

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held in the school on Tuesday, 17 September 2019 at 5.00pm.

Present:

Dr M Jary (chair), Mr M Cruddas, Mrs B Davies, Mr M Osborne-Town, Mrs L Perry, 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 R Lindsay (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr J Mitchell (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Welcome:

The chair was pleased to welcome Mr J Mitchell, assistant headteacher, to his first meeting of the Learning and Standards committee.

115. Election of Committee Chair:

It was resolved –

That Dr M Jary be elected as committee chair until the first meeting of the Learning and Standards committee in the autumn term 2020.

(In accepting the role of chair, Dr Jary reminded governors that she would be resigning as governor when her term as governor finishes at the end of the current school year).

116. Election of Committee Vice-Chair:

It was resolved –

That Mr M Cruddas be elected as committee vice-chair until the first meeting of the autumn term 2020.

117. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest relevant to agenda items.

118. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held on 14 May 2019 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.

119: Matters Arising:

Staff Appointments and Communication with Parents (Minute 106 refers)

The headteacher confirmed that there had been appropriate communication with parents regarding recent staff appointments and thanked the chair and other governors for their support in setting the tone of the communication.

The headteacher also outlined the induction arrangements in place for all newly appointed staff and was pleased to confirm that all were settling well into the school.

120. Results Analysis 2019:

Details of GCSE and Post-16 results 2019 had been made available in Office 365 and copies of summary reports were also circulated at the meeting. The headteacher (GCSE results) and Mrs Dodd (Post-16 results) provided an analysis of the results with further input provided by other members of the leadership team as appropriate.

GCSE Results

To give some context to the school's results the headteacher gave a brief overview of the national results, which had remained stable, and was particularly pleased to report that the number of Thomas Alleyne's students achieving grades 8 or 9 in all subjects compared very favourably with the national picture. Governors were informed that a power point giving more detail around the national picture was also available in Office 365.

The headteacher was pleased to report that the GCSE results 2019 were again strong, with improvements in English and Maths combined. Progress 8 data, when available, would likely show that Thomas Alleyne's was in the top 10% of schools across Staffordshire. The headteacher further reported, however, that there were still areas for improvement and that particular focus and challenge was to be given to improving outcomes in English, low attainers, and disadvantaged students. In respect of the latter, governors noted that although the results for disadvantaged students were good when compared with the national picture, the gap had slightly increased against the results of other students.

An analysis was provided of the outcomes achieved by the different subject departments, with outcomes in Food, History and Design and Technology particularly strong. The headteacher also outlined those subject areas where further improvement was necessary and confirmed that work was already being done to help bring about improvement. Governors were pleased to note that there had been some improvement in French, identified previously as a priority area for improvement, although recognising that there was still more to be done. The headteacher confirmed that there was still a focus on making French more popular which would help to increase the number of Ebacc entries, which remained lower than required.

Post-16 Results

Mrs Dodd went through the detail of the post-16 outcomes and reported that the school was currently working with PiXL6, a company providing national data to help schools compare against each other. Mrs Dodd further reported that the results were weaker than the previous year although the outcomes in vocational subjects had been strong and that sixth form retention remained high.

Discussion followed and governors recognised that the results were disappointing and that the need for improvement must remain a priority. Consideration was given to strategies that had been identified the previous year to bring about improvement and governors

agreed that it was important for the leadership team to ensure that all staff continued to follow those strategies. The headteacher confirmed that all staff would continue to work with previously agreed strategies and others that had also recently been identified. More work was also being done to ensure that students had a greater awareness of their expectations through being in the sixth form.

The headteacher further reported that in response to a previous governor challenge, more time had been made available to support leadership in the sixth form. The headteacher also confirmed that everything had been done in response to the findings from the recent sixth form review.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher and Mrs Dodd be thanked for their informative and detailed analysis of the 2019 results.
- ii) That governors note the improvement in combined English and Maths results but that the headteacher be requested to prepare a report to show how the results compared against national figures.
- iii) That governors recognise the need for further improvement across areas of the school, including in particular post-16 outcomes, and request the headteacher to provide further information on identified strategies being put into place to help bring about the required improvement.
- iv) That the headteacher be requested to prepare a report for the next meeting of the full governing body to list the key issues impacting on outcomes in the 6th form and strategies put in place to bring about improvement.
- v) That governors place on record their thanks to all members of staff present in school on the results' days to ensure the well-being of students and provide advice and support as appropriate.

121. Current Student Performance:

The headteacher presented a report on current school data and a Y11 pupil progress comparison per subject. The analysis identified predicted student grades against targets. An outline was also given of departmental performance and the headteacher outlined those subject areas with a particular focus on bringing about improvement. English had been recognised as a subject area causing particular concern. Having identified those weaker subject areas the headteacher also made clear to governors that there was a lot of strong data across the school.

