



Dartmoor
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

School Improvement Committee Report 2019



The School Improvement Committee met four times from the creation of the MAT in January 2018 to the end of the Trust's first financial year on 31 August 2018. It has established its terms of reference to hold the CEO and VCEO to account for the performance of all our schools. The committee comprised three trustees. The detailed minutes are circulated to all trustees and to members as soon as they have been agreed.

Each meeting was attended in person by both the CEO, Daryll Chapman, VCEO, Hazel Fox and CFO, Susanne Kiff in order to answer trustees' questions and to follow up on requests for additional information. A few meetings were close to being not quorate. New processes have been instituted since the period here covered to avoid non-quorate meetings in the future. The governors of our local governing boards have an open invitation to attend these meetings. We were delighted to welcome the Co-Chairs of Holsworthy Community College to a meeting earlier in the year.

One of the guiding principles behind the formation of the MAT is School Improvement and the primary function of this committee is to champion School Improvement across the MAT, in concert with ensuring value for money. Another guiding principle behind the formation of the MAT was the intent to provide education for our students from ages 4-19. To that end, cross-phase working is a standing agenda item to encourage this as a long term initiative whilst acknowledging the many initiatives that are already taking place; for example the DMAT student council. This committee also acknowledges the need for the educational and financial sustainability for small primary schools and the need to develop them further. The committee agreed that all schools should be being pushed to 'outstanding'. Another standing agenda item is to review schools with a current judgement of 'requires improvement'.

The committee noted that it is not expected to be the first port of call for issues that may arise, but more the 'last line of defence'. We monitor whether action taken by leaders is working or not.

A challenge for this committee is the consistency in the reporting data from the Schools. Data collection has been aligned in the primary schools and from September 2018 they will be sharing a common platform in Classroom Monitor. We are working towards common data timelines in the secondary schools.

During this period, Neil Swait, the DMAT school improvement lead, completed an external review of the primary schools based on OFSTED criteria. These visits were to identify areas that OFSTED might pick up on. These visits helped leaders to triangulate the priorities in their 2018-2019 school improvement plans. Following Neil's visits, if schools are classed as high priority, they are visited on further occasions by Neil Swait and receive more support. This support is delivered in partnership with the Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance by SLEs, NLEs, LLEs and NLGs. Low priority schools are seen less but the VCEO and CEO follow up these visits. Trustees recognised that a similar piece of work would be beneficial for the secondary schools as soon as a suitable officer is appointed.

Governors on local governing boards continue to undertake visits to monitor their school's school improvement plans, but it is hoped that Trustees could be invited to join these in the future.

Over two terms the committee received detailed reports including the following:

- 2015-2017 Secondary Key Performance Indicators.
- 2018-2019 Secondary Predicted Key Performance Indicators.
- Secondary Assessment Calendar 2017 - 2018.
- Primary Assessment Calendar 2017 - 2018.
- Minutes of LGB School Improvement Committees.
- School Improvement Visit Notes from DMAT Primary School Improvement officer Neil Swait.
- Primary schools' data overview trends over time (2015-2018).
- Presentation from Martin Smith, Director of the Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance.

Significant challenges are ahead for our schools upon which we have focused in the Autumn term 2018 and will continue to focus in 2019. These include:

- Meeting the needs of our most vulnerable students; the demographic of our schools is changing and the percentage of students in receipt of the pupil premium is increasing year on year.
- Improve progress data for those pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium in all Key Stages.
- Improve progress data for those pupils with special education needs in all Key Stages.
- Improve KS2 progress scores, especially in Mathematics.
- Increase the number of pupils taking the suite of Ebacc subjects.
- Increase the number of pupils achieving the Greater Depth grade at the end of KS2.
- A school improvement officer needs to be appointed for the secondary phase.
- Receiving, termly, an overview of in-year progress data for all year groups from all schools; trustees must have confidence in that data, and be assured that thorough internal and external moderation is taking place.
- Ensuring that robust challenge is evident in the minutes of Trustees' meetings and LGB meetings.

To help us provide support and challenge from September 2018 the CEO has commissioned Jon Lunn, a data lead, through our connections with another multi-academy trust. Jon Lunn has undertaken forensic analysis of our schools' performance, delivered data training for governors and trustees and has been instrumental in helping trustees to analyse and benchmark data. Our committee meetings from the 1st September onwards are proving to be more robust in terms of challenge as trustees become more confident in the consistency and quality of the data and their analysis of it.

Tania Skeaping
Chair of School Improvement Committee, January 2019



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