



CEO Report

The Gryphon Multi-Academy Trust

Alan O'Sullivan | 31st March 2020

Gryphon Trust

As you are aware COVID-19 is very much in the minds of everyone. From Monday 23rd March due to the staffing situation year 9 students will be asked to stay at home. Arnewood intend to run a virtual school using Firefly for as long as practical. We are following the advice from the DfE and Public Health England on all matters COVID-19 and the headteachers will have full discretion in accessing the situation as matters arise.

Please accept my apologies for not being able to present you with this report personally and to answer questions but I hope you find the information useful and will gladly answer any questions on my return from leave.

As you can see from below both schools in the last year achieved a “Good” rating from OFSTED with minor comments on feedback. The Scola building project was completed with some minor snagging details to be seen to, including the installation of a lift, following the collapse of the contractors. Following her long service to the school as a governor and director the building was renamed “The Elizabeth Cook” building (ECB) and a plaque was unveiled outside the reception.

We also saw the completion of the Eaglewood school with its opening in time for the start of the Autumn term. This is now up and running efficiently following some adjustments and we hope to have an official opening soon.

We now have a maintenance team of three to four led by our Facilities Manager who now open and close the schools and look after both buildings.

Also, this year we have obtained the services of a Trust Finance Officer, Sian Bartlett, who has settled in well and will look at our processes and marketing strategy and make suggestions for improvement. Following her long service to the school Caroline

Johnston has relinquished her post as finance officer and will now be a payroll officer reducing her hours down to one day a week which commenced the 1st March.

From September 2020 the IT department will be part of the trust team and will be taking over the responsibility for supporting Eaglewood as well as Arnewood and hope to make some savings through common efficiencies. We also have a new trust marketing coordinator starting soon who will bring much needed expertise to help us up the profile of the schools in the trust with the aim of increasing pupil numbers and improve our marketing strategy.

Following poor year-end financial results for Arnewood showing a potential large deficit in our three-year plan and a visit by myself, Roy Wilkins and Nigel Himmel to the Regional School Commissioners at the DfE we had a visit by an SRMA (School Recourse Management Advisor) in December. Prior to his visit we had improved our outcome following redundancies, reducing hours etc by over £100k. After his visit he came to share his results with suggestions for savings and we now await the official report with recommendations from the ESFA department of the DfE.

The directors and I along with the finance officer have put together a strategic plan for the trust. The heads and chairs of governors of both schools have been consulted and their suggestions incorporated in the plan. This includes our Vision, Mission Statement, Goals and Market Plans for the trust and is presented tonight for your approval. This will also include our five-year financial plan.

We have also reviewed our HR consultation and this involved representations from four providers and the recommendation will be presented by Keith Craze to this meeting. We are also looking at possible support for GDPR and how we handle freedom of information requests.

There are two sections of the Finance Manual which require updating the first of which is in the purchasing section due to Nigel Pressnell delegating signing off of invoices to the trust finance officer. Secondly in payroll due to us now having a payroll officer instead of a trust finance officer taking that responsibility.

We hope that within the next month that we will hear whether we have been successful in our CIF bid for the recladding of the ROSLA building to look like the ECB building. We are also in negotiation with Highcliffe Hawkes for the use of the field over at Eaglewood which will bring some extra income and will cover the expense of keeping that area in a manageable condition.

Arnewood

The following school improvement priorities have been identified for the academic year 2019/20. These are based on anticipated outcomes in 2019 primarily at key stage 4. They also consider the areas for improvement identified by OFSTED following its “Good” report in 2018. All are focused in the domain of teaching and learning and improving progress. Year and subject leaders were asked to ensure the objectives for their area were closely aligned to specifically meeting the three objectives below. Pastoral teams have also been charged with identifying clear strategies to improve attendance. The Priorities are;

- 1 Development of whole school literacy**
- 2 Student progress, especially SEND and disadvantaged children**
- 3 Providing precise feedback and guidance to improve progress**

The data set labelled The Arnewood School on the national performance table website includes a significant number of children in alternate provision. This is because school leaders work very closely with Eaglewood School, the other school in the Gryphon Multi Academy Trust, who are unable to accept single registered children. We view this as a strong collaboration well positioned to meet the needs of shared community.

Progress 8 for children attending just The Arnewood School has improved over the last three years to P8 -0.16. However, for all children (179) (the figure including the 10 in alternate provision), it has declined in 2019 and the gap is at its widest at P8 -0.43.

Current KS4 data, based on Autumn 2 Assessment which includes mock results, suggests P8 -0.2 and A8 45.02 including those children in alternate provision. Historically estimates at this time of year have been marginally generous. Boys are underperforming girls by approximately ½ grade per examination entry. Middle and lower attaining students are doing less well than higher ability students. This is a year group with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. Year 11 has slightly fewer higher ability students than typical. Student behaviour in Year 11 currently is mostly very good.

Arnewood continue to work hard at improving student attendance and this is given a priority by Heads of Year and tutors. The importance of attendance is understood by most students. They have a small group of stubborn non-attenders, including some genuine medical, which adversely affects children’s progress.

Strategically in 2019/20, the senior team are: -

- appointing the best teachers' possible given recent economic restraint and short supply
- supporting and re-enforcing expectation to deliver high quality lessons to all students through what we call The Arnewood Lesson
- reviewing the curriculum so that in the longer term it is more flexible in meeting the needs of each cohort

Eaglewood

The Eaglewood school continues to expand now it has the new building with about 48 pupils and is likely to increase to its admission target of 50 in the next few weeks. We have now had confirmation that we will be funded for 65 pupils from 2020/21. They have had some good press in the Echo and the A&T and everybody seems to be settling in ok. Nigel Himmel as of this month has changed the school hours, which he had presented to the governors/directors and consulted with the parents. Although students will receive the same amount of lesson time Nigel changing the day end from 3pm to 2.30pm and by cutting break times will improve student attention, improve staff management, avoid Arnewood school end, help parents and bring us in line with other AP providers.

Nigel Himmel reiterated that the three aims of the school vision was to help students be academically ready, emotionally prepared and feeling good with a key indicator of success being getting them back into mainstream and enter exams there. Following a "Good" OFSTED report in July the School Development Plan focuses on:

- 1. The Love of Reading.**
- 2. Consolidation and Transition of systems and processes.**
- 3. Data Decisions.**

All students are being encouraged to read as much as possible and staff have been tasked with making themselves, in all subjects, teachers of literacy as well as subject knowledge.

Eaglewood are currently looking in detail on how they track a student's progress through the three aspects of the vision. In order for a student to achieve going forward they must have a balance of all three. Students will never just be numbers at Eaglewood, they must be able to cope with life as well as being academically qualified for it. This data tracking process will influence all aspects of our data collection and handling, from referral forms to reintegration information.

Alan O'Sullivan

Chief Executive Officer

The Gryphon Trust