

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the governing body held in the school on Monday, 29 January 2018 at 4.00pm.

Present:

Mrs A Trenery (chair), Mr S Alcock, Mrs S Brown, Mr M Cruddas, Mrs P Curtis, Mrs B Davies, Mr B Egerton, Ms R Horry, Mr P Hudson, Dr M Jary, Mr M Prescott, Mr D Thomas.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mr T Brunt (Deputy Headteacher)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr I Johnstone and Mr P Taylor.

Governor Training – General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Prior to the start of the formal meeting, a short training session was led by Mrs Rudge, headteacher, informing governors of the reforms to data protection that come into force in May 2018. To support the presentation, two documents were circulated ("Preparing for the General Data Protection Regulation" and "The General Data Protection Regulation Explained") and it was made clear the importance of governors knowing what the new regulations mean and what the school was doing to prepare for the changes. The headteacher outlined the key issues of the GDPR and also requested governors to read both documents to ensure that they had a full understanding of the implications for the school.

The headteacher further reported that an information audit would be undertaken to help the governing body prepare for the changes and that it would also be necessary to appoint a Data Protection Officer. Discussions were currently taking place with the chief executive officer of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust regarding the possibility of an appointment being made across all schools in the Trust. Governors would be kept up-to-date of any outcomes agreed to ensure that everything was in place when the GDPR comes into force.

Following a discussion, the headteacher was thanked for delivering the training session and for the information provided.

30. Welcome to New Governor:

The chair welcomed Ms R Horry to her first meeting of the governing body following her election as a parent governor, and Mrs B Davies following her re-election as parent governor.

31. Governing Body Matters:

- a) Membership Update – the headteacher reported that details of the membership of the governing body and the committees (Steering Group, Learning & Standards, Managing & Resourcing) had been updated on the school's website, also including link governor responsibilities. It was noted that Ms Horry had been appointed to the Managing & Resourcing committee.

It was resolved –

That the membership details as shown on the school's website be noted but that the following small amendments be made:

- Mrs R Horry to read Ms R Horry
- Link governor for the farm to be included – Mr P Hudson

- b) Appointment of Governors – the headteacher reminded governors that Mr Freestone (staff governor) and Mrs Walton (co-opted governor) had recently resigned from the governing body and that both posts remained to be filled. The headteacher was pleased to report that Mrs Karen Fisher had put herself forward as a staff governor but there was still a need to appoint a replacement co-opted governor.

Discussion also took place regarding the recent parent governor election and some concern had been expressed with regard to the process which, although conducted in accordance with DfE guidance, was deemed to be unsatisfactory.

It was resolved –

- i) That governors agree to the appointment of Mrs Karen Fisher as staff governor.
 - ii) That the headteacher and clerk be requested to arrange for a skills audit of the governing body to be undertaken before further consideration is given to the appointment of a new co-opted governor.
 - iii) That the headteacher and clerk be requested to explore alternative arrangements to improve the parent governor election process, including an option for the process to be undertaken electronically.
- c) Register of Business Interests – the clerk circulated a 'declaration of pecuniary and personal interest' pro-forma and governors were requested to complete it as appropriate. This would enable the clerk to update the register of business interests as it appears on the school's website.
- d) Declaration of Interests – there were no declarations of interest for items to be discussed at this meeting.
- e) Governor attendance – Governors were informed that attendance at meetings (full governors and committees) would in future be recorded on the school's website. The clerk also reminded governors that although apologies for absence may be received for non-attendance at a meeting they did not always have to be accepted.

32. Chair – Report of Actions Taken:

That chair reported that it had not been necessary for her to act on behalf of the governing body between this and the last meeting.

33. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2017 had been previously made available to governors via Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes be received and approved as presented.

34. Matters Arising:

There were no matters of report.

35. Steering Committee:

Governors noted that a meeting of the Steering committee had been held on 10 January 2018 and a report of the meeting made available on Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the report of the Steering committee meeting be received and noted.

36. Managing and Resourcing Committee:

Minutes of meetings of the Managing and Resourcing committee held on 9 October and 12 December 2017 had been previously made available on Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of both meetings be received and noted.

37. Learning and Standards Committee:

Minutes of meetings of the Learning and Standards committee held on 3 October and 5 December 2017 had been previously made available on Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of both meetings be received and noted.

38. Quality Assurance of Assessment :

Mrs R Lindsay, assistant headteacher, was present for this item to present a report on work being undertaken by school staff with regard to quality assurance of estimated grades for GCSE and A level students. The headteacher also provided the context for the inclusion of this item, which followed discussions on this matter at the last meeting of the Learning and Standards committee. Governors were informed that all staff were ensuring that the best possible information was available so that student grades were able to be assessed with greater accuracy and consistency.

It was resolved –

That Mrs Lindsay be thanked for attending the meeting and informing governors of the school's arrangements to quality assure the assessment of predicted student grades.

39. Inspection Data Dashboard Summary:

The headteacher gave a presentation on the Inspection Data Dashboard now being used by Ofsted inspectors in preparation for school inspections. The document was available on Office 365 and provided governors with all of the information that they needed to know about the school. Much of the information provided had been discussed in more detail by the Learning and Standards committee and would continue to be a focus for future meetings. The headteacher was pleased to report that progress made by students across the school as a whole placed the school in the second quintile and had remained so for the last three years. This was something that only four other schools in East Staffordshire had achieved.

