

## SOCIAL ARTS FOR EDUCATION

AGM 25th August 2021

Held at The Yacht, Park Row, Greenwich, London SE10

**Present:** ML, AL, CL, JJ, NM, MH, LK, RM      **Apologies:** LR

### **1. Head Teacher's Report 2020/21**

It was with a mixture of emotions that students and staff returned to school in September 2020. After several months in lockdown, with the 'new normal' in full swing, there was much trepidation about returning to our small and cosy - two adjectives that once were our selling point - independent school.

On one hand, most of the students and staff had lost the will to try and teach and learn remotely. Teachers - *good* teachers - struggled with the most mundane tasks such as getting learners to participate or attempt work. Behaviour management is a lot simpler, it turns out, when a teacher is in the same room as the student. Learning remotely, however, enables a student to 'leave the class' with little room for consequence when half of the nation struggles with internet issues. On top of this, half of the nation were genuinely struggling with internet issues - including the teachers.

Most of us were looking forward to being able to do what we do best - teaching high quality, engaging and multi-sensory lessons where communication difficulties are limited to the already present barriers that our autistic learners have. We were also told that many students longed for interaction with their peers and teachers - something that we felt was evidence of progress, considering the attitudes towards school most of our students had when they first joined.

With an unprecedented amount of training and 'guidance' from the likes of the DFE, HR and HSE (to name a few) we prepared a building that was 'safe to learn in'. The trouble was, nobody actually felt safe. Nobody knew exactly how the virus was transmitted or how long it would be for another strain to develop, and conflicting advice from unions and the media did not put us at ease one bit. Our school had poor ventilation, small rooms, no space for one-way systems or 'mandatory' measures that we were instructed later on in the year to comply with when mass testing was introduced. All we knew was that we were working tirelessly to try and make it as safe as we possibly could, given our building and set of limitations.

Although the government prided itself on the £1.4bn Covid recovery package it offered to schools to support them with the extra costs the pandemic incurred, unfortunately independent schools were not eligible to receive such handouts and so the majority of the costs fell on our own emergency funds. Bexley Council gave us approximately £1k towards students with EHCPs which was gratefully received, but nonetheless nowhere in the region of the amount we spent from February 2020 and beyond, refurbishing, re-ventilating and restructuring our whole school and systems. If we had paid our staff for overtime, we would have gone bankrupt before the end of the year.

Students with significant difficulties to change struggled the most. One student, refused to go near our school after seeing a picture of a face mask drawn in a social story, and another, who had anxiety attacks on the doorstep at the thought of teachers asking her questions face-to-face after months of typing her responses in class. However, we survived the rest of the school year and second lockdown without any of our students or staff directly affected by the virus which - although it is hard to say how or if at all was due to our decision making - is one of my greatest achievements to date. All students and staff were sensible, cooperative and considerate. Parents and carers were understanding and had faith in what we were doing.

Students and their families were risk assessed on a regular basis and staff implemented immediate and appropriate support when needed. We felt connected more than ever before and the lines of communication that were formed, without a doubt, created a tangible sense of community and support for everyone through the toughest weeks.

Just as the mantra 'be kind to yourself' appeared in emails for the millionth time, we heard news that Ofsted would be likely to inspect us for our first standard inspection since registering as a school. By this time, I had already handed in my resignation - due to what I now can identify as 'occupational burnout' - and daily emails from the DFE were telling schools that there was no excuse for poor teaching. I felt as though the impending inspection could not have come at a worse time for me, personally and professionally. To say the news knocked me for six is an

understatement. I knew SAFE was an amazing place but emotionally, I felt I had nothing left to give and the weeks waiting for the phone call were dreadful.

Months beforehand, I had asked Lisa to approach me with a chocolate bar and Diet Coke, should she ever receive 'the call' - and as instructed, she did. We were told that the inspectors would arrive the following afternoon and in a strange way, I felt a sense of relief - if for nothing else, that it would all be over by the weekend! I had also been preparing myself by listening to podcasts about positive thinking - some interviewing people who had endured torturous circumstances. This brought to me the perspective I needed - although deep down, the inspection was still very much the moment in my profession that my degree, training and years of hard work had all been heading towards.

On the first day of the inspection, I felt the familiar feeling of trust and support once again, this time, however, I felt as if it were for me - at least it definitely comforted me. I looked around at the employees in the staff meeting and felt truly grateful for such a dedicated, hard-working and skilled team. The people that I was struggling to manage months before - due to my own flagging capacity - were now clearly in my eyes, energetic, prepared and ready. I felt nothing but complete and utter gratitude for every member of staff that sat before me and realised that no matter what the outcome, I (and the students) were incredibly lucky to have staff that had all invested so much into the school.

