

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the governing body held in the school on Monday, 23 September 2019 at 4.00pm.

Present:

Mr M Prescott (chair), Mr A Barton, Mr S Clarke, Mr M Cruddas, Mrs P Curtis, Mrs B Davies, Mr B Egerton, Dr M Jary, Mrs L Perry, Mr P Taylor.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mrs A Maingay (Deputy Headteacher)
Mr A Storer (Business Manager)
Mr D Godwin (Assistant Headteacher)
Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs S Brown, Mr P Hudson, Mr M Osborne-Town.

Governor Training – Review of KPIs and Governor Development Plan:

Prior to the start of the formal meeting, a short training session was led by the chair of governors with a particular focus on a review of KPIs, as covered through various meetings of the governing body held during the school year 2018/19, and the Governor Development Plan.

The chair was pleased to report that evidence from the minutes of meetings showed strong coverage of most KPIs although he confirmed that there was a need for governors to better demonstrate how performance management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, were being used to improve teaching and leadership and management. The headteacher further reported that her performance management had been undertaken by the CEO for the Uttoxeter Learning Trust, with support from members of the governing body. A review meeting, however, was still to be arranged.

The chair referred to the KPI for engaging with stakeholders, including staff and parents. Although this KPI was strong governors were informed that many of the parents' evenings and other open evenings had been attended by Mr Johnstone as governor representative. Following his resignation from the governing body it would be necessary for other governors to take on this responsibility.

The chair also reported that there was now also an additional KPI around the well-being of staff, as discussed at the previous meeting. Governors were informed that a staff committee had been established to look at measures in place to support the well-being of staff and agreed that it would be beneficial for a governor to support this committee. Mrs Perry offered to take on this link role.

With regard to the Governor Development Plan the chair confirmed that this continued to be updated as appropriate. Discussion followed and reference made to safeguarding and the governors' role in this. Governors were reminded that all governors must undertake the level 1 safeguarding course and also have read part one of the guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. This guidance had recently been sent to all governors with an instruction for them to confirm that they had read it.

It was resolved –

- i) That the chair be thanked for leading the training session and his review of KPIs.
- ii) That the chair be requested to raise the performance management of the headteacher at the next meeting of the ULT's School representation Board and arrangements for the review of any targets set.
- iii) That the headteacher be requested to circulate to governors all dates of planned parents' evenings etc during the current school year and for governors to confirm their availability to attend any of those meetings.
- iv) That governors thank Mrs Perry for agreeing to take on the link governor role for staff well-being.
- v) That Mrs Maingay be requested to deliver the level 1 safeguarding training course before the start of the next full meeting of the governing body, to start at 3.15pm and the main meeting to commence at 4.15pm, as the training course would take 1 hour.

160. Governing Body Matters:

- a) Appointment of Co-opted Governor
Governors were reminded that, following the resignation of Mr Johnstone, there was a need for a new co-opted governor to be appointed. The headteacher, although declaring an interest through friendship, suggested the appointment of Mr Jason Davey given his experience and knowledge around building controls. His appointment would add value to the governing body.

It was resolved –

That the chair be requested to make contact with Mr Davey and invite him to join the governing body as co-opted governor.

- b) Review of Committee Membership and Terms of Reference
The current committee membership and terms of reference had been previously made available in Office 365 and the headteacher reported that there was a particular need for membership to be reviewed given the number of recent resignations from the governing body. Discussion followed and questions raised around the quorum for committee meetings and the need to identify governor values within the terms of reference.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be requested to update the terms of reference to reflect governor discussions and for the updated terms of reference to be formally approved at the next meeting.
- ii) That the following changes be made to the committee membership:
 - Mr Barton – to move from Managing and Resourcing to Learning and Standards.
 - Mr Clarke – to move from Managing and Resourcing to Learning and Standards.

- Mr Osborne-Town to move from Managing and Resourcing to Learning and Standards.
- Mr Davey – to join Managing and Resourcing (subject to his appointment as co-opted governor).

c) Register of Business Interests

The clerk reported that the business interests' register continued to be revised to reflect changes to the governing body.

d) Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest for items to be discussed at this meeting.

