

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER : 08159859 (England and Wales)

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1156708

SENTient Trust Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited

Financial Statements for the Period 1 April 2020
to 31 March 2021



SENTient Trust

Hollow lane
Exeter
Devon
EX13RW

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Period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021**

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SENTient Trust

**Reference and Administrative details for the Period
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021**

TRUSTEES

Mr. P. Gray (Chair)
Ms. B Caschere
Mr. K Bennett (Vice Chair)
Ms. F Butler
Ms. S. Pickering
Mr. A Gardiner
Ms. Sam Barnham
Ms. C. Bevan
Mr. M. Rose
Ms. M. Carter
Ms. J. Warne
Mr. R Gaehl
Mr. S Allman
Ms. R. Mitchell
Mr. M. MacCourt
Ms Liz Shin
Ms. R. Saltmarsh
Ms. C. White
Devon County Council – Ms. S. Randall-
Johnson

COMPANY SECRETARY

Ms. L. Knight

REGISTERED OFFICE

Ellen Tinkham School
Hollow Lane
Exeter
Devon
EX1 3RW

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER

08159859 (England and Wales)

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SENTient Trust

Chairs Report for the Trustees for the Period

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

BOARD ACTIVITIES 2020/21

This brief report is somewhat untypical as our work has been overshadowed by events beyond our control.

ORCHARD MANOR SCHOOL

The forced academisation was at times all-consuming. I shall not attempt to summarise my file (one inch thick). However, for those coming new to the matter I offer the following observations.

The school was inspected and there were shortcomings in record-keeping (under the safeguarding heading). These were technical and there was never a suggestion of systemic failures. SENTient Head Teachers and Governors were magnificent in putting together a programme of support. However, DfE (the Regional Schools Commissioner) fired the starting pistol for academisation. In ordinary times there would have been HMI monitoring visits to assess our claims that the issues had been addressed. Coronavirus made that impossible.

Useful context is that the RSC was under pressure as the South West had the lowest conversion rate and Devon was bottom of the region.

Twists and turns involved DfE denying any flexibility in the legislation. I proved otherwise. The next tack was to claim that our Trust had an ideological antipathy to academies. That was easy to dispel. To cut a long story short RSC broke every rule in the book. Our meticulous legal challenge to the process (courtesy of Browne Jacobson LLP) demonstrated beyond doubt that statutory regulations had been ignored and the law broken.

That challenge was made eleven months ago and we have had no reply.

The Academy Order was issued and received approval. I raised a further objection which included a FOI request as to whether the Minister had been made aware of a legal challenge before signing the order. That was completely ignored. I wrote to the DfE complaints section. Two months on there had been no reply. I was told that the letter had not been received. I provided a tracking number. Miraculously I heard that the letter had been received after all and passed on to another department. Nothing happened. I engaged the Parliamentary Ombudsman who contacted the

DfE on our behalf. The matter was referred to the SWRSC – the subject of the compliant.

Conversations with our legal advisers show that we had a very strong case for judicial review. However, the financial exposure should we fail was beyond our means. As the expert told me ‘there’s the law – then there’s the DfE’. Naturally we cooperated fully to ensure a smooth transition. Relations with the chosen sponsor are good and I meet again with the CEO next week.

CORONAVIRUS

We have lived through an extraordinary time. The resolve and professionalism of Head Teachers and Governors has been incredible. This was in spite of advice from agencies that was often late, confusing, uncoordinated and changeable. The challenges for our sector were particularly acute as it was clear that if DfE expertise existed then it certainly was not heeded by those offering guidance. Many of us, in different ways, tried to explain that our young people would simply not understand (let alone comply with) physical distancing strictures – to give but one example.

The upshot was that we invented our own systems based on the most sophisticated risk assessment work I have ever seen. Once again, the structures and values of a cooperative trust combined to find a way through problems that seemed overwhelming. My conversations with Head Teachers show just what a toll it has all taken on them and their teaching and support colleagues. Of course, that continues – and will for some time to come. I take my hat off to you.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

During the year under review, SENTient schools were planning for quite a few changes in leadership. Half of our number have new or recently appointed leaders. Excellent appointments were made, and I have been particularly impressed by the collaborative work on induction.

