

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held in the school on Tuesday, 5 November 2019 at 5.00pm.

Present:

Dr M Jary (chair), Mr A Barton, Mr S Clarke, 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)

Mr D Godwin (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Apology:

An apology for absence was received from Mrs R Lindsay (assistant headteacher).

130. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest relevant to agenda items.

131. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held on 17 September 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.

132: Matters Arising:

a) GCSE Results - Combined English and Maths (Minute 120(ii) refers)

The headteacher reported that the combined English and Maths results had been 7% above the national average.

b) Behaviour Points or Credits (Minute 123(ii) refers)

The headteacher reported that there had been no parental concerns around the new Behaviour for Learning policy and the introduction of behaviour points or credits for students. The policy, however, remained under review and governors would be informed should any amendments be recommended.

133. Review of Summer Series External Exams:

Mr C Barrow, head of PE, was present for this item and the chair welcomed him to the meeting. Mr Barrow went through the detail of the Y10/12 Mock exam SWOT analysis which had been previously made available to governors in Office 365. He was pleased to report that the SWOT analysis highlighted the strengths of the mock exam process, in particular the positive attitude of students towards the exams. Mr Barrow also identified the

various challenges that had arisen and confirmed that the analysis had been used to identify improvements that could be made for future mock exams.

Full discussion followed and, in response to a question asked, governors were pleased to note that there had been a positive short term impact but that the full impact would not be known until next year's mock exams. Governors also questioned the impact on students' well-being and an outline was given of the staff support available to students throughout the exam period. The headteacher assured governors that the well-being of students, and in particular the more vulnerable students, continued to be a priority for staff.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mr Barrow be thanked for attending the meeting and presenting the SWOT analysis of the Y10/12 mock exams.
- ii) That a similar report be made available to governors following next year's mock exams so that governors can see the impact of improvement strategies put in place following this year's exams.

134. External Pupil Premium Review:

Governors were circulated with a copy of the report following an external pupil premium review held in October 2019. Mr Godwin went through the detail of the report, highlighting the many areas of strength that had been identified. He also outlined actions that had been taken to bring about improvement where necessary. Mr Godwin was pleased to further report that the review had recognised that the governing body had a good understanding of pupil premium funding and ensured that funds were allocated appropriately. Funding was well used to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Discussion followed and governors questioned in particular the number of disadvantaged students participating in school activities. The headteacher reported that currently a low number of disadvantaged students participated in school activities but this was something that the school was looking to improve through a focus on particular activities.

It was resolved –

That the report on the external pupil premium review be received and noted and that governors congratulate all staff concerned, and in particular Mr Godwin, for all the work being undertaken to support disadvantaged students.

135. Headteachers Triads – English, History and Actions to Improve Outcomes in English:

The headteacher reported that, with the support of colleague headteachers from Endon and Abbot Beyne High Schools, reviews had been undertaken of the History and English departments and the outcomes of those visits had been previously made available in Office 365. The Ofsted framework had been followed in undertaking the reviews.

The headteacher outlined both reports and confirmed that the strongest judgements were in History where the review had verified that it was an outstanding department. The outcomes for the English department reflected the current strengths and had identified the areas for improvement. The review had also recognised the work being undertaken by the recently appointed head of department to bring about the required improvement. A key focus for improvement was the inconsistency within the English department and the headteacher

outlined strategies that had already been put in place to address this, including revised schemes of work and a standard assessment of students' work. The headteacher was pleased to report that staff had responded well to the issues raised.

Discussion followed and governors noted that although some improvement was necessary within the English department, results for student attainment were better than the national average although below in student progress. Governors also noted that the English department was currently not as strong as the Maths department.

It was resolved –

- i) That the reports on the reviews of the History and English departments be received and noted and that the headteacher be requested to keep governors updated on the impact of identified strategies to bring about improvement in the English department.
- ii) That governors note the positive start made by the recently appointed head of English department and that governors would invite her to attend a future meeting once she had time to embed the new strategies.

