10% threshold in a particular year group or across the school, and that these closures would have been discussed and agreed with Governors and Trustees.

This Update will explain more about our Trust and committees in order to inform our community of the work that takes place to support our schools and children.

Members

Our Members group is made up of individuals who have a wide variety of experience, knowledge and skills. It meets each term and reviews the financial position of the Trust and the CEO and Chair of the Trustees report on strategic matters.

Peter Floyd, Chair, Sandra Symms and Marian Dickens, have been with us since we established. As mentioned previously, we are delighted to be joined by two new Members, Gaynor Bradley and Peter Hutterli. Please see our website for information on all our Members.

<http://www.corvuslearningtrust.co.uk/>

The role of the Members is to hold the Board of Trustees to account in order to ensure the success and integrity of the Trust.

Board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees currently consists of 7 individuals (but we need more!) who also have a wide variety of experience, knowledge and skills. Many of our Trustees have been with us since we established and we continue to develop our Board with wider expertise and diversity.

The role of the Trustees is more "hands-on" than the Members Group in terms of working with the CEO, LGBs, schools and Central Team and meets each half term. We also have two sub-committees; Education & Outcomes and Business, Assets & Risk which also meet termly, and it is here that the detailed work is carried out.

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to review and discuss strategic and operational matters. Currently, our big focus has been the transition of Sandhurst School to the Trust.

Sandhurst's application to join the Trust has been ratified by the DfE and, during the next few months, we will be focusing on the legal aspects of this transfer. It is hoped that this work will be completed to enable Sandhurst to join us early in the new year.

Recently, the Trustees have been supporting our schools with governance, admissions, policies, finance and risk assessments.

Our CEO and his team have been specifically involved with Headteachers and senior colleagues to support and develop school improvement, data tracking and intervention strategies, including a bigger focus on key learning groups. He is also in the process of supporting Headteachers in appointments and performance appraisals.



Education and Outcomes

The Terms of Reference for this committee state that its purpose is to support and challenge on all issues relating to the Education and Outcomes of Trust Schools.

In our last meeting, we discussed the outcomes from the summer assessments across all four schools.

In terms of our primary schools, our leaders were pleased with their outcomes bearing in mind the disruption to learning caused by the pandemic. It was felt that our remote learning offer for pupils and students greatly improved during the second lockdown. However, the data shows that our schools will need to specifically focus on writing as part of the catch-up programme for our pupils. This is already on school development plans and this committee will monitor the progress throughout this academic year.

At secondary level, Edgbarrow School's results were once again excellent and were felt to be a fair reflection of the work completed by the students. The school is looking forward to the return of examinations next year. We are working with the school to focus on the results of some key learning groups.

All schools are mindful of the possibility of an Ofsted visit in this academic year and we are working hard with them to ensure that the leadership and management, teachers, children, governors and ourselves are prepared for this visit. Whilst Ofsted visits are hugely important, be assured, our school leaders are always focussed on school improvement in its wider sense, from curriculum planning, teaching and learning to pupil outcomes.

Business, Assets and Risk

The purpose of the Business, Assets and Risk Committee is to support and challenge on all issues relating to the Business and Assets of the Trust and its schools. This committee monitors and reviews performance in areas such as financial strategy and getting the best value for money by having robust procurement and financial systems for the Trust and schools including all statutory requirements. All of this leads to ensuring positive annual audits for the Trust and its schools. For your information the Trust audits are carried out in the November of each year, so we are currently busy ensuring that the auditors have all the information that they require.

Local Governing Bodies (LGB)

Currently, each school has its own LGB, the Chairs of which meet together regularly with the Trust. This aids support, raises standards and builds consistency to the benefit of all.

Each LGB is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees and the Board delegates the running of the school to the LGB. The LGB works closely with the Trust and CEO to support the work of the school and Headteacher and reports back to the Trust throughout the year. This collaboration between all of us is hugely important in the support of our children and schools.

The role of the LGB is to carry out the Trust vision, policies and priorities, based on the specific needs of each school. The LGB are expected to question, challenge and support school leadership and to hold them to account.

