

# Cedars Academy

## HEAD TEACHER REPORT: Spring 2019

For presentation at Full Governing Body Meeting: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019

### Website Edition

## 1 Pupils

### 1.1 School Population

In February 2019 out of the **182** pupils on roll, 77 in KS1&2, 84 in KS3&4, and 21 in KS5; approx. 25% of school population are girls.

Currently we have:

- seven classes in KS1&2, average class sizes of 11 children
- eight classes in KS3&4, average class sizes of 11 children
- three groups in Post 16, average group size 7 students

Our current projection gives very similar numbers to this year; an ongoing discussion with Commissioning regarding reception age children currently predicts a group of 8/9 reception age children for September 2019. A meeting is arranged, 25.03.19 to meet with representatives from the LA, Gibside School and EP Service to discuss a potential Reception Class for Sept 2019. Further staffing implications will be considered at FGB and F&S.

### 1.2 Student Profile

- Number of students with English as additional language is 11
- Number of Pupils eligible for free school meals is 63
- Number of students who are transported to school is 107; with parents is 41, and independent 16

**School population by banding/barrier to learning:** Primary Need (Banding)

After banding restructure 2018-2019:

- 37% ASD (7%A2; 23%A3; 7%A4)
- 46% Cognition & Learning (2%D1; 5%D2; 26%D3; 13%D4)
- 17% Social, Emotional and Mental Health (8%B2; 9%B3)

### 1.3 Attendance

When considering the attendance within the school it is important to remember that a considerable number of our students have significant anxiety and/or mental health issues and/or healthcare needs and, for some, this has a marked impact on their attendance throughout the year. We have developed the role of our Community Welfare Officer to include strategies to improve attendance for targeted pupils. Attendance figures since the previous report:

- Whole School average: 90.26%

### 1.4 Safeguarding and Child Protection: Key figures:

- Referral to children's social care 9
- Looked after Children: 7
- Special Guardianship: 2
- Child Protection: 7
- CIN/Respite: 17
- Complex child in need 3
- TAF/ early help 10
- CYPS/CAMHS: 28
- Kalmer Counselling: 14
- CIN Assessment: 3
- Family Liaison: 26 Families, 30 students
- EHCP: 179
- Educational Psychologist: referral, assessment, intervention: 3

- Access to Learning Intensive support KS1/2: 5. KS3/4: 9
- TAF: Lead Practitioner 3
- Referral & Assessment: 9
- Occupational Therapy Referral: 1
- CAF (common Assessment Framework): 4
- Police referral/intervention: 1 + Acting as Appropriate Adult: 1
- CETR reviews 1 attended
- FCHAMS: 1
- Family Group conference: 2
- Professional Meeting: 1 (complex medical/holistic approach, clarification of roles/responsibilities)

### 1.5 Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing Training Spring 2019

- Whole School Safeguarding Refresher
- Whole School training: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing: a whole school approach
- Designated Person training: 2
- Administering Medication: 3
- Working with Disguised Compliance: 1
- Working with Hostile and Uncooperative Families: 1
- Tube administered medication (awareness): 4

### 1.5 Wellbeing & Safeguarding Initiatives/successes

- 1 referral to Trinity Youth (TRANS)
- TRANS referral/ workshops for 3 students
- Intensive support from Educational Psychologist for 1 student
- Greggs Breakfast Club
- Emotional Wellbeing Award
- Anti-Bullying Award

### 1.6 Community Voice

#### Primary Student Council

- Last term we looked at improving break and lunchtimes. This term we are focusing on recycling.

#### Senior Student Council

- Recently we have worked with Roseann to develop 'Good Morning Cedars' in conjunction with Greggs, we have also looked at improving the school environment, and continue to work on this and improving the lunchtime experience.
- We have formed a 'wellbeing group' who spoke to the Wellbeing Award in Schools assessor and have discussed what we do well and further changes that need to be made within school to promote emotional wellbeing.
- Within school we have rolled out recycling boxes and discussed how to keep the school tidy.
- Student Council continue to be instrumental in organising events such as Children in Need, Red Nose Day, the Travel the Tyne fundraising events, the Halloween Disco and working with Cedars Parents to organise a termly events.