136. 6th Form Review:

Governors were informed that a review of the 6th form had been undertaken on 14 October by Mr S Slater, chair of the ULT trust board and Mr T Sutcliffe, interim chief executive officer. A report on the review was circulated and the headteacher went through the detail of it. Governors were informed that although it had been a challenging day for all concerned, the review had been of value and had identified many strengths including its leadership and management. The report had identified a number of next steps for the 6th form and the headteacher confirmed that an action plan was being put together in response to the review. A particular focus would be around students being encouraged, where appropriate, to study vocational subjects (where results are strong) rather than A levels.

It was resolved –

- i) That the report on the 6th form review be received and noted with thanks in particular to the headteacher and Mrs Dodd, head of 6th form, for all the work being undertaken to bring about improvement.
- ii) That governors would continue to monitor, and challenge where necessary, the impact of identified strategies to bring about improved 6th form outcomes.

137. Teaching School Summary Report to the Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT):

Mrs Maingay, deputy headteacher, went through the detail of a summary report that had been prepared for the ULT to outline the work being undertaken by the Teaching School. Part one had been to look at the KPIs for the period September 2018 to 31 August 2019 and part two had looked at the KPIs for the period September 2019 to 31 August 2020. An outline was given of the strategies put in place to ensure that agreed KPIs were met.

Governors noted that the KPI for school to school support had not been met but were informed that this had been due to the timing of the teaching school award. The headteacher gave an assurance that arrangements were currently being made for school to support, with an agreement already in place to provide support to Sir Thomas Boughey

Academy. Mrs Maingay further reported that the Teaching School action plan remained under ongoing review and would be kept updated to reflect agreed changes.

It was resolved –

That the Teaching School summary report be received and noted, with thanks to Mrs Maingay.

138. Homework Policy:

A copy of the Homework policy had been previously made available in Office 365 and the headteacher reported that it had been updated to strengthen school arrangements for homework and that staff had been consulted on the changes made.

It was resolved –

That the updated Homework policy be received and approved as presented.

139. School SIP and Performance Management:

Mrs Maingay, deputy headteacher, reported that the performance management system had been revised and that agreed objectives were now more closely aligned to the school improvement plan. A copy of the revised system had been previously made available in Office 365 and Mrs Maingay went through the detail of it. Governors noted that the new system would enable better tracking of progress towards agreed objectives and, although the revised system was still new, there had been positive feedback from staff.

Discussion took place and reference was made to arrangements for the headteacher's performance management review and the headteacher reported that a date was still awaited from the interim chief executive officer of the ULT.

It was resolved –

- i) That governors receive and note the revised performance management system, with thanks to Mrs Maingay.
- ii) That the chair of governors would contact the CEO to request a date for the headteacher's performance management review.

140. 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.

141. Other Business:

The headteacher reported that she was currently updating the school's SEF and that governor input was important. A copy of the draft SEF would shortly be circulated to governors for further discussion at a future meeting.

142. Consideration Given to KPIs:

The KPIs covered during this meeting included:

KPI3 – Governors contribute to school’s self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses

Governors recognised the importance of contributing to the school’s SEF and a copy of the draft SEF was to be circulated to governors for discussion and input at a future meeting. (Minute 141)

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 Y10/12 mock exams and request by governors to receive further reports to evidence the long term positive impact of the mock exams. (Minute 133)

Governors discussed the review of the History and English departments and requested future reports to evidence the impact of strategies to bring about improvement in English. The head of department would also be invited to attend a future meeting of the L&S committee to discuss progress. (Minute 135)

Governors discussed the 6th form review and would continue to monitor, and challenge, the impact of strategies to bring about the required improved improvement. (Minute 136)

KPI5 – Governors use Performance Management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management

Governors discussed the new performance management system in place and noted how agreed objectives would be more closely aligned to the school improvement plan. Arrangements for the headteacher’s performance management had also been considered. (Minute 139)

KPI9 – Governors use Pupil Premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics

The external review of pupil premium funding had recognised that the governing body had a good understanding of pupil premium and ensured that funds were allocated appropriately.

143. 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, 14 January 2020 at 5.00pm.

Signed..... M Cruddas

Date..... 14 January 2020