Whilst the inspector gave Ruth and I the run-down of their findings - I felt a huge relief that it was all over. The year (nearly), the inspection and my time as head teacher. The inspectors all agreed that several parts of the school were outstanding, but that the overall rating was good. 'Jolly good' as the lead inspector called it. We were over the moon with what they said (the report is still to come) as we - or at least I - felt that our hard work had finally been validated officially. I've always felt like a bit of a rooky, starting SAFE up with very little experience, doing it my way, sometimes the wrong way and *always* looking back year after year thinking 'why on earth did I do that?'. The rating gave me the confidence I wish I'd had a long time ago - having said that - I always knew SAFE was a special place and very much appreciated by many. If our parents do anything, it's tell us that all the time.

Ruth and the team have been incredible. Now I prepare for my new role as Maths teacher, I feel gratitude for a different reason. I feel that I have a safe and understanding place to work, which is really, what SAFE is all about.

## **2. Chairman's Report 2020/21**

S.A.F.E. has now seen its 9th successful year. Although its second full year as a registered school fell entirely in a period of pandemic, this was navigated carefully by staff and management to ensure impact on students was kept to a minimum. All were glad to return to some semblance of normality in March, and a lot of work has been done since then to rebuild the cohesion of the school community.

This year was the last year of Annabel's headship, and saw the long-awaited first inspection by OFSTED, which went extremely well, thanks to the hard work and dedication of staff, proprietors and management. The result of the inspection, although still confidential, is testament to the excellent work that S.A.F.E. does, and to the skills the teaching staff bring to the school. I look forward to seeing it in the public domain, and feel that it is a fantastic legacy for Annabel.

Our student cohort remains relatively stable, with only two students leaving this year - one is going to do A levels, in conjunction with some voluntary work, and the other is going to study childcare at 6th form college, following a successful period of work experience at Crafty Wizards, the nursery on the same parade as S.A.F.E. We will stay in touch with both of these young people and will offer continuing support to them. A third student was due to leave this year, but the Department for Education have permitted us to keep them on roll until they are 19, as they were shielding for most of the last year so have missed out on vital transitional work and visits.

Links with further education providers have suffered due to the pandemic, as have many aspects of education, but transitional support will still be put in place, with S.A.F.E. staff attending college with leavers during their induction period, to ensure they are settled and coping.

S.A.F.E. continues to receive support from Greenwich and Bexley. Both boroughs are very happy with the service they receive from us, and we have now had a further 3 students placed with us from Bexley (one of whom was a private pupil for whom we have obtained an EHCP) and two more from Greenwich. In addition to this, Lewisham and Bromley

have made enquiries about us, though are yet to place any students. We have several current consultation requests, and only one place left - this place is sure to go within the next few weeks. Once it has gone, we will be at capacity for the first time in our existence.

GCSEs this year were, once again awarded via teacher assessed grades, however this time the awarding body oversaw the final mark. Every piece of evidence used to arrive at grades was scrutinised by the exam board's subject experts, and the grades were kept at those assessed by staff, meaning that we can be sure that the grades we gave were an accurate and honest reflection of student ability.

S.A.F.E continues to grow, and to thrive, thanks to the team of invested, dedicated staff. As a school, it is beginning to attract attention from staff elsewhere in education, who value our ethos and want to be part of what we do. Although next year sees a change in leadership, the ethos remains the same, and I look forward to seeing what the future holds.

### **3. Treasurer/Secretary's Report 2020**

Here are the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 which have NOT been audited but are a true reflection of the income and expenditure of S.A.F.E.

Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, we were not able to hold quizzes, raffles etc. However we still receive monthly donations and Julie Raven donated £15,000 in April 2020. We did receive monies from Just Giving, Bexley Lottery and Easyfundraising.

We have been able to claim Gift Aid from donations amounting £4,219.00 (2021).

We have not been able to hire out our hall.

Total of all fees in 2020 amounted to over £372,000.

Our rent has been raised to £1900.00 per month.

As in the previous year, I have handed over the monthly accounting procedures and filing of invoices to Ruth who uses SAGE accounting. I am more than happy to continue as Treasurer to check the accounts, but we have agreed that our accountants, Abudey, will audit the accounts for 2021 if necessary. I am still responsible for sending information to the Charity Commissioners and Company House.

We have been given notice that Jenny Johnson will resign as Director. However, we do need to have 3 directors, so please let me know if you have any suggestions.

### **4. Curriculum Report (Academic Year '20/'21)**

The start to this academic year was positive, albeit complicated by the pandemic. Radical changes were made to the timetable, in an endeavour to offer a full and balanced curriculum to an increasingly wide range of ages and needs, within the very limited space available within 253 Eltham High Street. A distinct split between academic and therapeutic subjects was maintained, with more weight given to therapies overall. A new qualification (BTEC) was offered in ICT, and art students were, for the first time, not studying for GCSE, but for Arts Award. PE is no longer offered as a qualification, but continues to be a selection of different activities throughout the year, booked at and coached by external providers. It had been felt that not enough timetabled sessions had been in place for English and Maths, so a major change this year was that these two core subjects had lessons four days a week at all levels. This has helped to ensure that specifications can be taught in the time available, and that students retain knowledge better.