#### College Council

- This term the sixth form College Council are organising our Easter Fair at Walker Terrace on 5<sup>th</sup> April
- KS4/KS5 Leavers Party at Ravensworth Golf Club on 12<sup>th</sup> July
- Looking at ways of making the College day more enjoyable for current and future students
- Evaluating our current reward system, it's success and looking at ways to improve/engage student behaviour within college.
- We have a Lunchtime Wellbeing group who have access to the Xbox on a student rota system.
- In the future we hope to start a Social, Emotional & Mental Health Group.

#### Cedars Parent Council Update

This year Parent Council have been looking at how they can make meetings more accessible and increase levels of engagement. They will be opening up a drop in session every Friday afternoon 1.30-2.15pm in the Lodge. They are looking at making meetings less formal and have changed the name 'Parent Council' to 'Cedars Parents'. Cedars Parents are organising a Kayak tour to help raise funds for the sports hall. They are also interested in working with school at looking at positive mental health and potential parenting programmes to support both their children and their own mental health.

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## 2 Staffing

### 2.1 Staff numbers

Number of staff at highest ever figure; the allocation of budget increased to reflect the increased demand for staff support in classrooms and via AtL. The percentage of total budget allocated to staffing at highest level ever. We have a zero budget allocation for cover of staff:

Key figures:

- Teachers: 22FTE (41% Budget)
- TAs: 39FTE (36% Budget)
- Admin/Catering: 4 Office Staff/Admin staff) plus 4 Kitchen/lunchtime staff (4% Budget).
- Contracts: 22 staff are on a fixed term contract which will end on the in 2019

## 3 School Improvement

### 3.1 Quality of Education

Our Self-evaluation identifies the next key steps to establishing Highly Effective outcomes:

- Develop our curriculum to align with the new framework, to develop Education with Character
- To develop our staff skills in the core subjects of Literacy, Language, communication and Numeracy
- Improve Preparation for Adulthood Provision in Key Stages 3,4&5
- Establish a Research Engaged Learning Community to enhance the Professional Development of all staff
- Develop robust and accurate systems for setting and tracking targets that are communicated clearly to staff, students and families
- Refine quality assurance of monitoring systems

### 3.2 Personal & Social Development, Behaviour and Welfare

Our Self-evaluation identifies the next key steps to maintaining Highly Effective Personal Development, Behaviour & welfare:

- Develop our approach to Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Develop our strategies to meet resilience and well-being needs
- Strengthen parent engagement, our understanding of, and response to, family needs

### 3.3 Post 16 programmes

Our Self-evaluation identifies the next key steps to establishing Highly Effective practice Post 16 study programmes:

- Develop our programmes to further personalise and respond to changing demand and need
- Develop our programmes to further embed enterprise awareness & skills

### 3.4 Leadership & Management

Our Self-evaluation identifies the next key steps to achieving Highly Effective leadership & Management:

- Sharpening senior leaders' and governors' challenge, so that they scrutinise achievement across the full curriculum in the same detail used for English and mathematics
- Continue to develop middle leaders' roles to drive whole school improvement, share best practice and show the impact of their leadership
- Refine our financial processes, business structure and model

### 3.5 School Improvement Teams (SITs)

The SIT leadership roles have recently been redefined and aligned to the new Ofsted Inspection Framework. SITs are directly linked to the revised SIP and Gov2Go roles. The SIT team leads (TLRs) are leading the development of SIT Action Plans and SIT R&D projects to inform school improvement. SIT leads will be arranging monitoring procedures to further involve their link governors.