Discussion followed and governors questioned and challenged in particular, strategies that had been put in place to bring about improvement in English.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be thanked for the analysis of current student performance and that it be noted.

- ii) That the head of the English department be invited to attend the next meeting of the Learning and Standards committee to outline in more detail strategies that were being implemented to bring about required improvement in English.

122. Pupil Premium and Disadvantaged Students Update:

A report on current data for disadvantaged and pupil premium students had been made available in Office 365 and a copy also circulated at the meeting. Mr Godwin went through the detail of the report, highlighting the many intervention strategies in place to support individual students. A report was also circulated providing details of Y11 pupil premium students and how their progress compared with that of other students.

Discussion followed and governors questioned in particular those subject areas in which the performance of pupil premium students was stronger than other subject areas, to help identify possible strategies to be put in place to improve outcomes in those weaker subjects.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mr Godwin be thanked for presenting his report on pupil premium and disadvantaged students and that it be received and noted.
- ii) That the headteacher be requested to provide a report for the next meeting of the full governing body to show the areas and strengths and weaknesses for pupil premium and disadvantaged students, in comparison with other students, and to highlight strategies put in place to bring about areas of required improvement.

123. 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 – the whole school attendance level was below the required target and this remained a priority for the school. Governors were pleased to note, however, that persistent absences (including pupil premium students) continued to fall.
- Behaviour/Exclusions – governors were pleased to note that there had been a decrease in the number of fixed term exclusions from school.
- Return to Learning – governors were pleased to note that the appointment of an isolation supervisor continued to have a positive impact in reducing the number of full day isolations. Also included in the report were examples of behaviour reports to support a return to learning and the new Behaviour for Learning policy, including the number of behaviour points or credits for students. Mrs Catterall further reported that arrangements had also now been made for parents to access information around the awarding of behaviour points and credits to students.
- Bullying – governors noted that there was only a small number of bullying incidents in and around the school premises and that most bullying incidents remained through the use of social media. Mrs Catterall assured governors that any reports of bullying were addressed appropriately.

- Safeguarding team – the strength of the school’s safeguarding team was highlighted.

It was resolved –

- i) Mrs Catterall be thanked for presenting her pastoral report and that it be received and noted.
- ii) That governors welcome the ability of parents to access information around behaviour points and credits and that Mrs Catterall be requested to report at the next meeting on the impact of this for parents.

124. External Pupil Premium Review:

A report referring to the forthcoming external pupil premium review had been previously made available in Office 365 and Mr Godwin went through the detail of it. He confirmed that the review was to take place on 10 October and governors noted the timetable for the day. Governors would be informed of the outcome of the review at a future meeting.

It was resolved –

That the timetable for the external pupil premium review be received and noted and that governors look forward to a positive outcome.

125. Safeguarding Policy Review:

The headteacher reported that the school’s Safeguarding policy was being revised to reflect updated local and national guidance and details of the changes to be made to the policy had been made available in Office 365. Mrs Catterall further reported that the updated policy in full would shortly be published and would forward a copy to Dr Jary, committee chair.

It was resolved –

That governors note the changes made and approve the revised Safeguarding policy.

126. Teaching and Learning CPLD Programme 2019/2020:

A copy of the 2019/2020 Teaching and Learning CPLD programme had been previously made available in Office 365 and Mrs Lindsay went through the detail of the training opportunities available to staff. Mrs Lindsay further reported that the Teaching and Learning communities were being brought back with courses designed to address many of the school improvement issues raised during this meeting.

It was resolved –

That Mrs Lindsay be thanked for presenting the 2019/2020 Teaching and Learning CPLD programme and that it be received and noted.

127. 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.

128. Consideration Given to KPIs:

The chair reported that an analysis of KPIs covered by governors during the school year 2018/2019 would be given at the next meeting of the full governing body. The KPIs covered during this meeting included:

KPI2 – Governors support and strengthen school leadership

Governors welcomed Mr Mitchell to the meeting following his recent appointment as assistant headteacher.

The headteacher confirmed that, in accordance with the governing body’s request, the leadership of the sixth form had been strengthened. (Minute 120)

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 the school’s results 2019. (Minute 120)

Governors challenged the outcomes in English and a request for the head of department to attend the next committee meeting to outline strategies to bring about improvement. (Minute 121)

Governors requested the headteacher to provide a report for the next full meeting of the governing body to list the issues impacting on post-16 outcomes and strategies in place to bring about improvement. (Minute 121)

Review and approval of the revised safeguarding policy. (Minute 125)

KPI8 – Governors engage with stakeholders, including staff and parents.

Parents able to access information around behaviour points and credits and a request by governors to be informed of the impact of this through parental contact with school. (Minute 123)

129. 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, 5 November 2019 at 5.00pm.

M. Jary
Signed.....

5 November 2019
Date.....