Staff continued to build on the excellent work they had done in the previous academic year, both in terms of teaching and in terms of the relationships they forged with students. Mick began teaching from home, remotely, which has been extremely successful, and all told, the pandemic has furnished staff with the skills to be more imaginative in the way lessons are delivered. We even have students now who are fully remote. Alison's science lessons have been a hit with the students, who thoroughly enjoy the practical -heavy nature of her sessions and feel they learn a great deal from them.

The pandemic led to teaching being remote for part of the year, and this was done to a full timetable. On return in March, it was necessary to alter the timetable to minimise the occupancy in the building, and this was done in a way that ensured that no child had their onsite lesson time reduced.

The curriculum offer at SAFE in the 20/21 academic year was as follows:

Qualifications:]

Maths offered at KS3 and KS4 levels, with the expectation being that all students would be prepared for the GCSE. Functional skills exams are available on demand for those who do not take the GCSE, though we discourage this as it can lead to issues at college later on.

- English offered at KS3 and KS4 levels, with the expectation being that all students would be prepared for the GCSE. Functional skills exams are available on demand for those who do not take the GCSE, though we discourage this for the reason given above.
- Science was offered at KS3 and KS4 - the KS4 class will take the IGCSE.
- Cooking was offered at KS3 and BTEC levels 1 and 2
- ICT was offered at KS3 and BTEC levels 1 and 2
- Art qualifications are the Bronze and Silver arts award.

Other:

- PE was offered as a non-accredited session, as the uptake for GCSE had been so low, and the requirements of the syllabus are exceptionally hard to meet with such a small cohort.
- Sensory Integration continued to be offered as a small group session.
- PSHE continued to be offered, with the mandatory SRE content fully covered.
- A range of therapeutic sessions was incorporated into the timetable. Students could access a social skills class, an emotional regulation class, travel training and group OT.

Annabel took over the maths class part way through the year, and continued to steer the GCSE students towards their excellent and well-deserved grades.

All in all, after some fine tuning, the timetable for the year '20/'21 worked well, and continuity in staff and specifications helped our students to recover following the worst of the pandemic restrictions. Aside from the need for inventive timetabling, the pandemic was the biggest challenge to our curriculum this year, and given that we still managed to offer our students a considerable amount despite these difficulties, we have every confidence that we can continue to grow and develop the provision we offer, and widen our curriculum in the future.

## **5. Staffing Report (Academic Year '20/'21)**

There has been some movement in staffing within SAFE over the last academic year. We have had three members of staff leave - one of whom has gone elsewhere to do teacher training, one of whom will be remaining part of S.A.F.E.'s proprietorial body, and one of whom is going to university. We have also had new staff join us, including a science teacher and a receptionist. Although we now look very staff-heavy, this enables us to offer our students a high level of support, with subject-specific knowledge.

Take a moment to compare last and this year's staff rolls.

### **Staff Roll '19/'20**

Annabel Leaver – Head of Centre., Ruth McWeeney – Deputy Head of Centre, Lisa King – Admissions Facilitator and Administrator, Mick Hunter – Trainee Science and English Teacher, Anthony Francis - Specialist Interventions Teacher, Dre Edwards - Support Assistant, Sue Garland - Volunteer History Teacher, Andy Hoang - Volunteer I.T. and Website Consultant, Steve Hughes - Trainee Art and Maths teacher, Nicola Morrell - Lead Practitioner, Hannah McCann - HLTA

### **Staff Roll '20/'21**

Annabel Leaver – Head of Centre, Ruth McWeeney – Deputy Head of Centre, Lisa King – Admissions Facilitator and

Administrator, Mick Hunter – English Teacher, Anthony Francis - Specialist Interventions Teacher, Dre Edwards - Support Assistant, Sue Garland - Volunteer History Teacher, Andy Hoang - Volunteer I.T. and Website Consultant, Steve Hughes - Maths teacher, Nicola Morrell - Lead Practitioner. Hannah McCann - Therapies Teacher, Tia Smith - Learning Support Assistant, Nicola Morrell - ICT Teacher and Lead Practitioner, Alison Allison - Science and Cooking Teacher. Charlie Smith - Receptionist

Some staff have changed roles during the year - Hannah McCann has taken a position as Therapies Teacher, Lisa King has been transitioning into the SEND and Admin Lead role, Mick Hunter to the Pastoral and Academic Lead role, and Ruth McWeeney to the headship. Annabel remains with us, but has been transitioning into the role of maths teacher, which she will be taking on in September. We sadly lost Steve Hughes in the summer term, which presented some challenges, but these were overcome with effort from others.

