

Respect Collaboration of Schools.

Review of Progress against 2023-24 objectives

Governors knew that this year would hold significantly different challenges and thus we changed the focus of our objectives.

That our curriculum and teaching is appropriate, high quality allowing pupils in KS2- 5 to make appropriate academic, social and emotional progress.

The executive of Respect and Subject Leads have spent much time this year ensuring our curriculum offer is appropriate and of high quality. We aim to ensure that the curriculum is personalised and engaging so that all can pupils can progress and achieve high quality outcomes, staff believe it is, and this view has been verified by external bodies including Ofsted.

Staff are supported by a bespoke training programme and Governors have been reassured that where staff are teaching outside of their immediate subject specialism ongoing support and training is provided.

Our fluctuating pupil numbers has made many aspects of school life challenging. As our numbers grow, we need to recruit staff and despite a national teacher shortage we have usually been able to fill vacancies.

Governors have noted that where there has been a slippage against outcome targets this has coincided with recruitment issues. This awareness gives impetus to mitigating any such anomalies.

Great store is placed on 'growing our own staff'. These are staff who buy into our vision and are especially skilled and committed to working in our context. Thus, when the quality of teaching and learning is judged by school leadership or external bodies it is found to be of a high calibre and pupils are engaged with their learning. Both pupil and parental questionnaires are testament to this.

As part of our curriculum reviews, we have tried to ensure we provide breadth by improving the range of creative activities we offer during lesson time, lunch time, after school and through visits. Our pupils seem to enjoy these opportunities and we feel time spent in this area supports social and emotional development is crucial to enrichment and success.

The schools are rightly proud of the importance placed on PSHCE. It is seen as vital to achieving our vision and supporting pupils' wellbeing. Governors have been pleased to note the increase in our extra-curricular offer and the residential experiences available to pupils.

That new protocols and procedures support individual improvements in attendance and appropriate effective management of behaviours.

Major policy changes to such areas as Behaviour Management has proved to be effective for all stakeholders. This, coupled with bespoke training for our staff has increased staff confidence in supporting good behaviour. Extreme behaviours such as acts of aggression have increased, and not surprisingly data reveals that this peaks during a pupil 'settling- in' period in our schools. Admissions are up and this has especially been the case at Bridge Street School (PRU) who have seen 3-4 new pupils a week admitted.

New approaches to managing attendance have proved beneficial, in what is a very challenging area of school life (this is one reason why the provision of taxis is so important) Having said this, 76 - 85% of pupils have improved their attendance by at least 30% from their previous school. Staff attendance continues to exceed national teacher attendance ranging from 91-94%

To continue to ensure financial health and sustainability.

Having very successfully overcome the financial challenges of 2022/23 securing a realistic forward-looking SLA with the LA and re-structuring our schools accordingly, we justifiably felt some degree of confidence for 2024 onwards - Well laid plans!! The reality has been that securing a way forward for our schools in the present national financial circumstances has been very challenging.

Our discussions with other schools around forming a MAT, supporting schools through a hub and spoke/ERF model gave us some confidence that the service we could provide for pupils is much in demand and would support income moving forward. Another factor was LA changes to SEMH provision in the city which we predict will present schools with reduced avenues of support and 'encourage' schools to look to exclude pupils. Already Bridge Street School (PRU) grows on average by 3-4 pupils a week and Kingsmead School (Special) is over subscribed.

The final periods of this financial year and the budget setting process will be challenging for governors as the LA determines its working relationship with RESPECT. Despite every effort total confidence that this objective has been met is not entirely in our hands. Moving forward, especially if that is in the Academy /MAT world, the sources of income and commissioning of our services will in all likelihood change.

To further consolidate the Alternative Provision and other transformation projects.

Transformational changes we have seen this year include :

- The creation of three distinct schools each with their own DfE number.
- A model of empowering school leaders' whilst rigorously holding to account.
- Changes to our governance to a model of reporting, more aligned to an academy model.
- The introduction of a SEMH leader to work in our schools and the wider city. Enormous potential, considerable challenges.

- Developing AP provision, Darley Barn for example was predicted to generate £100,000 of income our developments have secured £300,000
- Darley Barn facilities have provided opportunity for water sports, mountain biking, residential experiences, and Forest School to name but a few.
- The demand from city schools for both AP and shared placements has seen a steep increase with potential for further development.
- Improved MIS have supported a refined ability to interrogate data and lead to timely versatile interventions. However further developments are planned for next year.
- LA changes have resulted in the pupils who are being referred to Castle School (Hospital and Medical) do not automatically fit the stated admission criteria .This could result in a funding challenge further down the line – one to watch!
- The nurture provision and SEND Gateway continue to develop and reap benefits for our school and in the case of the latter for the wider city.

To pursue academisation for Respect Schools.

Governors have taken the decision to pursue the formation of a MAT. This follows conversations between Respect Leadership and both the DfE and LA. Initial plans have gained DfE support, and a link DfE support advisor appointed to guide us through the next stages. The LA are very supportive of this move and feel it is the right step to take. We have taken time to consider what we do well and what is needed in our context to provide an excellent provision for our pupils and staff.

To facilitate this, work the temporary Respect structure has gained much traction and considerable headway made in creating three schools with a small executive and admin central team.

Much interest has been shown for this venture with several schools keen to find out more should we be able to form a MAT or to work with us under a Spoke / ERF model. We have sought guidance on managing growth in our field of expertise.

Tentative steps have been made to consider governance structures and seek both legal advice and that of other MAT leaders
This has been an incredibly challenging year, which has solidified in our minds that academisation in one guise or another is essential to our future success.

To provide a better working environment at Kingsmead School and complete building projects at Castle and Bridge Street School

This year we were faced with the challenge of providing **any** sort of working environment let alone a better one, when we had to close the Wisgreaves site for three months following water damage.

January 2024 saw this site re open following a very challenging time for everyone. We sincerely thank parents and carers who were so supportive, staff who reverted to Covid Mode and coped somehow, and our fantastic sites team who worked with the builders to restore service as usual as soon as possible. Thank you.

Wisgreaves is one half of the Kingsmead School site (Special School) the other half of this provision is Southgate. The working environment here is still a cause for concern and is not supportive of the needs of our pupils. Improving this remains a priority.

Midst this closure we also had a building programme at the Bridge Street site to change the upstairs admin area into much needed teaching spaces. It will also allow us to better manage space during examination periods to minimise disruption for our pupils.

The drawing up of plans to extend the old Newton's Walk building (the new Castle School) funded by the LA , will allow a much-needed extension to Castle School to happen. At the time of writing we are unsure if this will get the go ahead from the LA.

The LA withdrew funding for taxis for our pupils. This is an essential in our context and thus we leased cars to provide our own service. This not only ensures our pupils get to school safely, but also provides transport to the extra-curricular activities which enrich the offer we make to pupils.

Our Priorities for 2023/24

- That our curriculum and teaching is appropriate, high quality allowing pupils in KS2- 5 to make appropriate academic, social and emotional progress.
- That new protocols and procedures support individual improvements in attendance and appropriate effective management of behaviours.
- To continue to ensure financial health and sustainability.
- To further consolidate the Alternative Provision transformation project.
- To pursue academisation for Respect Schools.
- To provide a better working environment at Kingsmead School and complete building projects at Castle and Bridge Street School.

Our priorities for 2024/25 remain the same as 2023/24