

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held in the school on Tuesday, 6 November 2018 at 5.00pm.

Present:

Dr M Jary (chair), Mr M Cruddas, Mrs B Davies, Mr I Johnstone, Mr M Osborne-Town, Mr M Prescott.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mrs A Maingay (Deputy Headteacher)
Mrs C Catterall (Assistant Headteacher)
Mrs C Dodd (Assistant Headteacher)
Mrs K Goodwin (Assistant Headteacher)
Mrs T Harris (Assistant Headteacher)
Mrs R Lindsay (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs K Fisher and Mr D Thomas. An apology for absence was also received from Mr D Godwin (Assistant Headteacher)

Governor Training - Level 1 Safeguarding Update:

Mr M Cruddas, Mr I Johnstone and Mr M Osborne-Town were present for this level 1 safeguarding update, led by Mrs Maingay, deputy headteacher. A similar update had been given prior to the recent meeting of the full governing body meeting held in October.

In response to a question asked during the safeguarding update the headteacher outlined the process followed in the event of an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff. She confirmed that the process followed was in accordance with safeguarding guidance and that the advice of the local authority's designated officer (LADO) was always sought.

The governors present thanked Mrs Maingay for providing the level 1 safeguarding update.

76. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

77. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held on 18 September 2018 had been previously made available to governors in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting be received and approved as presented.

78. Matter Arising:

Pay Policy (Minute 67(b) refers)

The headteacher reported that the revised Pay policy was still awaited from the Uttoxeter Learning Trust. Once received, approval and acceptance of the policy would be sought from governors.

79. Post-16 Update:

Governors were reminded that the 2018 post-16 outcomes had been discussed in detail at the last meeting and that improvements to those outcomes had been identified as a whole school issue. A report was circulated to highlight the whole school focus on post-16 and strategies implemented since the last meeting to help bring about further improvement. Mrs Dodd was present to take governors through the detail of the report, with particular reference to Sixth Form 7 and recruitment into the sixth form. She was also pleased to confirm that staff had responded very positively to the different strategies being put in place.

a) Sixth Form 7

This is in addition to the 6th form time allocated for homework and provides direction for students in facilitating their independent learning. Students are required to complete at least 7 hours per subject per fortnight of independent learning and is suitably checked to ensure that students are supported in developing effective independent study skills and habits.

b) Recruitment into the Sixth Form

Staff continue to discuss post-16 uptake and performance with a number of strategies implemented to help bring about improvement in both. This included having a greater awareness of students to help identify those to be invited on to A-level/BTEC courses. Marketing strategies are already resulting in a greater number of students expressing an interest in remaining in school to undertake sixth form studies.

The headteacher further outlined various other strategies to improve post-16 achievement and recruitment with a greater emphasis also being given to regular data drops. Assessment of this data was used to help track individual student progress and ensure that appropriate support could be provided as necessary. Governors noted that planned assessments were to be delivered in a mock style assessment window taken in lessons between 4 and 15 February 2019.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mrs Dodd be thanked for attending the meeting and for her detailed update on strategies to improve sixth form achievement and retention.
- ii) That governors request to be kept updated on the planned data assessments in February 2019 and to be informed of the outcomes as soon as possible after completion.
- iii) That governors recognise the importance of the right courses being offered to students and that staff should also continue to remind students about the importance of identifying an appropriate A-level course to help achieve future employment.

80. Outcomes of GCSE Reviews and Comparison of Maths and English GCSE Results:

Mrs Harris was present for this item and circulated confidential reports to show the outcomes for individual students following a formal review of their GCSE results and providing a comparison of the Maths and English GCSE results.

a) GCSE Reviews

A formal review of individual students' grades had resulted in some changes being made but Mrs Harris reported that a formal review of departmental outcomes (Art, Drama, ICT, PE) had resulted in no changes being made. She further reported, however, that the moderation reports of those reviews had been shared with departmental staff and were proving useful in helping to identify where improvements could be made.

b) Comparison of Maths and English GCSE Results

A report was circulated to show the data tracking of Y11 leavers' in Maths and English from the beginning of Y10. Regular data capture throughout this period helped to track the progress of individual students and helped to assess the accuracy of predicted results against the actual results achieved. This data tracking had shown that the actual grades received were lower than expected and governors were informed that, as a result, strategies had already been put in place to address this with appropriate changes made to the various schemes of work. Mrs Harris further reported that the assessment following mock exams had been accurate but that the further assessment in April had not been as accurate. A key to improvement was regular assessment between the mock and final exams with support identified as appropriate and this had been welcomed by students.

A further report was circulated to track the progress of current Y11 students from the beginning of Y10. Regular data drops continued to be undertaken for all departments but with a particular focus on students achieving grades 9-5 in Maths and English. Mrs Harris informed governors of how the data was being used to ensure that students received the appropriate support to help them achieve their predicted grade.

Full discussion followed with governors seeking further information on the outcomes of all departments and particularly those departments where predicted outcomes had been furthest away from the actual outcomes.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mrs Harris be thanked for attending the meeting and that her detailed reports on GCSE reviews and data tracking be received and noted.
- ii) That the headteacher be requested to provide a report for the next meeting to highlight the three departments where predicted outcomes had been further away from the actual outcomes and to include details of actions taken to bring about more accurate assessment if the future.

