GOVERNOR FOCUS VISIT

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| **Date & names of governors participating** |
| **Thursday 21st February 2023** – Jane Swettenham (JS); Lynn Smith (LS); Vicki Noonan(VN); |
| **Focus of visit** |
| **Inclusion;** SafeguardingSCR checkGateway/Practical and outdoor learning/InterventionsExternal agencies  |
| **Discussions and observations** |
| **Discussion with DJ Barron (DJB) AH Safeguarding** * The school has increasing numbers of students with high tariff needs. The scope of students that inclusion involves is now much broader. It does not just encompass SEND.
* DJB has central oversight of all interventions to support students. Nigel Bolitho (NB) is the Safeguarding Officer. Both are DSLs. Jamie Rigg (JR) AH leads on behaviour. Georgia Day(GD) also a DSL oversees year 7-11 pastoral managers and leads on liaison with external providers (Smart Minds, community safety teams police networks). The Gateway (formerly Oasis) is led by Julie Lloyd (JL) a DSL. Mark Bolton oversees the practical learning. Liz Smith SENDCo is also a DSL.
* Gateway plays an important role in supporting students with high tariff needs. This is a gateway back into mainstream lessons. The name change was important. Gateway supports anxious school refusers or students who may struggle in a particular area. There are no full time Gateway students. They have a blended timetable. 6th form can access Gateway if they wish. Most do not. Capacity has been built in the 6th form with support from the pastoral team.
* The school’s vocational centre is an internal offer led by Mark Bolton(MB) offering different alternative opportunities during the school week. It helps bring students back into mainstream classes. School would like to do more but there are capacity and cost barriers. Time spent by students in the vocational centre is timetabled in blocks of certain lessons. Timetabling avoids students missing core subjects. The vocational practical approach helps certain students. The intervention is based on need and how an individual student is presenting. JR line manages MB. For some students the vocational centre is a behaviour strategy and has a positive impact. For others it is about meeting a learning need by offering an alternative way to learn or enhancing engagement. Some students attend for a short time, whilst others attend as part of what they do at school. Referral is led by year team/pastoral team or a teacher would refer to the year team.
* There are a number of external interventions such as Kids Inspire, Building Lives (gang ideation), sports therapy. The school has a drama therapist. All interventions are recorded on CPOMS (our internal monitoring system) as extensive support. Only DJB can edit and there is an edit trail. All things are in one place. Staff can record concerns. DSLs have full access but cannot edit.
* DJB is hoping to establish a positive impact centre - a hub for inclusion and intervention.

**Discussion with Nigel Bolitho (NB) Safeguarding Officer*** Mental health has been adversely affected by the pandemic. This presents as anxiety, self-harm, suicidal ideation. Some parents found it difficult during lockdown to cope.
* CPOMS is the school’s safeguarding system where concerns are recorded. It records actions/responses. Teachers can and do record concerns. NB then picks up those concerns. However some staff rarely report using CPOMs. All staff are aware if in doubt always report.
* The school has 5 DSLs – DJB, NB, JL, GD and Liz Smith SENCo. The DSL team meet weekly to discuss specific issues/students. They work closely with the pastoral teams. Pastoral will pick up much of the lower level safeguarding issues.
* There are challenges in particular with year 7 students settling in, including walking out of lessons, refusing to go to lessons and bullying. Some have struggled with the transition to secondary school.
* There are weekly staff bulletins and staff safeguarding training.
* Support is available from Brentwood Christian Workers Trust, Children’s Society and Kids Inspire.
* School employs a Drama Therapist
* There are 4 children on Child Protection (CP) currently and 4 Children in Need, (CIN) 1 Looked after Child (LAC) and 10 previously LAC. 58 Young carers (YC).
* Where there is a high level of need SHS puts together a Care Plan. Currently 25. This is put together in consultation with student and parent.
* External agencies are under pressure so the threshold for referrals has increased. The waiting list for CAMHS is long and some parents seek private support.
* Communication with parents is important. Pastoral managers keep parents updated together with the DSL link. The school would like more trained DSLs.
* Home visits undertaken

