

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held in the school on Tuesday, 3 October 2017 at 5.00pm.

Present:

Dr M Jary (chair), Mr M Cruddas, Mrs B Davies, Mr I Johnstone, Mr M Prescott, Mrs A Trener.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mr T Brunt (Deputy Headteacher)

Mrs C Catterall (Assistant Headteacher)

Mrs R Lindsay (Associate Headteacher)

Mr A Storer (Business Manager)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

1. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Teaching and Learning committee held on 9 May 2017, and the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources committee held on 6 June 2017, had been previously made available to governors via Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of both meetings be received and approved as presented.

3. Matters Arising:

a) Teaching and Learning Committee

The headteacher was pleased to report that following the re-launch of the school council, every form was represented and resulting in greater student involvement.

b) Human Resources

The chair confirmed that the First Aid policy and Safeguarding policy had both been signed off following discussion and approval at the meeting.

4. Pastoral Update:

Mrs Catterall circulated a report giving a pastoral update and took governors through the detail of it. The following matters in particular were highlighted:

- i) Attendance – this continued to be closely monitored to ensure that attendance was in line with or better than the national average. The current attendance was 96.8%.
- ii) Holiday requests – there had been an increase in the number of holiday requests but, in line with County guidance, most had been refused. A consistent approach to holiday requests was being taken by the local schools.
- iii) Exclusions – the number of fixed term exclusions continued to remain lower than national figures.

- iv) Dove House – continued to provide good support for students but it was noted that of the PP students receiving support, none were females. At the request of governors, the headteacher agreed to look at the possible reasons for this and provide any necessary further support for the male students.
- v) Safeguarding – the team had recently been extended to ensure that the school was able to fulfil its increasing safeguarding responsibilities, with all staff also having to undertake the appropriate training courses.

It was resolved –

That Mrs Catterall be thanked for presenting her detailed pastoral report and that it be received.

5. Policy Updates:

a) Safeguarding Policy

Mr Brunt reported that it had been hoped to present the updated safeguarding policy for discussion and subsequent approval, but updated guidance from the County Council was still awaited. This matter would therefore be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

b) Pay Policy

Mr Storer circulated the proposed pay policy which had been discussed and approved in principle at the governing body meeting held the previous week. He confirmed that the policy had been revised to take account of those discussions.

It was resolved –

That the Pay policy be approved as presented.

6. Staffing Update:

The headteacher provided a staffing update and was pleased to be able to report that the school had a full staffing complement in place for the start of the new school year. Details were given of newly appointed teaching staff, and the headteacher further reported that adverts had been placed for three support staff positions.

It was resolved –

That the staffing update be received and noted.

7. Student Performance (including disadvantaged students) and A level Report:

A report outlining student performance, including that of disadvantaged students, had been previously available on Office 365 and Mr Brunt went through the detail of the report.

i) Disadvantaged Students

Mr Brunt reported that whilst performance remained good, the data showed that the performance of disadvantaged students during 2016/2017 had not been as good as the previous year and staff continued to look at reasons for this. Appropriate measures were being put in place to narrow the gap.

As requested previously by governors, data was made available to show the average points difference for students and GCSE Pod usage. Details were also given of various intervention strategies being put in place to support students, including a review of staff performance by heads of department to identify if best practice could be adapted by other staff.

The headteacher further reported that the English progress scores for disadvantaged students were of particular concern and, as such, was a particular focus for the school during the current year.

ii) A Level Report

Mr Brunt circulated a summary of the A level report for 2016/2017 which had been completed through use of the Advanced Level Performance System (Alps) which comprised the national dataset provided by the Department for Education for all schools and colleges. An outline was given of how the Alps scores were calculated and how this reflected student A level performance at Thomas Alleyne's. Based on this indicator, the three year trend for student outcomes was satisfactory to good with BTEC results stronger than A level results.

Full discussion followed with an update given on how staff were responding to the Alps performance indicator and governors had also previously been circulated with a departmental report detailing student performance and outcomes. Governors noted that staff continued to monitor student progress and identify reasons why outcomes were sometimes not as predicted. As a result, a number of strategies were being put in place to help bring about improved performance which included a more structured approach to the Behaviour for Learning policy for students. A review of study time was also being undertaken which, if necessary, could result in supervised study for some students.

