

CEO Report to the Board

Education standards

The education standards review in the schools is split into two sections this term, one section focusing on SEND in our primary school schools and the other section focusing on personal development and curriculum standards at Rastrick High School. To support these reviews two external consultants were used by the Trust.

In SEND Gill Robinson OBE led a review of SEND at each school, providing a report to the Heads of School and LGBs on the standards of education for pupils with SEND at their schools. This report was presented to the LGBs at their last meeting in November. Gill also provided a summary report with the board and conducted a face-to-face meeting with me, Matt Crowther and Jackie Nellis (as named SEND Director on the Board). Gill will be conducting a review at Rastrick in the Spring term. The summary report is below. Jackie Nellis will provide oral feedback to the Board at the meeting.

The education standards review at Rastrick High School focused on personal development and curriculum standards. The review was led by Liz Cresswell, Ofsted Inspector. Liz was supported by me and Matt Crowther. The report summary is below, and the full report can be found on the Governance Portal.

Send summary report (primary schools) Gill Robinson OBE SEND Advisor

Outcomes	<p>Present all analysis of SEND Performance in a data broken down way in the 4 Code of Practice broad areas of need so that any gaps in certain types of provision can be easily identified. Pupil Passports should be introduced in a generic style across the Trust so that there is consistency of practice and all pupils receive the same level of support.</p> <p>Make sure that the approach in dealing with behaviour is consistent across the Trust and that reasonable adjustments are being built in for pupils with SEND in a fair and equitable way.</p>
Leadership	<p>The role of the SENCo is vital in every school especially at the present time where 50% of all pupils with EHCPs are in mainstream schools. The SENCo has an important role to play with the headteacher and governing body in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision. This will be most effective if they are part of the school leadership team. It is not advisable that the SENCo is the headteacher. Make more use of the SENCo cohort as a Trust-wide resource to develop and disseminate good practice. Introduce a SENCo Network across the Trust.</p>
Quality of Teaching and Learning	<p>Embed even further into the pedagogy of the teachers that all teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND. Also have a detailed section in the recruitment process and interview in particular, that SEND is high on the Trust's agenda. Make SEND an implicit part of the induction for all staff.</p> <p>Some teachers are not 'brave' enough to teach outside of the whole school curriculum. For some pupils the curriculum needs to be highly personalised and an alternative curriculum pathway used.</p> <p>Place more emphasis on promoting class teachers to have more confidence in using a repertoire of approaches to adapt and personalise their teaching for pupils with SEND.</p>

Working with Parents and Carers	Continue to reach the parents who feel that they do not need to be involved in their child's education by offering a range of supportive activities/sessions etc.
Assessment and Identification	The assessment systems in the school are not able to assess the pupils accurately. This is due to the existing systems not being able to break the data down into small enough progress steps which is what pupils with more complex needs make. Also, it is not possible for lateral progress to be measured. The Engagement Model is to be used for a small number of pupils. MAPP is also being looked into and training is to be provided by Marie Fishwick at Carlinghow Academy, part of Great Heights Trust.
Monitoring tracking and evaluation	<p>Find ways in which to monitor and evaluate the interventions used particularly with pupils with SEMH.</p> <p>Across the three schools there needs to be further training for TAs and teachers on the use of effective interventions. There are a number of structured intervention programmes available that aim to support and develop pupils' key skills. Some can make a real difference to pupil outcomes, others can be costly, time-consuming and not as effective. It is therefore important to consider decisions carefully when making strategic choices. TAs also need to know why the interventions are being used and when they should stop being used. Teachers should be confident that they know the outcomes required from interventions used.</p> <p>Make sure that the Pre Key Stage Standards are used effectively across the Trust Primary Academies and source an effective assessment system to measure small steps of progress. Also use the language of the Engagement Model language when observing teaching and learning.</p>
Efficient use of resources	<p>TAs would benefit from working together across the Trust to share their learning. There are some extremely talented TAs who should be used to coach and mentor others who are new to the post. A Lead TA across the Trust would be a suggestion as to how this can be implemented.</p> <p>Introduce Trust wide Performance Management for TAs.</p>
Quality of SEND Provision	Ensure that Preparing for Adulthood is a thread across all teaching and learning in the schools. Make all governors aware of the increasing diversity of the pupils with SEND so that they have a clear focus on the strategic needs of each school over time. A 'governor scrutiny' toolkit with regard to what SEND provision should be like may be needed to be established by the SENCo Network.

Personal Development and Curriculum Standards report Liz Creswell

Senior leaders are able to articulate an ambitious curriculum intent. They describe a broad and inclusive curriculum where there are high expectations of all pupils both across the curriculum and within subjects. All subjects have carefully constructed schemes of work which sequence learning to ensure progression. There is a philosophy across subjects of teaching to the top. Where pupils are taught in sets every pupil is challenged and supported. Across the curriculum and within subjects vocabulary is explicitly taught and teachers deliberately put learning into context and make links which develop the cultural capital and a rich schema. There is a strong wider curriculum offer

including enrichment linked to every subject. There is a broad and inclusive curriculum which is personalised in the classroom to ensure that all pupils make progress

School leaders effectively spoke about why and how the curriculum and the implementation of it, is of a consistently high standard. These strategies can be broken down into 3 strands: 5 to drive, quality assurance and professional growth. The relentless drive and refinement of these strategies to continually improve the school are supported by accurate school and faculty improvement plans. These in turn, support the delivery of a challenging CPD programme.

There are clear and well-established quality assurance processes in place, all based around 5 to drive. The outcome of this QA is used skilfully by leaders to adapt the school's improvement plan and CPD programme. The weakest teachers are supported effectively to improve. For example, the small number of teachers who judged to be weak were identified the QA programme and received appropriate support. Two thirds of these staff improved, and one third left the school.

