

## Barley Lane School

*Hard work, humility, kindness*

November 2017

People,

In the spirit and context of SIP/PM that anticipated and attempted to create a framework to react to the anticipated risks and challenges:

Firstly as a community we have to accept that significant staff losses from the tragic to the trivial from the serious to the bizarre from the unavoidable to the questionable be it suspension, resignation, promotion or retirement are a part of this school's nature. We are constantly hit hard and will be again by a lack of bodies where if fully fit and all present we feel a powerful benefit.

Secondly whilst uncomfortable there are pockets of frailty in our team where expectations are not high enough of children or self, folk are not promptly transparent in acknowledging frailties (this directly linked to that failure of expectation) and this compounded inevitably by a failure to tangibly improve matters because again standards are too low and albeit subconscious there is a failure to see the urgent need for self-improvement.

Thirdly the children and young people, their families and the professionals working with them throw us many curved balls and the risks and challenges are complicated, diverse even enigmatic and sometimes very hard to manage and make and keep safe...

SIP 2017-18

The humility to recognise where practice has frailties\* and standards are slipping and behaviour and learning are at risk and the humility too to speak up and seek help to improve;

Continuously seeking to understand the children better in all their diversity and complexity, spark and challenge and being a "present" and active listener and contributor to and sometimes leader of the shifting and dynamic conversation formal and informal about best-practice;

Consistently demonstrating the graft and energy to make real both emerging and the established best practice we have learned and shared and set out over time through bloody hard work and being alive and open to new ideas and ways of working.

Teaching and support team core focus for PM 2017-18

They do and did, I would reasonably argue, accurately anticipate the current sharp realities but what to do about it has been and is the pressing formal and informal professional conversation at this time so what of practicable worth has emerged and is emerging?

With key staff down and similarly key alpha male charismatic youngsters pushing hard at boundaries plus examples of the most complex and poignant and challenging cases presenting very powerful risks

What does the school improvement response to this look like for real?

- Staffing stretched so both planned and proactive and also intelligent and flexible reactive deployment of staffing critical and scaffolded by briefing and debriefing with twilight meeting key to next day working.
- Keep relentlessly modelling the behaviours we want to encourage and embed in the children and young people most pertinently self-awareness, self-control and building those positive relationships all recurrent EHCP/Statement priorities.
- Stay optimistic and even when gloomy present as so (sorry folks I know fine advice from Mr Gloomy himself!)
- Be strong collectively and individually about naughty behaviours and seek a friendly but no less determined assertiveness in this sometimes it has to be win-lose to us and then be conciliatory and healing.
- Recognise where behaviours more nuanced and complex so must we be?
- Avoid all but essential admin', meetings and so on, anything that dilutes your energies and diverts them from the children and young people's safety, wellbeing and learning. (the former keep that conversation alive and current again briefing/debriefing key to this)
- In all this recognise current stresses are massive and potentially and probably actually corrosive so be kind to each other please.

Thank you I am not the best of leaders but have no doubt you are the best of teams and people.

*Michael*