

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the governing body held in the school on Monday, 10 June 2019 at 4.00pm.

Present:

Mr M Prescott (chair), Mr A Barton, Mr M Cruddas, Mrs P Curtis, Mrs B Davies, Mr B Egerton, Ms R Horry, Mrs K Fisher, Dr M Jary, Mr I Johnstone, Mr M Osborne-Town, Mrs L Perry, Mr P Taylor.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

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

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs S Brown and Mr S Clarke.

Governor Training – Ofsted Update (including staff wellbeing):

Prior to the start of the formal meeting, a short training session was led by the chair of governors with a particular focus on the changes to the Ofsted framework, including governor responsibilities for staff well being. Governors were informed that a reduction in teacher workloads should be a priority and one particular example as to how this could be achieved was data collection and the headteacher confirmed that she had already reduced the number of data collections undertaken throughout the year. The headteacher further reported on other actions she had taken to reduce teacher workload.

Discussion took place and governors asked if staff wellbeing surveys were undertaken and the headteacher confirmed that they were undertaken annually, during the second half of the autumn term. Findings were shared with the senior leadership team and the business manager outlined actions that had been taken in response to those surveys. The headteacher undertook to check if action plans agreed following the staff surveys had been previously shared with governors and gave an assurance that they would be shared in the future.

The chair also referred to the Governor Development Plan and reported that he would shortly be looking at KPIs identified following governing body meetings to see where improvement was necessary. This would include identifying necessary training activities, including in particular those around safeguarding. The revised development Plan would be shared with governors at a future meeting.

It was resolved –

- i) That the chair be thanked for leading the training session and reminding governors of their responsibilities around staff wellbeing.
- ii) That the School Improvement Plan should be revised to include necessary actions to support staff wellbeing and that a wellbeing group be established to comprise governors and staff representatives. Interested governors were asked to contact the chair.

145. Governing Body Matters:

a) Membership Update

The chair welcomed Mrs Perry to her first meeting of the full governing body following her recent election as parent governor. He further reported that Mr S Clarke had also been elected as parent governor but had been unable to attend this meeting due to other prior commitments.

The chair also informed governors that Mr Johnstone was retiring as a governor at the end of the school year. The headteacher paid tribute to Mr Johnstone for the full support he had given to her and the school, particularly through his representation at staff interviews, parents' evenings, disciplinary committees etc.

It was resolved –

That governors place on record their thanks to Mr Johnstone for the support he had given to the school and governing body during his period in office, including his support given to the initial establishment of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust.

b) Review of Committee Structure and Membership

The headteacher reported that this would be reviewed at the next meeting of the full governing body and that a copy of the current structure was available in Office 365. Governors were encouraged to look at the document before the next meeting.

c) Register of Business Interests

The clerk reported that the business interests' register was being revised to reflect recent changes to the governing body.

d) Declaration of Interests

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

e) Link Governor Reports

The chair reminded governors that copies of governor link reports could be found in the Steering committee folder in Office 365.

146. 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.

147. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019 had previously been made available to governors in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes be received and approved, subject to recording apologies for absence received from Mr B Egerton.

148. Matters Arising:

- a) Appointment of ULT Chief Executive Officer (Minute 131(a) refers)
The headteacher reported that trustees were interviewing candidates for the CEO post on 19 June and that headteachers and chairs of governors were also to be involved in the interviews.
- b) JCB Admission Arrangements (Minute 131(c) refers)
The headteacher confirmed that the changes to JCB Academy admission arrangements had been approved and that whilst this had little impact on admissions to Thomas Alleyne's for the current year, a greater impact was anticipated in future years. As such it continued to be kept under review.
- c) New Funding Formula (Minute 131(d) refers)
The headteacher again confirmed that there would be no additional funding for the current financial year, but the local authority had confirmed that any savings from the new funding formula would be passed on to schools in future years.
- d) Pay Policy (Minute 139(a) refers)
The headteacher confirmed that the ULT approved Pay policy had now been received and had been submitted to the Managing and Resourcing committee.
- e) New First School in Uttoxeter (Minute 142(b) refers)
The headteacher reported that a bid had been submitted, on behalf of the ULT, for sponsorship of the new first school to open shortly in Uttoxeter. The sponsorship bid had been put together by the chief executive officer with support from two other first school headteachers.