It is also worth noting that Keith now chairs our Executive Group and our close working arrangements will, I am sure, be beneficial for the Trust.

MONITORING AND SUPPORT

One of the things that came out of the Orchard Manor experience is the reality that the nature of our organisation is not widely understood – RSC admitted as much to the local authority. I wrote a paper for the board recently and hope to put the proposals into action as a result of your agreement. Of particular note is our work with DCC on assessing risk, monitoring performance and providing report. The approach is described in a paper for today's ordinary meeting. I commend it to you.

CONCLUSION

It has been a privilege to chair the Board for a year or so. Please be assured that you can count on my support.

Dr. Paul Gray

Dr Paul Gray (Chair of Board)

Keith Bennett

Keith Bennett (Vice Chair of Board)

SENTient Trust

Heads Report for the Trustees for the Period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Keith Bennett : Marland School

Achievements:

- 100% Non-NEET post 16 destinations for our 2 Secondary School Year 11 Leaver cohorts July / Sept.
- Very good broad / balanced attainment for these Year 11's (far better than expected considering the impact of the pandemic):
 - o 9 students (100%) achieved at least 2 nationally recognised qualifications, including 1 student who achieved 2 and the other who achieved 4.
 - o The remaining 7 students (78%) achieved at least 9 nationally recognised qualifications (**including GCSEs, Vocational Level 1 &/or 2, Functional Skills, etc. across a broad range of subjects*).
 - o 5 students (56%) achieved at least 10 nationally recognised qualifications (*).
 - o 1 student achieved 17 and another achieved 16 nationally recognised qualifications (*).
- Strong emotional and social development for most students (assessed utilising 'Thrive' methodology).
- Students being entered for and successfully achieving a broad range of nationally accredited qualifications from Year 9 onwards.

- Ofsted Inspection of our Residential Care Provision in Sept 2021: 'Outstanding' grade awarded.
- New Vocational Centre constructed / opened on our Residential School site summer term 2021.
- New classroom block constructed / opened on our Primary School site October 2021.
- Construction of major 'Forest School' type facilities in our remote 5 acre woodland.
- Construction of a bike 'Pump Track' on our residential site.
- Student numbers formally expanded on all 3 sites in past 6 months: Total whole school cohort increased from 110 to 122, including age range expansion on 2 sites – overall now Y1-Y11.

Concerns:

- Major staff recruitment issues in all categories (Teacher, TAs, Premises Manager, Residential Care Worker) – never seen it as bad as this and we pay well compared with other schools. Currently have 4 different job adverts out with closing date of next Monday and only one single applicant overall to date.
- Starting to experience a significant negative impact on mental health and resultant behaviour, predominantly within our residential student cohort. This is highly likely due to a combination of external factors, especially Covid pandemic and the huge pressure created by significantly increased referrals and pressure from 0-25 SEN Team to place as quickly as possible, reducing our ability to phase intake to spread impact.
- Maintained funding limiting our ability to fully staff at the levels required to meet the ever increasing complexity of student need (our low Resi Care Worker staff levels was raised by Ofsted at our recent inspection).
- Covid has had an impact on most fronts but we are managing it as best as we can.

Stuart Allman : Pathfield School

Significant Events

- New Head Teacher Nov 2020
- New Deputy Head appointed Feb 2021
- Opening of the Discovery centre Nov 2020– an off-site provision for the Pathways group (Currently 20 secondary aged pupils)
- Two new classrooms built for Reception/ key stage 1 April 2021

Concerns

Covid 19 is having a major effect on the learning of all pupils and the repercussions will be felt for a significant period of time

Sam Barham : Lampard School

The first stage of the school's expansion scheme is almost completed. From January we admit the first additional 16 students. This particular stage has been fraught with challenges linked to Covid, weather, building supplies and extended the stage from 6 weeks to 22 in total. This first stage has been impactful but has now given Upper School students larger class sizes and an environment fit for purpose. The expansion plan (3 stages) will see a planned increase from 120 to 180 over 3 years.