You can see that SAFE wages continue to move towards the government's recommended pay scales, and that as a result we are now able to attract a higher calibre of staff. We need to ensure that we continue to close the gap, however, particularly where teaching staff are concerned, and will be addressing this over the next academic year where budgets allow.

#### **S.A.F.E. Staff Wages Currently:**

Head of Centre - £47,000, SLT lead roles - £40,000, Administrator - £24,500, Support Assistant - £20,000 (pro-rata) HLTA £22,000 (pro-rata), Teachers and other staff £28,000

We are, as ever, pleased to have a relatively low employment turnover this year, and need to ensure we offer appropriate incentives to keep hold of our excellent teachers and support staff. We also want to develop an excellent reputation as a school and an employer in order that we can continue to attract experienced, invested staff.

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Jenny Johnson is resigning as a Director and she thanked everyone for all the support she has received. She said SAFE had helped her family right from the beginning.

We welcome Lisa King and Michael Hunter as PB's and they were voted by everyone. MH will take over JJ's job (Curriculum). LK will take on the Staffing Role.

Also Nicola Morrell is to be our Complaints Clerk and she can be a Director in the meantime, but the role will be reconsidered by the end of 2021. ML will send her a copy of the Articles of Agreement.

Julie Raven would like to be a PB on a trial period.

The following roles were agreed:

RM	Head of Centre and to have LR to help with Safeguarding
RM	Health & Safety/Safeguarding
AL	Maths Teacher /Health & Safety
LS	Staffing
NM	Staffing/Curriculum/Complaints
MH	Curriculum
ML	Treasurer/Secretary

We are to continue with Zoom monthly meetings for the time being.

It was agreed that as ML has now moved, the SAFE Registered Address should be changed to our Accountants i.e. Abudey.

END OF AGM MEETING

**SOCIAL ARTS FOR EDUCATION**

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020				
INCOME	£		EXPENDITURE	£
OPENING BALANCES:			BRANCH EXPENSES:	
			Administration	£ 3,184.89
Current a/c as at 1/1/20	£ 3,395.48		EHCP allocated	£ 1,842.35
			Entertainment	£ 115.32
INTEREST	£ 0.13		Exms	£ 2,053.88
			Gifts	£ 54.94
			Health & Safety	£ 1,893.20
FEES:	£ 372,043.97		HR	£ 1,781.61
	£ 24.00		Insurances	£ 3,298.00
DONATIONS:	£ 18,414.75		Liabilities	£ 43,731.43
			Loan repayment	£ 8,000.00
LOAN	£ 8,000.00		Office suppliies	£ 478.28
			Pensions	£ 9,668.40
HALL HIRE:	£ 1,035.00		Premises	£ 10,855.70
	£ 900.00		Rates	£ 642.12
GIFT AID	£ 4,723.52		Recruitment	£ 2.94
			Refund	£ 2,294.00
DEPOSIT	£ 150.00		Rent	£ 25,791.67
			Resources	£ 5,305.44
Refunds	£ 234.68		Safeguarding	£ 1,580.40
Other	£ 48.00		SEND	£ 1,419.83
EVENTS	£ 300.50		Software	£ 564.73
			Specialist services	£ 3,700.00
CASH IN			Staff expenses	£ 856.68
			Staff wages	£ 165,213.95
			Subscriptions	£ 1,466.13
			Training	1875.2
			Travel	£ 519.40
TOTAL INCOME	£ 409,270.03		Utilities & Phone	£ 2,937.52
			Total Expenditure	£ 301,128.01
Current Account				£ 108,142.02
TOTAL EXPENDITURE				£ 409,270.03
Branch Treasurer (name in capitals)				
Signed		Date:		
Branch Chairman (name in capitals)				
Signed		Date:		
I have audited the above Income & Expenditure Account from the information supplied and certify that this is a true reflection of the Accounts for Social Arts for Education				
Auditor (name in capitals)				
Signed		Date		

<b><u>SOCIAL ARTS FOR EDUCATION</u></b>				
<b>Bank Reconciliation at Year End 2020</b>				
	<b>RECEIPTS</b>			<b>PAYMENTS</b>
Bank Statement Balance b/f Jan 2020	<b>£3,395.48</b>		Cash Book Balance Dec 2020	<b>£ 301,128.01</b>
Cash book balance 2020	405,874.55			
To balance				<u>£ 301,128.01</u>
	Payments	£ 301,128.01		
	Receipts	<u>-£405,874.55</u>		
	Balance	-£ 104,746.54		
Bank statement as at 31 Dec 2020		£ 108,142.02		
Less balance		-£ 104,746.54		
		£ 3,395.48		
Signed by Auditor				
Name in Capitals			Date:	