The headteacher was pleased to report that, whilst all validated scores had still to be received, the GCSE results were showing a progress score of plus 0.21 reflecting that for the third year running the school had made significant progress.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mr Brunt be thanked for providing a detailed and informative report on school performance, including that of disadvantaged students.
- ii) That the headteacher be requested to keep governors updated on strategies being put in place to bring about improved performance in the weaker curriculum areas, including in particular English progress for disadvantaged students.

8. Learning Walks:

An analysis of the learning walks undertaken during the summer term 2017 had previously been made available on Office 365 and Mr Brunt took governors through the detail of it. He was pleased to confirm that 95 learning walks had been undertaken and a key conclusion was that the quality of teaching remained good/outstanding. The walks had also helped to identify where further support was necessary.

Discussion followed and reference made to new Ofsted guidance relating to reducing the workload of teachers and any possible impact this might have for the school. The headteacher informed governors that decisions had previously been taken to help reduce the workload of teachers.

It was resolved –

That the analysis of the findings following the learning walks be received and noted.

9. Work Scrutiny:

The work scrutiny schedule for 2017/2018 had previously been made available on Office 365 and Mr Brunt reported that the first activity was to be undertaken at the end of this week. There was therefore nothing further to report at this stage.

It was resolved –

That the work scrutiny schedule be received and noted.

10. CPD Programme:

A copy of the CPD programme for staff had previously been made available on Office 365 and Mrs Lindsay took governors through the detail of it. Governors noted in particular that all staff were required to undertake 12 hours of training and that the CPD programme offered comprehensive training opportunities across four strands – leadership; teaching and learning; behaviour and safety; well-being. The school's Inset programme for 2017 was also noted.

It was resolved –

That Mrs Lindsay be thanked for preparing and presenting the comprehensive CPD programme for staff and that it be received and noted.

11. Teaching and Learning Communities:

Mr Brunt and Mrs Lindsay updated governors on the teaching and learning project which had been a key feature of meetings of the teaching and learning committee over the last two years. Governors were informed that the second year of the project had now been completed and that a celebration event had recently been held in London. Mr Brunt and Mrs Lindsay had both attended the celebration event and made available their presentation, in the form of the jigsaw, which had been used to show the work undertaken by the school as part of the project.

Full discussion took place and governors noted that all staff had embraced the work being undertaken to improve school practice and that everyone had identified which of the teaching and learning communities they wished to support. Examples of an agenda and minutes of a meeting were made available to demonstrate staff commitment being shown.

It was resolved –

That the update on the teaching and learning communities be received and noted with thanks to Mr Brunt and Mrs Lindsay, and that governors expressed a view that consideration be given to extending this programme to include the middle schools.

12. Any Other Business:

There were no other items of business to discuss.

13. Confidentiality:

Governors agreed that none of the matters discussed during the meeting should be recorded as confidential.

14. Consideration Given to KPIs:

- i) 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 Minutes 4 (pastoral update), Minute 7 (student performance) and Minute 8 (learning walks) with particular focus and challenge around strategies being put in place to improve student outcomes through the improvement of the weaker curriculum areas. This included challenge to improve progress for the disadvantaged students in English.

- ii) KPI 5 – Governors use performance management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management

Covered through discussions relating to:

- Minute 4 (pastoral update) – discussions around the extended safeguarding team and requirement to undertake appropriate training courses.
- Minute 7 (student performance) – challenge to look at the support given to PP male students in Dove House and for heads of department to identify best teaching practice that could be mirrored by other staff.
- Minute 10 (CPD programme – discussions around the comprehensive CPD programme and requirement for all staff to complete 12 hours of training.

15. Date of Next Meeting:

Governors were reminded that the next meeting of the Learning and Standards committee was to be held in the school on Tuesday, 5 December 2017 at 5.00pm.

The meeting finished at 6.55pm.

Signed.....

Date.....