161. Chair – Report of Actions Taken:

That chair reported that it had not been necessary for him to act on behalf of the governing body between this and the last meeting.

162. Chair – power to Act:

It was resolved –

That the chair continues to be given power to act on any urgent matters arising between meetings.

163. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2019 had previously been made available to governors in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes be received and approved, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 149(i) Behaviour and Attendance – Dover House to read Dove House.

164. Matters Arising:

a) Appointment of ULT Chief Executive Officer (Minute 148(a) refers)

The headteacher reported that Mrs Sarah Clarke had been appointed as chief executive officer and would take up post in January 2020. Mr Sutcliffe had been appointed as acting chief executive officer for the autumn term.

b) JCB Admission Arrangements (Minute 148(b) refers)

The headteacher that she had been invited to attend a meeting with the headteacher of JCB Academy although the purpose of the meeting was unknown. An update would given at the next meeting.

c) New First School in Uttoxeter (Minute 148(e) refers)

The headteacher reported that a decision on sponsorship of the new school was expected shortly.

d) Modern Foreign Languages (MfL) (Minute 149(b) refers)

The headteacher was pleased to report that there had been some improvement in MfL outcomes but more work was required. A more detailed update would be given later in the meeting.

e) Swimming Pool (Minute 149(h) refers)

The headteacher was pleased to report that the swimming pool was now fully operational and being used during the day at weekends.

f) Building Works (Minute 155 refers)

The headteacher reported that the building works continued, including repairs to the school roof. However, there had been some concerns around the safety of the scaffolding used for the roof repairs and that she had instructed the work to be put on hold until appropriate measures had been taken to improve safety. Work was again now underway and compliant with health and safety guidance. As a result, however, the completion of the work had been delayed. The matter had been discussed with Entrust to ensure that there would be no similar concerns when roof repairs in other areas of the school were undertaken the following year.

It was resolved –

That governors fully support the actions taken by the headteacher to ensure the health of safety of anyone on school site during the building work.

165. Committee Meetings:

Minutes from the last meeting of the managing and Resourcing committee, held on 18 June 2019, had been previously made available in office 365.

The headteacher reported that the Learning and Standards committee had met the previous week and had focussed on the school results 2019. At the request of that committee, the following two reports had been prepared for this meeting:

a) Pupil Premium Students

Mr Godwin circulated a report that had been discussed in detail at the meeting of the Learning and Standards committee, outlining the performance of pupil premium students and how they also compared against other students. Governors noted that pupil premium students had not out-performed other students in any of the subject departments. An outline was also given of the strategies that had been identified to support departments in underperformance of pupil premium progress. Full discussion followed and governors challenged the impact of the identified strategies to bring about improvement and the difference that pupil premium funding was making. They challenged in particular the levels of intervention in Maths in comparison to English. The headteacher confirmed that she would discuss this with department heads but also stated that although the grades of one or two students were below target, the outcomes in Maths were generally strong.

b) Sixth Form

The headteacher circulated a report outlining post-16 outcomes and the strategies that had been identified to bring about the required improvement. Governors were asked to note the financial implications of the improvement strategies. Full discussion followed and welcomed the report to identify improvement strategies and noted the importance for governors to monitor, and challenge where necessary, the impact of those strategies.

The headteacher confirmed that data tracking and performance updates would be shown in her future reports to the governing body for them to challenge, and support, where necessary.

It was resolved –

- i) That the reports of recent committee meetings be noted.
- ii) That the headteacher and Mr Godwin be thanked for their reports on post-16 outcomes and pupil premium outcomes respectively and that they be received and noted.
- iii) That governors request that they be kept fully updated at each meeting of the Learning and Standards committee and full governors on the impact of identified strategies to bring about the required improvement in these two key areas.

166. Headteacher's Report:

The headteacher circulated a detailed report on the work and activities of the school, a copy of which had also been previously made available in Office 365. Much of the report focussed on the 2019 school results and governors were again reminded that these had been discussed in detail at the recent meeting of the Learning and Standards committee.

a) Leadership and Management Score Card

The headteacher confirmed that the scorecard had been revised to reflect previous governor discussions and was pleased to report that the judgement for most of the scorecard remained good or outstanding. However, the number of students on roll remained a concern with attendance also below target. The headteacher reported that improvement remained a priority for the school.

b) GCSE Results 2019

The headteacher was pleased to report that the 2019 GCSE outcomes were again strong and would place the school in the top 20% nationally. Attainment and progress were both above the national average.