Lampard is in its 3rd year of curriculum development and focus is on quality assuring teaching and learning and supporting subject leaders to deliver subject specific staff training to non-specialists. The EMPOWER curriculum is assessed through bespoke assessment frameworks and uses Evidence for Learning to capture academic progress and also in increased independence.

A concern to highlight is the number of consultations we receive as a setting (19 since September) and the impact on strategic leadership capacity due to the length of time the proves takes to complete. Our recent 0-25 team visits to our setting gave us the opportunity to raise this as a concern. Consultations have been raised it at LA level in our LA/special school meetings.

SENTient Trust

Income and Expenditure for the Period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Income and Expenditure from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
SENTient Trust Bank Account

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
B/F	£10,063.80		
		07-May-20 brownejacobson	£ 1,760.60
		18-May-20 admin - LK	£ 3,640.00
		10-Jun-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
		30-Jun-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
		01-Jul-20 brownejacobson	£ 1,200.00
		31-Jul-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
		05-Aug-20 admin - LK	£ 13.00
		05-Aug-20 Zurich Insurance	£ 543.37
		01-Sep-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
		23-Sep-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
12-Oct-20 OMS	£ 1,000.00		
13-Oct-20 Millwater	£ 1,000.00		
22-Oct-20 Lampard	£ 1,000.00		
28-Oct-20 Lampard	£ 2,000.00		
		30-Oct-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
09-Nov-20 Barley Lane/ Pathfield	£ 3,500.00		
		30-Nov-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
		04-Dec-20 brownejacobson	£ 858.40
		10-Dec-20 admin - LK	£ 38.90
		23-Dec-20 brownejacobson	£ 4,513.20
		30-Dec-20 admin - LK	£ 182.00
		22-Jan-21 brownejacobson	£ 1,200.00
		01-Feb-21 Clive Robson	£ 875.00
10-Feb-21 brownejacobson	£ 858.40		
		09-Mar-21 admin - LK	£ 364.00
16-Mar-21 Devon CC	£ 27,136.46		
		29-Mar-21 admin - LK	£ 182.00
	36,494.86		16,644.47
Bank balance		29,914.19	
Anticipated expenses			
		-	
Anticipated income			
Adjusted bank balance		29,914.19	

SENTient Trust

Balance Sheet for the Period
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

**Balance Sheet as at 31 March
2021**

SENTient Trust Bank Account

Current assets

Debtors

Cash at bank and in hand 29,914

**Creditors: amounts falling due
within one year**

Net current assets 29,914

**Total assets less current
liabilities 29,914**

Net Assets 29,914

Reserves 39,058

Profit & loss account (9,144)

Members' funds 29,914

SENTient Trust

**Profit and Loss Statement for the Period
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021**

Profit & Loss to 31 March 2020

SENTient Trust Bank Account

Turnover -
Administrative expenses (16,644)

)
Operating Profit/(loss)	(16,644)
Other interest receivable and similar income	7500
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	(9,144)
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	0
(Loss)/Profit for the period	<u>(9,144)</u>

SENTient Trust

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Statement of Financial Activities

Income

A total of **£8,500** was received from 5 schools to fund property transfers and administration costs

The Trust received **£27,136.46** from Devon CC

Expenditure

A total of **£9,532.20** was paid to brownjacobson for legal services and property/lease transfers

Best Western were paid a **£1,676.25** for room hire and refreshments

Zurich were paid **£543.37** for specialist Charity Insurance

Companies House were paid **£300** for a late registration fine

LK was paid **£2,053.90** for administration services and £3,640 for backdated services

Clive Robson was paid **£875** for a report commissioned by the Trust