**SCR** Single Central Record was checked by governors with KW and DJB. All found to be in order with no gaps**Discussion with Julie Lloyd (JL) Manager of Gateway*** There are 15 students on the Gateway Form Register. JL sees them every morning for 15 minutes. Most are year 11s. Many SEND. Year 11s appear to have the greatest need currently. Form comprises one boy and the remainder are girls. They are with JL for form time but are in lessons. They need the stability that Gateway provides.
* Various interventions are scheduled during the day. On a busy day JL will work with up to 20 students. There are more boys receiving interventions and they are usually drawn from the younger years. Interventions are recorded on CPOMS. Students have a time out card if they are struggling in a lesson they can come to Gateway.
* Students are also provided with support at break and lunchtimes.
* Gateway provides students with a quiet and calm space. Some have difficult home lives. Stress and anxiety are prevalent on a daily basis.
* JL provides mentoring, friendship group work, self-esteem and stress/anxiety support.
* JL has completed the Mental health lead course.
* Gateway students attend Gateway if they have a cover teacher. These cover lessons can be noisier/behaviour not as good. They are better served by being in Gateway.
* Students can use Gateway if they need a break and time to regroup
* JL has sat in lessons with students for support.
* Referrals to Gateway come via the pastoral team.
* Parents are very supportive of the work in Gateway.
* All Gateway students know JL’s schedule and know where to find her.
* Important to identify those students who need help so support can be put in place.

 **Discussion with Georgia Day(GD)*** GD coordinates and line manages the pastoral teams
* GD supports them with higher level cases which crosses over into behaviour
* GD also involved with attendance and does home visits always with another staff member. Some are pre-planned and others unannounced. Attendance now a huge issue due to the pandemic. GD supports students with significantly poor attendance (those with 60% or below attendance). Important to determine the reason why. Are there safeguarding issues/mental health issues/medical issues such as chronic fatigue syndrome?
* GD’s broad role involves liaising with external agencies. GD will liaise with the local authority if a student is medically unfit for school/unable to attend due to mental health issues. The LA will step in and provide education. GD the key point of contact in the school for CSS.
* Building good relationships with the family is important. Those students are still part of the school even if currently unable to attend.
* The school can provide remote (usually) home tuition for some students. This is reviewed 6 weekly.
* Behaviour can be an issue with some students. Parents can push against the school which can mean resistance from the child. Year 7 is particularly challenging. A minority of students can take up huge amounts of staff time. Children have walked out of lessons. Some students spend time in the BLUE room.
* GD ensures that all interventions are logged. Early help procedures include universal offer, additional, intensive and high level. Pastoral mangers provide universal support. Every student has one. An adult mentor for example would be the next step up. The school identifies students who need additional help at team level. Group intervention can be offered such as anxiety workshops. External intervention could include the school nurse or Social Care.
* GD also works with the heads of year for those students with high level support needs and would discuss with the year team what exam subjects those students should be entered for.
* GD has a weekly drop in zoom call with Essex which enables her to tap into Essex support and advice. Anonymised cases are discussed.
* There is a huge amount of work required before the school can refer. It is challenging when there are children who are not classroom ready, and unable to function in school. Their behaviour and well being can deteriorate if they do not get the right help promptly.

 **Discussion on Safeguarding with DJ Barron*** As a basis for the discussion we used the Essex safeguarding toolkit
* The school conducts themed assemblies focused on safeguarding issues such as online safety.
* The school has an anonymous reporting tool which students are made aware of in assemblies. Students can if they wish leave a contact email. They could be reporting concerns about a friend. The school will never find them unless they want. However anonymous reporting by its nature can limit the help.
* School conducts wellbeing surveys. PHSE will address issues such as vaping.
* Attention is focused on those students who are presenting but some students do not want to talk. The school focuses on demystifying the process. Explain to students how the school can help. School are clear they may have to inform parents if the child is at risk.
* Site security is part of safeguarding. The school has a Health & Safety Policy (September 2022). New Estates manager appointed. He has requested First aid training for himself and his team. The site team are at school the earliest and in school the latest. The site team will report any issues they see. School fencing is adequate. The premises are secure. Automatic closing gates to be introduced. Issues that arise are rectified and logged. For example a child had managed to squeeze through a gate to retrieve a water bottle. Issue dealt with and recorded. Parents informed.
* CCTV on site.
* IT security maintained. School are looking into how to modernise the server.
* Identity of visitors checked at reception. Those who are not DBS checked are given a red badge and will always be accompanied. Those with DBS checks are given green badges.
* All staff receive level 2 safeguarding training. This training is updated every September. Mid-year joiners have to complete level 2 webinar. There are also refresher safeguarding sessions. All staff familiar with KCSIE. All level 3 DSLs receive refresher training every two years through Essex. Training records are kept. Staff are required to prove they understand the level 2 training. TES has developed a safeguarding training package that gives access to a variety of cases and a quiz on KCSIE which staff must complete. In the event there is something new or an incident happens then DJB would run a session. Essex provide a level 2 update (97 slides) which are sent to staff. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and always on the agenda. DJB and his team also take part in the termly Essex safeguarding forums.
* Staff report concerns through CPOMS. If urgent they should find a DSL. Staff encouraged to look for and be aware of changes in a student’s behaviour.
* Brook Traffic Lights - JL and NB have undertaken the HSB training: how this is categorised, there is an assessment tool so you can assess an individual’s risk.
* DJB is the lead DSL. It is part of his job description. The role has appropriate status and authority within the school and DJB sits on SLT. He is allowed additional time to carry out his role. There is funding and resources.
* The safeguarding policy is reviewed in summer each year. The updated policy taking into account any changes made as a result of the latest version of KCSIE is available and ready for September inset. JS and JB would approve the policy subject to ratification by all governors so it can be in place without delay. It is brought to governors at September FGB. Staff receive the CP policy and an executive summary. The SET procedures are mapped into our policy.

