

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held in the school on Tuesday, 5 December 2017 at 5.00pm.

Present:

Dr M Jary (chair), Mrs B Davies, Mr M Prescott, Mr D Thomas, Mrs A Trenergy.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mr T Brunt (Deputy Headteacher)

Mrs C Catterall (Senior Assistant Headteacher)

Mrs C Dodd (Senior Assistant Headteacher)

Mr D Godwin (Assistant Headteacher)

Mrs R Lindsay (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Apology for Absence:

An apology was received from Mr M Cruddas.

16. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

17. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held on 30 October 2017 had been previously made available to governors via Office 365.

It was resolved –

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

18. Matters Arising:

a) Dove House (Minute 4(iv) refers)

The headteacher reported that although support continued to be given to both male and female students attending Dove House, there were no obvious reasons why there were no PP female students in attendance.

b) Safeguarding Policy (Minute 5(a) refers)

Mr Brunt reported that updated guidance on safeguarding matters was still awaited from the County Council.

c) Pay Policy (Minute 5(b) refers)

The headteacher reported that the previously approved Pay policy was now being applied throughout the school.

19. 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 – The current attendance was 96.7% which was slightly down from the previous year and there had been a rise in the level of persistence absence. The school was working closely with other schools in the ULT, with the support of an education welfare officer, to improve attendance levels.
- ii) Exclusions – the number of fixed term exclusions continued to remain lower than national figures.
- iii) Bullying – most bullying issues were around the use of social media and the school continued to seek support from other agencies in dealing with matters.

It was resolved –

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

20. Policy Updates:

a) Anti-Bullying Policy

Mr Brunt reported that this policy was based on the template received from the County Council and had also been cross-referenced with the policy adopted by neighbouring schools.

It was resolved –

That the revised Anti-Bullying policy be received and approved.

b) Homework Policy

Mr Brunt reported that a number of small amendments had been made to this policy to reflect current school practice.

It was resolved –

That the revised Homework policy be received and approved.

c) Assessment Policy

Mr Brunt reported that a number of amendments had been made to this policy to better reflect how the school undertakes monitoring.

It was resolved –

That the revised assessment policy be received and approved.

d) Curriculum Policy

Mr Brunt reported that this revised policy had been significantly updated to reflect current school practices but that it continued to include provision for students to choose four optional subjects in addition to the core subjects. The headteacher further reported, however, that this remained under review by the leadership team.

It was resolved –

That governors continue to support a broad and varied curriculum offer and that the Curriculum policy therefore be received and approved.

e) Taking and Publishing Images of Children Policy

Mr Brunt that this policy reflected guidance received from the County Council but added that it may need to be revised to take account of the new data legislation shortly to be implemented.

It was resolved –

That the Taking and Publishing Images of Children policy be received and approved, subject to possible further review.

21. Student Performance 2017:

Mr Brunt, Mrs Catterall, Mrs Dodd, Mr Godwin and Mrs Lindsay were all present at the meeting to support the headteacher in presenting a variety of reports to highlight student performance throughout the school year 2016/2017. During each of the presentations, governors asked appropriate questions to ensure that all data was understood and, in particular, to challenge strategies that were being put in place to bring about any required improvement. The reports included:

a) FFT Aspire Report

The headteacher circulated a copy of the KS4 School Dashboard 2017, produced by FFT Aspire, which provided an overview of school performance both in attainment and progress levels for all students (disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged) across all subject areas. The headteacher highlighted the key issues identified in the report, including both strengths and weaknesses. A particular focus area for school staff were outcomes of disadvantaged students as a big gap remained between the attainment of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. However, in reporting this, the headteacher was pleased to refer to a letter received from Staffordshire County Council congratulating the school on outcomes for disadvantaged and SEN students which placed the school in the top quartile.

The headteacher also referred in detail to outcomes in each of the curriculum departments and subject areas, highlighting those that were doing well and those where improvement is necessary. This helped to determine improvement priorities and strategies for the current school year, which included – improve performance in SEN; review and improve performance in English; continue interventions in MFL; support plans for ICT/Computing; supporting students at risk of not attaining both English and Maths.

The headteacher was also pleased to report that overall trends for school outcomes reflected the work being undertaken by everyone at the school and that parental voice continued to show strong parental support for the school. Progress measures are above average for the third year in a row.

b) Post-16 Provision and Outcomes

Mrs Dodd presented a report on post-16 provision and reported that validated results were still awaited. However, initial results showed that post-16 performance had been disappointing but that staff were already looking at the reasons for this and strategies being put in place to bring about improvement. A key issue for consideration was the entry requirements for sixth form whilst being mindful of implications for the school and wider community in the event of significant changes. Identified priorities for the current school year included – monitoring at risk on entry Y12 students; monitoring current students with low VA in Y13; parent interviews and supervised study; monitoring of under-performing students.

c) SEN and Disadvantaged Students

A report on disadvantaged, SEN and EHCP students had been previously made available to governors and Mr Godwin went through the detail of it, referring in particular to some of the strategies being put in place to support students in Maths and English. Governors also noted the varied work being undertaken by the SEN team to support the different needs of students.

d) Student Performance – Current Data

A report had been made available to outline current October data for student performance in Y10 and Y11 as compared to the 2017 results. Mr Brunt further reported that the data highlighted those subject departments where there was a need for particular focus and agreed action points in place. Discussion followed and governors agreed that it would be useful if subject/department leaders could attend future meetings to give a presentation to show in more detail the issues within a particular subject department and the strategies being put in place to bring about improvement. Mrs Lindsay agreed to undertake a presentation at the next meeting with a particular focus on English.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher and school leaders be thanked for providing detailed reports on the many different aspects of school performance and which gave governors a greater understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- ii) That governors note, and support, the work being undertaken by staff in addressing the areas of concern and agreed strategies being put in place to bring about required improvement.

22. Teaching School Update:

The headteacher and Mr Brunt confirmed that the application for Thomas Alleyne's to become a Teaching School had been submitted and governors noted that, if successful, the school would attract additional funding. Interviews with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, to question and challenge the strengths of the school, would be held during January or February with a final decision made by Easter. The headteacher undertook to keep governors fully updated and also advised that some governors may also be interviewed as part of the application process.

It was resolved –

That the update on the Teaching School application be noted and that governors thank the headteacher and other school leaders for all of the work undertaken in submitting a detailed and positive application.

23. Any Other Business:

There were no other items of business to discuss.

24. Confidentiality:

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

25. 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 Minutes 19 (pastoral update), 20 (policy review) and 21 (school performance), with particular focus and challenge around strategies being put in place to improve student outcomes through the improvement of the weaker curriculum areas and monitoring of individual student progress.

26. 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, 6 February 2018 at 5.00pm.

The meeting finished at 7.15pm.

Signed.....

Date.....