Revised SIT Gov links:

- Communication & Creativity (Paul Bentley): Sarah Guy & Naomi Kelly
- Understanding the World (Keith Vincent): Gordon Neale & Gill Morton

- Personal & Social Development (Amanda Pickering): Maria Hall
- Community Voice (Naomi Parkin): P Hills

### 3.6 Cedars Curriculum Review 2019 – a rationale for change and our focus

In responding to changes to Ofsted Inspection Framework we have begun a process of curriculum review, for implementation in September 2019. The focus of our Staff Training day for June 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the implementation and impact of our new curriculum.

Research shows that there are a number of approaches to curriculum design. The national curriculum provides us with an important benchmark, but beyond it the content and structure of knowledge and how this is delivered is something for our school leaders to decide on. It should depend on a number of factors relevant to our school's context and the knowledge and expertise of our staff. We understand that a successful curriculum includes how well the curriculum is implemented through well-taught and appropriately **sequenced content**, thoughtfully designed **assessment practice** and consideration of an **appropriate model of progression**.

Without doubt, we need to have a strong relationship with **knowledge**, particularly around what we want our pupils to know and know how to do. However, we recognise and understand that this does not mean that the curriculum should be formed from isolated chunks of knowledge, identified as necessary for passing a test. A **rich web of knowledge** is what provides the capacity for our pupils to learn even more and develop their understanding further.

This does not preclude the **importance of skill**. Knowledge and skill are intrinsically linked: skill is a performance built on what a person knows. That performance might be physical or cognitive, but skills matter and they cannot be separated from knowledge. They are, if you like, the 'know-how' in applying the 'known'. Knowledge and the capacity it provides to apply skills and deepen understanding are, therefore, essential ingredients of successful curriculum design.

Enabling the acquisition of knowledge and skills requires a whole-school approach for creating a positive, safe and supportive school climate in which students can learn and develop. Our **Behaviour for Learning** approach involves the school community working together, where students are empowered to participate in decision-making. We have developed a continuum of support; importantly, students have access to more support when they need it. The continuum emphasises a therapeutic approach, with consideration to anticipation & preparation, attachment awareness, an emphasis on mindfulness and wellbeing, the use of reflective language; the focus is on early intervention through to targeted and intensive interventions.

As part of our curriculum review we are considering how we **implement** the curriculum to reflect the **intent** behind it that leads to the **impact** it has on each child. Our curriculum is skill and context based and encourages active engagement in learning; it is based on effective behaviour for learning, with embedded cross-curricular and contextual themes. The curriculum focuses on developing the key themes of **communication, cognition, personal and social development and physical development**; it develops transferrable skills that equip children and young people for life beyond the school. It is child-centred and led.

### 3.7 Repairs & Maintenance

- The planning application for the proposed infill and creation of a breakout/therapy space opposite Mrs Ali's room was submitted on the 10<sup>th</sup> January.
- The garage roof has now been renewed. We are now pursuing permitted development application to create a general teaching room. Further discussion is required before any further work is continued.

#### Planned Work

- The noticeboards down the main corridor are to be removed, the walls are to be filled and painted ready for Mr Finn and his team to improve this area.
- New blinds to the main hall have been ordered and will be fitted soon.
- Dining tables for the primary pupils have been sourced and an order has been placed.
- Chairs for the dining hall are currently being sourced.
- Sourcing a double decker bus to be used as a library.

### 3.8 Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS) – outcome of verification visit November 2018

We were delighted to receive the Wellbeing Award for Schools in November. The award is recognition of how well we respond to the impact of emotional health and wellbeing on the behaviour and learning of our students.

We believe that we have a clear vision and strategy for promoting and protecting emotional wellbeing and mental health, and that we promote a positive culture which regulates emotional wellbeing and sees mental health as the responsibility of all. We prioritise

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professional learning and staff development on emotional wellbeing and mental health issues, and are developing our understanding the different types of emotional and mental health needs across the school and creating systems in to respond appropriately. We actively seek the ongoing participation of the whole-school community in our approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health and work in partnership with other schools, agencies and available specialist services to support emotional wellbeing and mental health.

