

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a remote meeting (via Zoom) of the governing body held on Thursday, 30 April 2020 at 4.15 pm.

Present:

Mr M Prescott (chair), Mr A Barton, Mr M Cruddas, Mrs P Curtis, Mr J Davey, Mrs B Davies, Mr T Hollins, Mr P Hudson, Dr M Jary, Mr M Osborne-Town, Mr P Taylor.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Miss J Titterton (Office and HR Support Manager)

221. Introduction to Meeting:

Mrs Rudge, headteacher, thanked governors for attending this remote meeting which had been arranged to update governors on arrangements that had been put in place to ensure the health and wellbeing of all staff and students, both on or off site. The views of governors on other key issues were also required.

222: Coronavirus and Safeguarding:

The headteacher shared a mentoring report that is being used to evidence the contact being made with individual students and the work being undertaken in order to monitor the effectiveness of virtual learning and to ensure safeguarding procedures were in place. The spreadsheet showed the details of around 1000 students in all year groups including free school meals, pupil premium and looked after children status. The staff mentors use the spreadsheet to see if students have accessed homework assignments and work set. All students are contacted every two weeks, with the more vulnerable students contacted more frequently and, if necessary, on a daily basis. Staff contact the student and parents to ascertain reasons why work has not been accessed and check that students are safe and well. Mr Barton suggested that students could tick a box on Insight to show that work had been accessed and homework was completed.

A discussion took place around the number of students who have ICT issues and 57 students need laptops. The government scheme assessed 11 of these were eligible for laptops but the headteacher considered the actual number to be 32 students. The headteacher has therefore issued a complaint to the DFE and ASCL and requested 32 laptops. Mr Hudson asked if paper work packs had been sent out and if school could consider signing up for a package like Nisai where lessons are taught on line by teachers 1 hour a day of English and Maths. All pupils in yrs 9 – 11 received a work pack before school closed but supplying further packs would present substantial problems around production and delivery of these. The headteacher has ordered 149 second hand laptops at a cost of £10,000 and is using the 6th Form DVF budget, SEN and PP budget to finance these. Mr Hudson suggested the Staffordshire County Council Covid 19 fund and suggested contacting Philip Atkins or David Brooks. A discussion occurred around contacting other local businesses for donations and fund raising opportunities.

The D & T team have had positive media attention from social media, newspapers and radio following the making of PPE face visors for local key worker organisations. Their design has gained attention from local hospitals who have requested the visors.

Dr Jary asked about the number of students where a lack of motivation was an issue. This was confirmed as 62 students and the headteacher stated that this is where the mentor coaching conversations are very important and some may need to come into the key worker school. The primary focus for mentoring is yr 9, 10 and 12 with the main focus on yr 10. Bridging work was being looked at for yr 11. Vulnerable students were contacted every day and this is managed by Mrs Maingay and the DFE. During these conversations the mentor has to speak to the student, parent and social worker. The headteacher confirmed that the school remained open for vulnerable students and children of key workers with a small but increasing number of students on site. If students due into the key worker school do not arrive a phone call is made to ascertain where they are and reasons for their absence. All other students are contacted regularly and there is a virtual Safeguarding Board meeting every Friday to review open cases.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher will contact Philip Atkins/David Brooks re the Staffordshire County Council Covid 19 fund to apply for laptop funding.
- ii) The headteacher will invite Dr Jary to the Safeguarding meetings on Fridays.

223. Staffing - 2020/21 School Year:

The headteacher discussed the present staffing vacancies for the next academic year 2020/21. The school is presently advertising the posts of PT Maths teacher, FT and PT English teachers and FT MFL teacher. These are possible vacancies as 2 staff have interviews this month and school is able to advertise their posts in case they become vacant. A MFL teacher may also be deployed to teach at Ryecroft Middle school.

The headteacher is also monitoring the mental health of staff and asking them to take a break if they have experienced a bereavement. The key worker school is now operating well. The first week there were some concerns from staff whose concept of social distancing was different to others and whistle blowing has been used to resolve these. This improved the situation with the majority of staff being content to be included on the rota when needed.