In meetings designed to gather information on the subject curriculums, the faculty leader's knowledge and understanding of their curriculums and in their skill to lead their team of staff to deliver the curriculum effectively, the exceptional characteristics listed below were seen. NB This review included discussions with and visits to mathematics, English, science and MFL.

- The intent of each of the curriculums was strong.
- High quality detailed and well sequenced curriculums are used with fidelity in each of the faculties. The pupils learning journey through the curriculum is clear; the growing complexity of the work demonstrates well sequenced curriculums that are adapted skilfully by teachers to meet the demands of all learners.
- The Directors of Faculty are highly skilled leaders, who have an excellent understanding of the subject and their team. They lead with ambition and high expectations.
- Leaders have an exceptional knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and as such make skilled refinements to continually adapt the document and supporting materials such as resources and assessment. For example, in Mathematics, this continual *grappling* of the curriculum can be seen in the enhancements to the assessment system that now better reflect the depth in the complexity of work required from pupils year on year.
- The work in pupils' books reflects the well sequenced highly ambitious curriculum. Pupils are clearly challenged by the curriculum, they are not worried about failure and instead, thrive in taking risks. This was evidenced in learning walks and in scrutinising pupils' work. For example, the work observed in pupils' books in English demonstrated that the curriculum challenges pupils to craft their writing in such a way that it embeds complex language and writing themes, that in the words of the Director of Faculty gives the pupils the 'platform for success'.

The evidence base identifies strong practice in quality of education and the aspects of personal development explored over the two days and validates the school's self-evaluation that provision is very good. Visionary leaders who put the vision into practice are a key feature. The leaders are proud of their practice but also reflective and constantly seeking further improvement to secure the best for the pupils of Rastrick High.

December 2022 Polaris Staff Survey Executive summary to the Board

Please click the link below to the survey

<https://Polarismat.aflip.in/StaffSurveyReport>

National context

In a National Education Union (NEU) survey taken in March 2021, 10,000+ school and college staff reported on their working lives over the past year, and how they view it in the months and years to come. This survey encompassed school leaders, teachers, and support staff. Below are some of the responses to the survey which provide a useful comparison to the Polaris staff survey.

- 70% say workload has increased over past year, with almost all respondents (95%) reporting they are worried about the impact on their wellbeing.
- 55% said that their work-life balance was now worse than before the first lockdown, with one in five of all respondents (20%) saying it was 'much worse'
- Almost all respondents (95%) told us they worry about the impact of workload on their wellbeing. 48% said they do so "very often", and a further 47% say they do so "occasionally"

The overall result of the Polaris staff survey was very positive. A school specific survey, benchmarked against the trust survey will be sent to Heads of School next week. The survey will be run again in July, enabling comparisons and judgements to be made.

The survey demonstrated that the culture across the Trust is positive. Most staff understand what the school / Trust is trying to achieve and have a strong understanding of the vision and values that underpin the Trust and its schools. Furthermore, there is a strong feeling of confidence amongst the staff in Trust leaders.

The staff responses in the survey were broadly similar in each school. Where negative results were slightly higher was in general at Rastrick High School, although these negative results do not constitute a proportionally significant difference to the other schools in the Trust.

The survey highlighted areas that require greater focus from school and trust leaders, notably:

- Professional development opportunities for support staff
- Communication between school leaders and their staff
- Communication between the Trust and all staff
- The Trust well-being package
- Staff workload

These areas will be used to inform the Trust's people strategy. This document will communicate to the Trust Board and all trust staff the Trust's strategies to support employee performance and well-being. The areas identified from the survey that will make up key elements of the strategy (this is not an exhaustive list) are drafted below:

- Talent management
- Professional development
- Employee benefits
- Workload management

Events

This term has seen several events at the Trust that has provided many positives.

- Publication of the first Trust staff newsletter <https://polarismat.org.uk/news/>
- The running of the first trust wide staff training day and publication of the accompanying promotional video (note link in the Trust newsletter)
- Open evenings at the Trust schools
- Trust wide charity day for the local charity Focus4Hope
- Visit to Rastrick High School of the Rt Hon Michelle Donelan, Minister for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Update on Salterlee Primary School

The TUPE consultation with staff and the parental consultation were both positive events. The TUPE consultation has been run for 6 weeks and is due to be completed on the 15th December 2022. The consultation (to date) has seen no issues or measures raised by Union colleagues.

Due diligence is well underway, led by the CFO. Educational standards work with the school is also well progressed. The Director of School Improvement has worked closely with the Headteacher to develop and implement many systems in preparation for March 2023 and for the start of the new academic year.

Growth, networking and National Support School work

The CEO has met with many school leaders this term. All of these have been local primary Headteachers. These meetings have been a blend of formal presentations to the Headteacher / Chair of Governors and informal discussions with Headteachers and their Deputies. All resulted in the request from the Headteachers for follow up discussions and/or meetings with Heads of school from schools within the Polaris Multi Academy Trust.

I have also met with local secondary Heads from Calderdale and Kirklees. The Calderdale Headteachers were met through the Calderdale Heads Association (CASH) conference, where I was asked to present on the issues facing leaders of education. I have met with a secondary Headteacher from Kirklees to build the relationship between the Trust and the school. This was a good first point of contact and will be followed up with meetings through the year.

The Trust continues to conduct national support school. I continue to act as a coach for the ambition Institute. The work this term has continued with Park High School, Stanmore. The team conducted a 2-day training event and standards review with school leaders, governance support work and the Headteacher's pay review. The plan for the spring and summer term is for Park High School leaders to travel to Rastrick High School to meet Matt Crowther and Mat Williams in the Spring Term and to perform 2-day standards review in the Summer Term.