**Discussion with Gateway students** * Governors met with some students who used Gateway. All were year 11s and part of JL’s Gateway form group.
* All students spoke positively about the support provided by JL. JL has provided them with support in making college applications.
* They also use Gateway at break and lunchtimes
* They have received the benefit of 1 to 1 tuition in Maths and English. They would prefer more notice as to when they receive these sessions
* The students would like more clarity about revision sessions
* The students were positive about the support provided. Although the pastoral managers did not always get back to them as quickly as they would have liked, they acknowledged they were very busy.

**Visit to Practical and Outdoor Learning Centre*** Governors met with MB who oversees the centre. Small numbers of students are able to access practical learning opportunities. There were four students at the centre undertaking carpentry.
* Other students can attend the centre to undertake ASDAN courses for example in Finance. There are capacity issues but those students who do attend benefit from the offer. It has been shown to have a positive impact on behaviour and engagement.

.**Discussion with DJ Barron and Governor Feedback*** DJB explained his plans for The Positive Impact Centre which will be the hub for inclusion and intervention. Governors visited the proposed site of the Centre.
* The Positive Impact Centre will include Gateway, Vocational and SEND provision. This is a central hub in the middle of the school. Some students are not secondary classroom ready. A number have complex needs. This will draw students into the same space. Some students are struggling to function in school. Their behaviour/wellbeing deteriorates. We need to look at what we can offer beyond the normal curriculum. JL and MB currently work in isolation so this will bring practitioners together. If a student is in crisis it will provide a safe place for them to go to. Access will be based on need. The centre will help those students reintegrate if they have been off school for a while. This will be a monitored central space. C8 or Gateway may not suitable so the student can access the centre. The current space outside student services is not ideal as it lacks privacy.
* Will look at developing sensory in the centre for students with those specific needs.
* Plans to use the fitness suite for physical health which links to mental health as the school has the resource.
* DJB planning on looking at more counselling and workshops such as self-esteem. Emily the school Drama therapist does some excellent work. The Brentwood Christian Workers Trust provide some counselling.
* The school currently uses Tute an online tutoring service. Students will be able to access online lessons from the centre.
* External Services due to increasing pressures just aren’t available in the same way. Referrals take up a huge amount of time and work.
* There are a number of external interventions such as Kids Inspire, Building Lives (gang ideation), sports therapy. This is all logged on CPOMS as extensive support. Only DJB can edit and there is an edit trail. All things are in one place. Staff can record concerns. DSLs have access but cannot edit.
* Governors thanked DJB and the staff and students for taking the time to talk to governors. The visit had been informative and provided governors with detailed information about the school’s approach to inclusion.
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| **Questions for reflection** |
| * What are the views on provision from parents whose children have accessed Gateway, the practical outdoor learning centre centre and the other interventions to promote inclusion.
* Linked to the school’s priorities and SIP, what would be a suitable focus for the governors next visit in Summer 2023?
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| **Actions, by whom and by when** |
| **By June/July 23** an update to be provided to governors on progress made in the establishment of The Positive Impact Centre**By June/July 23** if possible data to be provided on the impact on areas such as behaviour, attendance and progress of those students who have accessed Gateway, the practical and outdoor learning centre and other interventions**By June/July 23** an update on progress regarding updates to school server and automatic closing gates and use of fitness suite to promote mental health. |