224. Year 9 Options:

Yr 9 are presently being set normal lessons through on-line learning. The yr 9 Option letters are going out to parents today. The headteacher is expecting complaints which will need to be resolved. Once options are set, students can be encouraged to stop studying the subjects that they are not taking in yr 10.

225 School Issues and Financial Implications:

The focus will be on yr 10 to return to school first. There followed a discussion around a contingency plan if school returns after 31st May 2020. The headteacher has started to plan for this and assessed that there can only be 6 or 7 students in a classroom. The indications are that school could accommodate only a fifth of the students at one time and the focus would be yrs 9, 10 and 12. The greatest problem to solve is the toilet facilities for students and staffing levels as 22 staff are in vulnerable groups and at risk of serious illness if they

come into school. The feasibility of one way systems around school were also being looked into and the headteacher awaits the consultation document in how to keep students safe. The headteacher expects 3 weeks' notice of a return to school. A water hygiene flush of the whole system has been arranged over May half term to prevent Legionella and repairs to the roof start on 4th May 2020.

The Online learning policy is now out for consultation and the headteacher will share this with governors at the next meeting. Mr Osborne-Town stated that this will make online learning more effective and it was agreed that this is the focus along with getting vulnerable students into the key worker school. Mr Hollins explained how GCSE pod was very effective and quality assured as it was written by teachers and examiners. The headteacher felt that online learning has a 30% – 40% success rate for motivated students but that staff are focused on improving virtual learning.

Once school returns there will need to be a recovery curriculum around how students are feeling with awareness of a sense of isolation, character resilience etc. This will need to take place before a return to curriculum learning.

226. Year 11 – 6th Form Applications:

Teacher assessments need to be submitted by 1st June 2020. This year the access to 6th form has been softer and invitations have gone out to some students who are challenging due to their mental health. Mrs Peers has superbly guided staff on the accuracy of the data entered into CAGs. If grades were inflated the DFE would suppress them so it is important to be correct. The departments are doing their own ranking e.g there are 70 students at grade 5 that then have to be ranked 1 – 70.

The headteacher informed governors that yr 11 to yr 12 bridging work would be available on Insight from 4th May 2020.

227. Other Business:

a) Covid-19 Report

The headteacher has a new Covid 19 report that produces bar graphs which she will write and share with Governors.

There was a discussion about the safety of using Zoom for Governors meetings in future. This may have to change to Microsoft teams and would be accessed through a meeting scheduled in Office 365.

b) Performance Management

The headteacher discussed with the governors the performance management targets for teachers. They could be changed to the effectiveness of their mentoring, setting work during closure and not based on results. Results based targets would not hold up if a complaint was made in any event and the headteacher favoured putting teachers through this year so that discussions did not have to occur. The MAT has been asked to reconsider performance management targets and Mr Prescott stated he would raise this at SRB. Support staff could undergo training and then think of targets for next year.

c) Record of Thanks

Governors placed on record their thanks and appreciation to the headteacher and all other members of staff for everything that they were doing to support students during such a difficult time. Mr Prescott will send an email to staff to reflect this. It was reported that the headteachers' communications to parents and staff were excellent in conveying both compassion and important information to the community. Governors recognised the contributions made by the following staff: Mrs Peers for data input; Mrs Dodd and her team for the 6th Form Options; Mr Mitchell and his team for yr 9 Options and Mrs Maingay for the Mentoring spreadsheet.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher will share the Covid 19 report with governors.
- ii) Mr Prescott will send an email to staff to convey a record of thanks from governors.
- iii) Mr Prescott will raise performance management targets at SRB.

228. Date of Next Meeting:

It was resolved –

That the next remote meeting be held on Monday, 8 June 2020 at 4.00pm (with meeting arrangements to be confirmed nearer the date).

M Prescott

Signed.....

15 June 2020

Date.....