

AAS LOCAL COMMITTEE IMPACT STATEMENT 2022/23

Dear parent/carer

As members of Astrea Academy Sheffield Local Governance Committee, we are keen to take this opportunity to celebrate another year in the school's growth, development, and success. As part of the Astrea Academy Trust, the academy has a dedicated local committee which meets six times a year. You can find out more about us and our work on the school's website.

The highlight of this academic year was being rated as GOOD by Ofsted when the academy was inspected in November 2022. Ofsted found AAS to be *"a safe, calm school where scholars receive a good quality of education supported by kind teachers"* and noted our positive contribution: *"Governors and trustees provide effective support. They check for themselves that what leaders tell them is accurate. They know the importance of checking that all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged or have SEND, receive the help that they need."*

The local committee has a range of responsibilities:

To ensure that the vision, ethos, and strategic direction of the Astrea Trust is maintained within each school.

The work of the local governance committee, the academy and the Trust starts and ends with a universal belief in high standards and expectations for every child, no matter what barriers they may face. The vision is one in which all Astrea scholars will learn, thrive, and lead successful lives. Working together, Astrea schools tackle the barriers that stand in the way of young people's success, through a commitment to a brilliant education, a focus on inclusion for all, and by delivering on the promise of opportunities that inspire beyond measure. Our committee works hard to support the academy in delivering that vision.

Committee chairs receive regular updates from the Trust's CEO on developments within the Trust, which are cascaded down to committee members. The chair liaises with the co-principals and clerk to draw up agendas for meetings, responding to issues highlighted in the Astrea Trust's 2025 strategic plan, focusing on key issues such as a knowledge-rich curriculum; excellence in teaching; behaviours for learning; excellent professional practice underpinned by research; and staff and student well-being. The co-principals, Mrs Glover (or Associate Principal, David Boyd) and Rachel Flemming, along with other members of the senior leadership teams, have reported on these areas throughout the year and have been challenged by members through questioning at meetings and during academy visits.

Members of the committee have different responsibilities (for example, Safeguarding, SEND, Grants, Behaviour and Attendance, Quality of Education and Fundraising & Partnership) and link with key members of school staff so that they learn about policy and procedure as well as seeing staff and scholars in action during visits. These regular visits ensure that the committee understands all facets of academy life and can therefore support and challenge the school in making its vision a reality.

Committee members support the school in ensuring that high standards of behaviour are upheld. We work to make sure that the academy uses its sanctions appropriately by chairing and attending exclusion review panels.

In addition, online governance training from the Trust and The National College is available to committee members so that we can extend our knowledge and increase understanding around key issues such as the role of being a committee member, SEND, behaviour, curriculum, analysis of data and preparation for Ofsted. Committee members have benefitted from this training during the year.

The leadership team shares the academy's self-evaluation and improvement plans (framed by Trust and including any recommendations post-inspection) with the committee and welcomes questions on its aims, formulation and progress towards objectives. The committee plays an important part in helping ensure the delivery of a robust and considered curriculum as well as offering a constructive platform where data, processes and procedures are discussed and scrutinised.

The Chair also keeps in touch with the co-principals between meetings to ensure support is provided as well as giving an opportunity to catch up on successes, challenges, and any other issues.

To hold school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school, the inclusion of all pupils and the offer of a knowledge-rich and broadly-based curriculum.

This year has seen a return to some sort of normality following Covid although the long-term impact of the pandemic continues. Nevertheless, committee members resumed their regular visits. Using evidence from these visits alongside lesson observations and meetings with link staff and scholars, the committee challenges leaders on the provision of an accessible curriculum for all, focussing specifically on groups such as SEND or those targeted by pupil premium grants, to ensure the best possible outcomes for AAS scholars whatever their need or ability. These questions and answers are recorded in the minutes of each meeting.

Committee members get to know how the academy works on a day-to-day basis - including lining up on the MUGA, Morning Meetings, entering and exiting lessons, conduct on the corridors and arrangements at lunchtime. Members have also had the opportunity to accompany school trips, meet with the scholar council, sample delicious school dinners, and take part in activities on Culture Day.