81. Pastoral Update:

A report providing a pastoral update had been previously made available in Office 365 and a copy was also circulated at the meeting. Mrs Catterall went through the detail of it, including in particular:

- Attendance – strategies implemented have had a positive impact on reducing the persistent absence rate for pupil premium and other vulnerable students. Focus is currently being given to the number of students absent for family holidays.
- Behaviour/Exclusions – the school continued to compare favourably with the national picture but governors questioned the increasing number of fixed term exclusions given to students. The headteacher reported that the school continued to work closely with students with challenging behaviour with actions taken in an attempt to avoid permanent exclusion. Such actions included pastoral support plans, change of curriculum, addressing the school culture. The headteacher undertook to provide governors with an (anonymous) exemplar pastoral support plan to highlight everything that was done within school to support students. Where appropriate, students and their parents were also invited to meet with a governor disciplinary panel to seek assurances regarding their future behaviour. Such a panel had been arranged for the following week with three students requested to attend.

Governors questioned the role of the ULT in helping to support pupil behaviour across all schools and noted that there wasn't a ULT Behaviour Plan. The headteacher reported, however, that a district inclusion panel (DIP) had been set-up specifically for schools in Uttoxeter and a key focus for the DIP was to ensure that all schools worked together closely in supporting pupil behaviour.

- Number on Roll – the headteacher confirmed that the number of students on roll remained below the planned admission number and that there had recently been a number of admissions requests for pupils with complex special needs. Due to the unsuitability of the school site the requests had been refused and were being discussed with the local authority. Governors were informed that appeals were likely and would therefore be kept updated.

It was resolved –

- i) Mrs Catterall be thanked for presenting her pastoral report and that it be received and noted.
- ii) That governors note the role of the district exclusion panel in ensuring that all Uttoxeter schools work closely together around pupil behaviour but also request that this matter should be brought to the attention of the ULT.
- iii) That governors keep under review the increasing number of requests for admission to the school for pupils with complex special needs given the unsuitability of the school site in being able to meet their needs.

82. Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2018/2019:

A copy of the 2018/2019 Pupil Premium Strategy Statement had been previously made available in Office 365 and, in the absence of Mr Godwin, Mrs Maingay went through the detail of it. Governors were informed that the strategy had been developed in line with National College for Teaching and Leadership guidance and that it was now more target driven with identified time frames. This would help to track individual student progress to identify the need for early intervention and also ensure greater clarity around the use of pupil premium funding to support those students. Governors noted that the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement was for parents and that it had been developed to ensure that they clearly understood the work being undertaken by the school to provide appropriate support for pupil premium students.

It was resolved –

That the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2018/2019 be received and noted with thanks to both Mr Godwin and Mrs Maingay for their work undertaken to provide greater clarity around the use of pupil premium funding to support pupils as appropriate.

83. Policy Update:

Homework and Performance Management Policies

Both policies had been previously made available in Office 365 and the headteacher confirmed that both had been revised and changes made as necessary.

It was resolved –

That the revised Homework and Performance Management policies be received and approved as presented.

84. Well-being Survey:

The headteacher was pleased to report that following the recent health and safety audit the school had moved from grade 2 to grade 3 but that further improvements were necessary to move to grade 4. A particular necessary improvement was around staff well-being and that as a result a well-being survey had recently been undertaken and this would form the basis of a school action plan to identify and implement necessary changes. A copy of the survey had been previously made available in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the well-being survey be received and noted.

85. Staff Support Plans:

The headteacher informed governors of support plans put in place as necessary to support members of staff from time to time and an example of such a report was made available. Appropriate support would be put in place to bring about improved performance within agreed time frames and governors noted that the main level of support would be provided by Mrs Maingay.

It was resolved –

That governors receive and note the very clear and detailed support plans put in place to help improve performance of staff as necessary.

86. Departmental Plans for Continuing Professional Development (CPD):

An updated Teaching and Learning CPD document had been previously made available in Office 365, together with a copy of a departmental CPD for teaching and learning co-ordinators. Both documents would help better monitor what was happening in the classrooms and bring about improvement to students' learning and outcomes. Mrs Lindsay took governors through the detail of both reports.

It was resolved –

That Mrs Lindsay be thanked for her providing an update on the CPD reports and that they be received and noted.

87. Confidentiality:

Governors were reminded about the need for confidentiality with regard to a number of documents discussed during the meeting but it was agreed that there was no need for any of the issues to be recorded in a confidential appendix.

88. Consideration Given to KPIs:

KPI 4 – Governors provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for the improving quality of teaching, pupils’ achievement and their behaviour and safety

Covered through discussions relating to a review of the school’s GCSE and A-level results 2018 and challenge around strategies being put in place to bring about improved performance (minutes 79 and 80); pastoral report with particular reference to student behaviour (minute 81); understanding of support plans put in place for teachers to help improved performance (minute 85); understanding of departmental CPD to monitor what’s happening in the classroom and improve students’ learning and outcomes (minute 86).

KPI 5 – Governors use Performance Management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher to improve teaching, leadership and management

Covered through a review, and subsequent approval, of the Performance Management policy (minute 83).

KPI 7 – Governors operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities agreed
Level 1 Safeguarding update provided prior to the start of the formal meeting.

KPI 9 – Governors use Pupil Premium and other resources to overcome barriers in learning, including reading, writing and mathematics

Discussions around the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2018/2019 to provide greater clarity around the use of funds to bring about student improvement (minute 82).

89. Date of Next Meeting:

Governors were reminded that the next meeting of the Learning and Standards committee would be held in the school on Tuesday, 15 January 2019 at 5.00pm.

The meeting finished at 7.10pm.

Signed.....
M. Jary

Date.....
15 January 2019