



Accountability Review & Challenge Group (ARC)

Liskeard Hillfort Primary School

Minutes of ARC Meeting – 8th November 2016

Date & Time	Tuesday 8th November 2016 at 2.00am		
Venue	Colchester Academy, Hawthorne Avenue, Colchester, CO4 3JL		
Participants Role			
Richard Bassett	RB	Independent Chair	
Mary McKeeman	MM	Director of School Improvement – Bright Tribe Trust	
Heidi Hoskin	HH	Executive Principal	*
Tim Cook	TC	Principal – Liskeard Hillfort	*
Simon Evans	SE	Bright Tribe Trust	
Nigel Shaddick	NS	Bright Tribe Trust	
Jack Minto	JM	Clerk to the ARC Group	

*** participated via conference call**

1 Welcome Introduction & apologies

Richard Bassett (RB) (Independent Chair) welcomed those present. There were no apologies.

RB summarised the Terms of Reference of the Accountability, Review & Challenge (ARC) Group, and how its primary functions are to monitor the performance of each academy and to provide both practical support and rigorous challenge to each academy's leadership team so as to achieve rapid school improvement.

RB outlined that the relevant discussion documents (i.e. in respect of each school) for the ARC meetings are (i) the Principal's Report in respect of the Rapid Improvement Group (RIG), (ii) the school's Self-evaluation Form (SEF) and (iii) the school's Academy Improvements Priorities (AIP) plan and (iv) such other supporting documents as may become relevant from meeting to meeting.

RB noted that (i) the ARC group reports to the Adventure Learning Academy Trust Board and (ii) Liskeard Hillfort Primary School is part of ARC Group Region 1 and (iii) this is the initial ARC meeting and that (so as to achieve optimal effectiveness) the format/content of the meetings can be expected to evolve over time.

RB emphasised that subsequent ARC meetings would prioritise reviewing achievement/progress in respect of “agreed action items” from meeting to meeting.

2 Safeguarding.

MM asked for an update on safeguarding (specifically as to (i) date of the most recent safeguarding audit and (ii) is safeguarding considered to be effective?). TC responded that (i) a safeguarding audit has been conducted and is complete (ii) safeguarding policy is perceived as being outdated and **Action Item.** NS to arrange for updated/current safeguarding policy document to be sent to Liskeard immediately.

RB sought an update on Liskeard’s SCR. NS noted that such was up to date as of the end of last term.

Action Item. TC to ensure that Liskeard’s SCR is updated and current - such to be reviewed at the next (January 2017) ARC meeting.

3 Review of 2016 Data

RB asked for an appraisal of 2016 data. After a general discussion TC noted (i) KS2 statistics *show profound in-year improvement and sit in line with national average* and (ii) KS1 statistics are now considered to be satisfactory (and are above the national average) and (iii) statistics for “disadvantaged” pupils are available and could be provided for review outside of today’s meeting..

Action Item. TC to provide statistics for “disadvantaged” pupil. TC to ensure that all statistics are updated and current – to enable such to be reviewed at the next (January 2017) ARC meeting.

RB asked what areas were of particular concern. TC noted that SEND was still an area of weakness.

Action Item. TC to particularly address SEND statistics in his submissions to the next (January 2017) ARC meeting - to enable such (and the steps being taken to improve these) to be reviewed then.

SE led a discussion about Pupil Premium outcomes and in particular (i) what were the barriers to improving these and (ii) what are the interventions being put in place to achieve improvements. TC gave a general summary of the various interventions (social/academic) being undertaken.

Action Item. TC to submit a report to MM on the interventions currently being undertaken to improve Pupil Premium outcomes – such to be the basis of a fuller review of this topic at the next (January 2017) ARC meeting.

RB sought an update as to progress on producing targets (particularly in respect of year 6) for the current year. TC noted that these were available and had been provided.

Action Item. Targets to be reviewed at the next (January 2017) ARC meeting.

4 Attendance

NS asked for a discussion about pupil attendance statistics (both generally and in respect of pupil premium children). TC noted that (i) pupil attendance statistics were satisfactory (and generally better than national averages) and (ii) pupil premium attendance is currently 96,4%. TC also noted that “holiday requests” were increasing – and recent training received from Bright Tribe on managing this had been valuable.

Action Item. TC to provide updated statistics on attendance for the next (January 2017) ARC meeting. Such to be monitored and changes from last year to be reviewed then.

5 Staffing

RB called for an update about staffing. TC noted (i) that (whilst teaching standards had been regarded as poor in last year) the appointment of new teachers had improved standards overall (88% of teachers were now regarded as “good”) and (ii) Liskeard Hillfort Primary School now had a staff FTE of 18 (with one additional to come in January 2107).

RB asked if a formal support plan was in place for any teacher – TC noted that one (year 4) teacher was in that category.

After a discussion about teaching standards at Liskeard, RB noted that school leaders should ensure that continuous progress is being made in this area.

After a general discussion about teaching standards in all schools where HH was the Executive Principal, noted that a programme to spread/share “good practice” in this topic across all those schools would be valuable.

Action Item. HH to develop a programme (across all the schools where she was Executive Principal) to spread/share “good practice” in improving teaching standards. Such to be reviewed at the next (January 2017) ARC meeting.

6 Behaviour

RB asked for a review of behaviour. TC noted that performance in this area was much improved. There had been 32 fixed term exclusion days two years ago (2014-2015) and 6 fixed term exclusion days in last year (2015-2016) and that there had been only one fixed term exclusion day in the year to date. Liskeard is now a “calm and courteous” school.

7 Finance

RB called for an explanation of Liskeard’s financial situation. TC noted that the school would end the year “in budget”. TC however raised the significant concerns around the EHC unit level funding and noted that Liskeard was looking into EHC Plan funding and was seeking a response from ALAT.

Action Item. MM to explore how the trust could support Liskeard on EHC funding.

TC noted that the Liskeard budget for IT was an area of concern and that a review of such by ALAT was required..

Action Item. MM to arrange for a review of the Liskeard IT budget by ALAT.

8 Any Other Business

RB asked who had been the author of the Liskeard SEF. TC noted that it had been he. RB requested a more concise version be produced for future ARC meetings.

Action Item. RB to provide Liskeard with an example of a “model” SEF.

MM sought an update as to how Liskeard were progressing on establishing their Drive Team structure. TC noted that the process was still on-going and expected to have 5 or 6 members in place by January 2017. TC also noted that the school’s PTA was active and successful and highlighted the wide range of activities and engagement from parents

TC noted (i) that various premises-related matters (particularly those having health and safety implications) needed attention and (ii) that the various ALAT/BTT policies on this topic needed to be enhanced. TC also proposed that either the Trust employed an H+S lead or that in school training by a suitable colleague was provided. Rather than policies per se it is the expertise that allows the school to conduct appropriate H+S assessment that is needed. There is a measure of urgency to this.

Action Item. MM to provide Liskeard with updated ALAT/BTT policies on health and safety matters.

TC noted that Liskeard Hillfort Primary School would welcome a “more visible presence” by senior trust management personnel.

Action Item. MM to alert senior ALAT colleagues that schools would value them having a “more visible presence”.

RB thanked all participants for their contributions. Meeting ended at 3.30pm