The committee is aware of this year's highlights:

- How reading underpins all aspects of learning at AAS
- Refinement of the knowledge - rich curriculum and its delivery through bespoke booklets and skilled staff
- Appropriate alternative provision for scholars of highest need, emotionally and/or academically
- Introduction of a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular trips for scholars of all ages, ranging from tours on foot in the local community to a planned MFL excursion to Spain.
- An improving trend of attainment in Key Stage 1 SATs, phonics in Y1 and a good level of development (GLD) in EYFS.
- Development of outside spaces in Nursery and Reception.
- Successful implementation of period 6 to support Y11 in preparation for GCSE's.
- All plans in place for launching the 6th form in September 2023
- Update and review of behaviour policy (following Trust model) and introduction of rewards programme to incentivise and uphold high standards.
- Access to high level professional training with its emphasis on pedagogy and pursuit of excellence.
- Further development of essential Personal Development programme (across both phases) including an appropriate RHSE component to meet statutory requirements.
- Expansion of the well-supported community engagement programme for parents/carers and the formation of the Community Advisory Group
- Successful application for funding to continue HAF holiday programme.
- Engagement with the Go-Green agenda

To work with the school's leadership and central team to ensure that high standards of safeguarding are maintained.

As well as reading Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 and Annex A), all committee members have completed Safeguarding for School Governors along with modules on Data Protection and GDPR, Understanding Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

We were very fortunate to have Trust Assistant CEO, Mr Tomas Thurogood - Hyde serving as the link member for safeguarding this year as he brought a high level of qualification and wealth of experience to that role. He has met with DSLs from both phases, reviewed the SCR and signed off the annual audits from the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership as well as the Trust.

Safeguarding data is presented at every meeting and processes are discussed, questioned, and clarified, enabling members to build a picture of strengths and concerns. The committee is aware that safeguarding is a main priority at AAS, and significant staffing resources and focus is placed on the responsibility of keeping children safe.

To promote positive parent, community and stakeholder engagement and to drive school-to-school partnerships for improvement within the Trust.

As the academy grows and changes, so does the make – up of our committee and this year, we were joined by two representatives from Trust alongside a new staff member who represents both phases, as well as a recruit from the local community. The academy is now well established, and the committee is becoming much more reflective of the community around it. We are a group of likeminded individuals, from a range of skills and backgrounds, who have a common overriding interest in wanting to support the school in delivering the very best education and opportunities to every scholar.

We have three parent members on the committee from the immediate community who routinely report feedback from other parents at meetings, supporting improvement of all outward processes.

Committee members have been involved in a range of successful new events run by the academy this year for the benefit of families within the local community such as coffee mornings, school fairs, and a well-supported HAF programme offering a wide range of activities during holiday times.

To identify, understand and report to Trustees any strategic risks facing the school.

The committee is fully aware of the strengths AAS has in terms of its site and facilities and recognises significant work that has been done this year in terms of community engagement. The committee sees that the academy is run by committed, professional staff who enjoy rewarding relationships with colleagues and scholars. The academy has a fair behaviour policy which is consistently applied, a clear work ethic which fiercely protects every scholar's right to learn, and scholars who enjoy their learning and have high aspirations. In addition, the committee sees that a high level of care and pastoral support is provided to the academy's most vulnerable scholars and their families.

Committee members are made aware of risks for AAS either via the principals' reports in meetings, through visits to the academy, or in discussion with staff and parents. Some concerns which have emerged this year and have been passed on to the Trust are the growing numbers at the start of the primary phase and limited physical capacity in that area, the ongoing impact of the pandemic on scholars in the primary phase as well as the continuing trend of mobility. There has been a huge effort to raise attendance across both phases, but further improvement is needed to reach the academy's target. In the secondary phase, the number of suspensions remains high, but a robust plan is in place to reduce those numbers.

This year has been one of building stability and making steady progress in line with the Trust – improving what we do, day in day out. The year has also seen a series of firsts for AAS – our first inspection, our first cohort of Y11 scholars sitting their GCSE’s, the first Y11 Prom and our first Annual Awards Evening. There have been ongoing challenges because of the pandemic, bad weather and industrial action, but committee members are proud of the hard work and dedication shown by all members of the school community to ensure AAS is a “good” provider – not only in terms of the education it provides, but also the wider support shown to scholars and their families.

We would like to thank all the scholars, families, staff, and other local stakeholders for their continuing support for Astrea Academy Sheffield and look forward to continuing our work with the school next academic year.