The headteacher further reported that the school's leadership team was using the data contained in the report to strengthen areas of school performance, with languages in particular identified as weak. Various strategies had been put in place to bring about improvement but with limited success. However, governors were assured that staff continued to look at what more could be done to improve outcomes in languages which, in turn, would improve Ebacc results. To further support improvement strategies the headteacher reported that a Strategic School Improvement Fund bid to improve provision and performance in Modern Foreign Languages was being prepared by the school, in conjunction with other neighbouring schools. The bid was to be submitted before the deadline in early April 2018.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be thanked for providing a summary of the school data contained in the Inspection Data Dashboard and it was agreed that the Learning and Standards committee should continue to use the information to focus on necessary strategies to help bring about improvement in the required areas.
- ii) That all governors would take the opportunity to study the Inspection Data Dashboard in more detail and raise any questions through the committee or directly with the headteacher.

40. School Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation:

A copy of the current School Improvement Plan cycle had been previously available on Office 365 and the headteacher took governors through the detail of it. Governors were informed that the Plan was aligned with Ofsted criteria. An outline was given of the different sections of the Improvement Plan and the process for it to be monitored and reviewed, taking account of school self-evaluation.

It was resolved –

That the headteacher be thanked for providing an update on the School Improvement Plan and that it be received and noted.

41. Staffing:

The headteacher reported that the key staffing issue to be considered was the recruitment process for appointing a new deputy headteacher. An advert had recently been placed and the headteacher was pleased to report that there had been a good level of interest shown and was optimistic of being able to make a good appointment. Short listing of applications was to take place on 6 February, with interviews held on 14 and 15 February. The

headteacher circulated a draft programme for the two days and sought the views of governors, who were also invited to support the process by joining the various interview panels. Governors were reminded of confidentiality in respect of the interview programme.

With regard to other staffing matters the headteacher reported that an MFL teacher was to leave at the end of April and an advert had been placed to appoint a replacement teacher. A temporary appointment would be made to cover the remainder of the school year with a permanent appointment made for September. Other vacant posts to be filled were Physics (f/t), History (0.6) and PE (0.4). An IT post (0.4) had become available but the headteacher reported that this post would not be replaced.

It was resolved –

- i) That the draft interview programme be received and approved, subject to amendments as suggested by governors.
- ii) That a requirement for candidates to undertake a psychometric test should not be included as governors don't feel that it will add value to the interview process.
- iii) That the report on other staffing posts be received and noted.

42. ULT Update:

The headteacher reported that Trustees were shortly to place adverts for the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance officer as contracts for both posts were shortly coming to an end. Governors noted that Mr A Storer, the school's business manager, currently undertaking a combined role as Chief Finance Officer, was considering his future role. The headteacher further reported that the ULT was shortly to expand with three more schools joining over the next few months.

It was resolved –

That the ULT update be noted and that governors request that Trustees inform them of planned interim arrangements should a new Chief Executive Officer not be appointed by the required date.

43. Headteacher's Report:

The headteacher circulated a detailed report on the work and activities of the school and placed on record her thanks to Tiff Harris who had prepared the school data as detailed in the report, much of which had been discussed earlier in the meeting and by the Learning and Standards committee. The headteacher referred in particular to the following issues:

- a) Score Card
The headteacher reported that the score card matched the school's own self-evaluation but the biggest weakness remained the number of students on roll, which was disappointing given the school's consistent outcomes at GCSE. Governors were assured that consideration continued to be given as to how to improve the number on roll but the building of a nearby new school and a change of age range at JCB academy would have implications for this school.

- b) GCSE Computer Science
Ofqual had recently decided to revise arrangements for the non-exam assessment part of the computer science GCSE which would no longer count to the 9 to 1 grade. As this decision had implications for students' work a letter had been sent to parents to advise them of the revised arrangements.
- c) BTEC Public Services
A request had been received for the school to offer a BTEC in Public Services and consideration was currently being given to this.
- d) Staff Sickness Absence
As promised, an update was given on staff sickness absence and the headteacher reported that from a possible 70 working days during the autumn term, 28 teachers had been absent during that period which equated to 167 days in total. This figure was slightly higher than the previous term. However, the long term absence of two members of staff accounted for most of those days.
- e) Swimming Pool
The swimming pool remained out of use but discussions continued with East Staffs Borough Council to support the funding of the necessary repairs to enable the pool to re-open.
- f) School Bids
As reported earlier in the meeting a Strategic School Improvement Fund bid was currently being prepared to support improved outcomes and uptake in MFL. A decision on the Teaching School bid was expected very shortly.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be thanked for her detailed report and that it be received.
- ii) That when undertaking the skills audit of the governing, consideration be given to expertise in marketing given the need to increase the number of students attending the school.

44. Safeguarding:

There were no safeguarding issues to be considered.

45. Confidentiality:

Governors agreed that none of the matters discussed during the meeting should be recorded as confidential but a reminder was given of the need for confidentiality with regard to the discussions around the proposed deputy headteacher interview programme.

46. Evidence for KPIs:

The chair reported that the matters considered at this meeting met the following key performance indicators:

- KPI 2 – governors support and strengthen school leadership
Evidenced through Minute 42 and discussions around the deputy headteacher interview programme, including attendance at the interviews.

- KPI 4 – governors provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils’ achievement and their behaviour and safety
Evidenced through Minutes 39, 40 and 41 and discussions around the quality assurance for assessment of predicted student grades, the Inspection Data Dashboard and the School Improvement Plan.
- KPI 8 – governors engage with stakeholders, including staff and parents
Evidenced through Minute 31 and discussions around improving the governors’ section on the school website, appointment of new governors, and a review of the parent governor election process.

47. Any Other Business:

There were no other items of business to discuss.

48. Date of Next Meeting:

A request was made for the date of the next meeting (scheduled for 23 April) to be changed.

It was resolved –

That the next meeting now be held in the school on Monday, 16 April 2018 at 4.00pm – to be preceded by a training session at 3.30pm.

The meeting finished at 6.15pm.

Signed.....

Date.....