The performance of girls in comparison to boys was stronger which reflected the national picture although the headteacher indicated that the gap at Thomas Alleyne's was bigger than the national figure. Governors challenged what was being done to address this and the headteacher outlined a number of strategies that had been put in place, including the introduction of mixed ability teaching.

When looking at the performance of the different subject areas the headteacher reported that English was the most important area to be focussed on and outlined the reasons for this. Although the English results were in line with national average they were not as good as they should be for this school and the headteacher further reported that the School Improvement Plan had been revised to reflect a bigger focus on improving English.

The headteacher reported that a subject assessment of Y10 data against the actual results achieved had raised questions around the reliability of some of the assessment data and these were being addressed as a result. An outline was also given of the progress of the current Y11 students and their predicted grades. Continued data tracking would identify those students where intervention strategies may be necessary.

It was resolved –

That governors note the strong 2019 GCSE results and congratulate all concerned.

c) Post-16 Outcomes

As reported earlier in the meeting the headteacher confirmed that post-16 outcomes were not strong. Full discussion followed and governors questioned why strong GCSE results were not followed up with strong results at post-16. Improvement strategies had been outlined during earlier discussions and the headteacher further reported that the school was now a member of PiXL6 which was a school improvement partnership of over 1600 schools. This would help identify those schools where results at both GCSE and post-16 were strong and Thomas Alleyne's would work with those schools to help identify what more could be done to improve outcomes, particularly at post-16.

Governors were pleased to note that recruitment, and retention, to the 6th form was good.

It was resolved –

That the headteacher be requested to provide an update in her future reports on the impact of identified strategies to improve post-16 outcomes.

d) Work Scrutiny and Learning walks

The headteacher reported that a new programme for work scrutiny had been put in place and was aligned with the Ofsted framework. A full programme of learning walks continued and the headteacher was pleased to further report that these continued to show teaching as good with some outstanding practice.

Discussion followed and governors welcomed the findings from the learning walks but also felt that a trend analysis would help them better monitor the effectiveness of teaching. Previous discussions had also identified Psychology as the weakest 6th form subject and governors noted that the number of learning walks for this subject was comparatively lower than most other subjects.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be requested to include in future reports a trend analysis for learning walks to help identify strengths and weaknesses.
- ii) That consideration be given to increasing the number of learning walks for Psychology and to inform governors at future meetings of the impact of this.

e) Y9 Curriculum

The headteacher reported that mixed ability teaching had been introduced this year for all subjects other than English and Maths. This was to ensure more consistent group size and equal distribution of boys and girls across classes.

The headteacher further reported that students and parents would receive guidance during the autumn term regarding the options process. The school was committed to retaining a broad curriculum and allowing students to access 4 option pools. French would not be made compulsory for students but would continue to be marketed to consider this a strong option choice. Governors were asked to note that the implications

of this would be that the school would not meet the national target of 70% for the number of students entered for the Ebacc qualification.

It was resolved –

That governors fully support the introduction of mixed ability teaching and the retention of a broad curriculum through the offer of 4 option pools.

f) School Site

The headteacher reported that significant building work continued across the school site and outlined the progress being made with each of the projects.

It was resolved –

That governors place on record their thanks to the headteacher, school business manager and site staff for all of their work in overseeing the projects, particularly during the holiday period.

g) School Visits

Governors were pleased to note the many different school visits that continued to be arranged to enhance the learning experience of students.

h) Staffing

The headteacher gave an update on changes to the school's staffing establishment and was pleased to report that new members of staff were settling in well.

It was resolved –

That governors note the changes to the staffing establishment and request the headteacher to include in future reports the amount of time that staff leaving had been employed at the school.

i) Safeguarding

Governors noted the school's current safeguarding team and that Mrs Catterall, assistant headteacher, continued as the designated safeguarding lead. Discussion followed and governors questioned the need for the school to perhaps employ a full-time safeguarding lead.