We intend for the Award to help accurately inform and influence future planning in terms of management structure, curriculum and effective intervention; we aim to benefit from this process in identifying areas of strength, areas in need of development and effective ways in which to evaluate, interpret and improve our practice in the future.

It is pleasing to highlight some of the key findings from the verification visit:

- *The School's well-used strapline/motto 'Fit for Life' is fully understood by the whole school community as referring to emotional and mental fitness as well as to physical fitness.*
- *Relationships between staff, pupils, parents and governors are clearly based on mutual respect and care.*
- *The School Council and the Parent Council are both well-respected and well-led bodies which have genuine influence and authority.*
- *The School clearly has a very good understanding of the nature of emotional wellbeing and mental health, its role in the promotion or denial of learning and its pivotal importance in the development of the particular young people who attend the School.*
- *The School has given particular care and attention to some of its critical, if often unseen or unacknowledged processes e.g. the nature of the wellbeing question in the staff appraisal seems both natural and appropriate; and the School's own staff questionnaire is an excellent example of its type, giving valuable data and insight.*
- *Parents were very thankful that they had obtained places for their children at the School - where they are regarded and treated as individuals with their own individual needs. The School was frequently described as being 'child-centred', sometimes in contrast to the mainstream schools they previously attended.*

## 4 Enrichment Activity Programme

As ever, the extensive range of opportunities offered, particularly during out of school hours, demonstrate the massive commitment and dedication of our tremendous staff.

Whilst we do extremely well to have staff willing to provide their time beyond normal school hours, we still have to supplement the additional costs resulting from so many activities. This can be a significant draw on Pupil Premium money in particular. As a result staff are being asked to consider ways to reduce costs wherever possible (i.e. changing venues/accommodation/activities).

### Enrichment Programmes and Residential Experiences Spring/Summer 2019

- KS3 Outdoor Activity Day: 21<sup>st</sup> January & 4<sup>th</sup> February @ Newburn Leisure Centre
- KS2 Outdoor Activity Day: 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> January @ Newburn Leisure Centre
- Ski Residential: 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019. One week skiing residential in Frabosa Soprana, Italy. Participants: 20 students, 7 staff
- KS4&5 France Residential: 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Chateau du Baffy, Normandy & Paris. Participants: 15 students and 5 staff
- Swim The Tyne: 25<sup>th</sup> March. Students/parents Fundraising Event
- Dance Festival: 3<sup>rd</sup> April, The Sage, Gateshead
- Easter Fair: 5<sup>th</sup> April. Be inspired to... at Walker Terrace
- Meander Sailing: 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> April 2019. 10 students and 2 staff will live on the tall ship, working the sails, cleaning, steering the vessel and working as part of a team whilst sailing in the North Sea
- Impact Week: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May - Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May. All classes are invited to create films, devise songs, rehearse performances and enter our creative writing competitions
- KS2 Kingswood: 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> June 2018. 2 nights and 3 days completing outdoor and adventurous activities
- KS3 OAA in Wooler: 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019. 2 groups: 1 group staying in Walker Walls Hostel, 1 group are camping in Walker Walls grounds. Participants complete outdoor and adventurous activities.
- Practice Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition: 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June 2019: 1 group walking & 1 group cycling. Participants: 14 students, 4 staff
- Summer Fair: Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June
- Qualifying Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition: 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Description: 2 Bronze groups out together- 1 night, 2 day expedition. 1 group walking & 1 group cycling. Participants: 14 students, 4 staff

*Fit For Life*

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- Leavers Party: 12<sup>th</sup> July at Ravensworth Golf Club.
  - Greatest Showman: 17<sup>th</sup> July at Cardinal Hume School. Cedars Production
  - EFDS National Disability Athletics Championships 2017: date tbc. National Championships following completion of Regional competition, meeting qualification standards

M.f.

MF March 2019