Each LGB meets regularly with the school's leadership and communicates separately with its own school community.

And finally.....

We hope that the information above has helped to inform and to clarify the work of the Trust. We continue to look for individuals who have a passion for education and our local community and would be interested in joining our Members or Board of Trustees.

As one of our Trustees recently said....

"When I first joined the Board, I was nervous about whether I would have the necessary skills, time and knowledge to understand the issues. However, some three years later, I am delighted that I applied. The team was welcoming and is experienced, thoughtful and respectful. Everybody has a voice and most importantly for me, I feel valued and have been given the opportunity to utilise many of my skills. I am thoroughly enjoying this role and would encourage anybody within our community who has a passion to be involved and the drive to make a difference, to step forward and make contact."

We would be delighted to hear from anyone that might be interested in working with us.. To contact us please email us at:

enquiries@corvuslearningtrust.co.uk



Advert for New Trustees

ABOUT OUR TRUST

Corvus Learning Trust was established in January 2018 by its founding schools; Oaklands Infant, Oaklands Junior, Hatch Ride Primary and Edgbarrow School. We represent and look to improve all phases of education, from Early Years through to Key Stage 5 and are based in Crowthorne, Berkshire.

The Trust is a family of schools, initially from the local area, which has shared values and a common ethos in the delivery of education. We work together in collaboration and share good practice whilst retaining our individuality.

The Trust Board seeks new Trustees to help us to support the delivery of our strategic plan and our Vision and Mission.

Our Vision is: *“Deliver an exceptional education to all our young people”*

Our Mission is:

Deliver outstanding outcomes

Achieve sustainable growth

Provide excellent Trust services.

Our Values are:

Our Values, which were created from input across the Trust, underpin the way we operate, work together and behave. At the centre of our Values is that *“We give every young person the opportunity to fulfil their potential”*.



Our schools are supported by a Central Team that offer a range of expertise including raising standards, school improvement, Leadership and Management, Finance, HR, policies and governance.

All of our schools are judged by Ofsted as Good or better.

Our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as a former headteacher, is an experienced leader who has worked with the development and support of headteachers outside of the Trust and therefore offers support and guidance to the leadership team of our schools and their Local Governing Bodies (LGB).

Having created and established a healthy, viable Trust, we are now growing and developing partnerships with new schools. This is an exciting time to join us and a great opportunity to help lead the Trust.

OUR TRUSTEES

Our Board of Trustees currently consists of 8 individuals who have a wide variety of experience, knowledge and skills and we are keen to grow our team. The role of our Trustees is one of support, challenge and guidance, and, as a smaller Trust is “hands-on” in terms of working with the CEO, LGB, schools and Central Team.

Some of our Trustees have been with us since we established, but we have also developed our Board with wider expertise and diversity. We would like to develop our Board further and in particular with people with knowledge and experience in the areas of Primary Education, Legal, Finance, HR, IT, Safeguarding or Health & Safety. However, we would also be very interested in hearing from anyone who feels they have the ability and commitment to share their passion, drive and energy for the benefit of our children and staff.

Our Board of Trustees meet each half-term. We also have two sub-committees; Education & Outcomes and Business, Assets & Risk which also meet termly, and it is here that the detailed work is carried out. The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to review and discuss strategic and operational matters regarding financial control, leadership & management and school improvement. The CEO reports to the Board of Trustees. In terms of time, the commitment required is a minimum of 6 hours monthly.

Every Trustee is expected to abide by the seven principles of public life set out by Lord Nolan: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In the interests of safeguarding and in accordance with DfE requirements, all Trustee appointments will be subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring service check.

If you would like any further information on our Trust or the role of a Trustee please contact us at

enquiries@corvuslearningtrust.co.uk. We would be happy to have an informal conversation with you, if you would like to discuss the role with one of our Trustees.

If you would like to apply to be a Trustee of Corvus Learning Trust please complete the Trustee application form that can be found on our website (corvuslearningtrust.co.uk).

Stephen James – Chair of Board of Trustees