It was resolved –

That the business manager be requested to look at which other schools were now employing a full-time safeguarding lead and to prepare a report to show the cost implications of doing this at Thomas Alleyne's.

j) Number on Roll

Governors noted that the number on roll remained below the school's admission limit. Mr Egerton reported that work continued in the planned new housing for the area and that this would likely lead to an increase in student numbers in future years. This would also result in further S106 funding being made available to the school.

It was resolved –

That the Managing and Resourcing committee be requested to further look at the available S106 funding to ensure that the school continued to receive its entitlement.

167. School Improvement Plan:

The headteacher reported that the School Improvement Plan had been previously made available in Office 365 and encouraged governors to read it in readiness for the school's next Ofsted inspection. The Steering committee would continue to monitor and review the Plan.

It was resolved –

That the School Improvement Plan be received and that governors would each focus on one particular area of the Plan and submit any views to the headteacher.

168. ULT Update and Update on Pay Policy:

As previously reported earlier in the meeting, a new chief executive officer for the ULT had been appointed.

The headteacher further reported that an updated Pay policy was still awaited but would be submitted to governors once approved by trustees.

It was resolved –

That governors await the updated Pay policy.

169. Safeguarding:

The headteacher reported that there were no specific safeguarding issues to report but informed governors that the school's Behaviour policy had been updated to reflect national guidance and had been considered in more detail by the Learning and Standards committee and its recent meeting. Governors were also reminded of the requirement for them to have read part 1 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document.

It was resolved –

That governors would read the document as required and confirm having done so in due course.

170. Other Business:

Marchington Students and Public Transport

The headteacher reported that parents of those students living in Marchington had raised concerns around students no longer being able to use the school bus. The headteacher reported that the changes were due to a national directive and not a decision of the school.

It was resolved –

That the chair would contact the local authority to raise concerns and that the headteacher should write to parents to inform them that the governing body was looking into this matter.

171. Evidence for KPIs:

The matters considered at this meeting met the following key performance indicators:

- KPI 3 – governors contribute to school's self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses
Evidenced through discussions around the School Improvement Plan and agreement of governors to focus on areas of the Plan and submit any views to the headteacher. (Minute 167)

- KPI 4 – governors provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and their behaviour and safety
Evidenced through governors, as requested by Learning and Standards committee, receiving reports from the headteacher on performance of disadvantaged students and strategies to bring about improvement in post 16 outcomes. (Minute 165)

Evidenced through discussions arising from the headteacher's report and the challenge to the headteacher to provide future evidence around the success of any improvement strategies put in place. (Minute 166)

Evidenced through request for headteacher to look at the number of learning walks for Psychology lessons. (Minute 166)

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

Evidenced through request for chair of governors to discuss with ULT trustees the arrangements for the performance management of the headteacher, including review meetings. (Minute 172)

- KPI 7 – governors operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities approved
Evidenced through level 1 Safeguarding course to be undertaken prior to the start of the next meeting.

Evidenced through a request for the business manager to prepare a report to look at impact of school employing a full-time safeguarding lead. (Minute 166)

- KPI8 –Governors engage with stakeholders, including staff and parents
Evidenced through a request for governors to attend future parents' or school open evenings. (Training session)

- KPI9 – Governors use Pupil Premium and other resources to overcome barriers in learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
Evidenced through consideration of the report to show the performance of disadvantaged students and the impact of pupil premium resources. (Minute 165)

172. Items for School Representation Board:

As discussed earlier in the meeting, the chair was requested to raise ULT arrangements for the headteacher's performance review and subsequent review meetings.

173. Confidentiality:

Governors were reminded of the need for confidentiality with regard to a number of issues 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 of the minutes.

174. Date of Next Meeting:

It was resolved –

- i) That the next meeting of the full governing body be held in the school on Monday, 2 December 2019 at 4.15pm.
- ii) That a level 1 Safeguarding course for governors be held prior to this meeting, commencing at 3.15pm.

M Prescott

Signed.....

2 December 2019

Date.....