

CEO Termly Newsletter for Staff and Governors: December 2019

New Schools

Sherburn High School joined the STAR MAT on 1 October followed shortly afterwards by Brayton CE Primary on 1 November. I just wanted to say how delighted I am that both schools have become part of the STAR 'family' and how much we are all looking forward to working with them and all colleagues. The Trust is now composed of 11 schools in total, with 444 staff providing an education for around 4000 children. We've come a long way!

Trust Board Priorities

The Trust Board have published their strategic priorities for 2019-2020. This document is now available on the STAR MAT website <https://web.starmat.uk> and on the google governance team drive https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/OAI_UAIPVGnSmUk9PVA and outlines their key intentions for the year ahead. I hope to be attending staff meetings at all schools in the New Year to put a little more 'meat on the bones' for colleagues and to answer any questions.

Curriculum Development

The quality of the curriculum we deliver is crucial for the success of our children. As a Trust we have now agreed the curriculum principles which underpin what we teach in all of our schools.

During the course of this term a great deal of successful collaborative work has taken place to begin turning the principles into reality. Colleagues from both primary and secondary phases have been working together to establish a progression framework for every foundation subject. This is our shared curriculum 'intent' and maps the key things we want children to know and be able to do in each year from foundation stage to the end of Key Stage 3.

How our schools 'implement' the framework i.e 'what' they teach, remains their decision but I believe that this is a really significant development for our Trust and will pave the way for further collaborative work moving forward.

Our curriculum principles and a 'timeline' for further development next year can be found in the google curriculum team drive for staff and the governance drive for LGBs.

Trust Members Annual General Meeting

Our Trust 'shareholders' or 'Members' hold an AGM in December each year. At this meeting our annual accounts are carefully scrutinised and approved as well as all other aspects of the Trust's activities and performance.

While we faced an in-year deficit in 2018-2019, I am delighted that our projections for next year remain optimistic with a better than break-even budget forecast. There have also been significant audit improvements which resulted in no 'serious concerns' in the auditors' findings.

The 2019 Annual Accounts can be viewed online by visiting the STAR MAT website.

Member Appointment

I am very pleased to announce that Mrs Dawn Younge, former Chair of Governors at Saxton CE Primary has become a Member of the Trust. Pen portraits for all Members can be found on the STAR MAT website.

Trustee Appointment

It is a great pleasure to inform you that Mrs Deborah Hastie has been approved by our Members to join the Trust Board. Trustees are appointed on the basis of the skills they bring and an area of expertise that we have been hoping to recruit to for sometime is in Communications and Marketing. Deb brings a huge amount of professional experience in this area and is also a former governor at Riverside School. Her pen portrait (along with all our Trustees) can be found on the STAR MAT website.

School Conditions Allowance Update

The Trust Board are currently appointing an Estates Director to focus on building improvements, health & safety and to project manage annual capital funding (£1.2m in 2019) across the Trust. This new role will be responsible for specialist support for our schools and will aim to lift premises burdens from Headteachers. The job description can be found on the STAR MAT website.

Retirement

After a great deal of reflection and soul searching I want to announce to all colleagues that I have made the difficult decision to retire at the end of this academic year. As I am sure you all know, the Trust is very close to my heart and has occupied a great deal of my life for the last few years. I feel,

though, that after 36 years in teaching now is the right time to hand over the baton to someone else and to explore some new challenges beyond education!

As a consequence the Trust Board are currently considering recruitment options for a new CEO and they will inform colleagues of the outcome of their deliberations in the New Year.

And lastly but by no means least.....a STAR at Christmas !

A STAR at Christmas brought together children from just about every school in the STAR MAT to sing festive songs and form a choir of almost 300 pupils and students. Each school performed a song of their own choice and then joined together for some well-known festive songs. What a way to finish the term ! Thank-you to everyone who was involved in making this wonderful event happen.



Thank- you again for all your hard work this year,

Have a wonderful and relaxing Christmas,

Martyn



Very proud to be CEO of the STAR MAT