It was resolved –

That the report be received and that the headteacher be requested to pass on governor thanks to her headteacher colleagues for their work in putting a bid together and that they hope for a positive outcome.

149. 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. The headteacher also focussed on the School Improvement Plan headlines for 2019/2020.

- a) Leadership and Management Score Card
Governors noted that turnover of senior staff remained as a 'good' judgment with only 'some turnover'. Governors challenged the terminology used as it was unclear around the interpretation of senior staff given the recent resignation of a number of heads of department. Governors also made reference to the recently established risk register and suggested that staff turnover could be included on the register to help monitor possible future risks around staff turnover.

The headteacher clarified the make-up of the senior leadership team and confirmed that the resignation and appointment of heads of department were included in the staffing update shown later in her report. The headteacher also confirmed that 'some turnover' was the terminology used by Ofsted to give a 'good' judgment. The headteacher agreed though to look at the leadership and management scorecard with a view to adapting it

for future reports to help governors better understand possible risks around staff turnover to enable them to challenge and support as necessary.

It was resolved –

That the headteacher be thanked for clarifying the ‘good’ judgment given for the turnover of senior staff and that it be noted.

b) Years 10 & 11 Headline Data

The headteacher outlined the differences between the current two year groups and confirmed that the performance of Year 11 students was stronger. The possible reasons for this were outlined and the headteacher reported that the current focus was on the assessment of Y9 and Y10 students and intervention strategies being put in place as necessary to bring about improvement.

The headteacher further reported that, as discussed at previous meetings, Ebacc and Modern Foreign Languages (MfL) remained a concern, although following the recent appointment of a new head of department and a specialist leader in education for MfL it was hoped that there would be some improvement in student outcomes and the take-up in student numbers for French.

It was resolved –

That the Learning and Standards committee would continue to focus on improvements in MfL outcomes and seek evidence of the impact of the intervention strategies put in place.

c) Post-16 Data

The headteacher highlighted the Y12 data and outlined the different strategies that had been put in place to bring about the required post-16 improvements. The data showed the positive impact of those strategies and the recently completed review of the sixth form was the basis of the action plan to bring about continued improvement.

It was resolved –

That the Learning and Standards committee would also continue to focus on the necessary improvements to the sixth form and seek evidence of the impact of the intervention strategies put in place.

d) Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The headteacher outlined the impact of learning walks, lesson observations and work scrutiny to help identify the quality of teaching and learning. She was pleased to report that these showed that the quality of teaching and learning was at least good, with much outstanding practice. Governors were pleased to note the judgment but challenged actions taken in those teaching areas where outcomes weren’t as strong. The headteacher gave an assurance that any member of staff was given appropriate support to help bring about improvement, if necessary.

e) School and ULT Improvement Plan

The headteacher reported that priorities for the continued development and growth of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT) had been identified and they underpinned every School Development Plan (SIP), including Thomas Alleyne’s. A copy of the 2018/2019

SIP had been previously made available in Office 365 and governors noted that staff continued to evaluate outcomes against agreed targets.

The headteacher further reported that the 2019/2020 SIP was currently being developed and this too had been previously made available in Office 365. The Steering committee would look at the detail of it but governors were requested to let the headteacher know of any other areas that they may wish to see included in the 2019/2020 Improvement Plan.

It was resolved –

That the School Improvement Plan update be received and noted and that the headteacher be requested to arrange a governor training session to focus on the 2019/2020 SIP before the next meeting of the full governing body.

f) Staffing

The headteacher gave an update on recent staffing changes and was pleased to report that a number of strong appointments had been made. Possible reasons for the higher than usual number of recent staff resignations had been fully discussed at the recent meeting of the Learning and Standards committee. The headteacher also referred to recent staff changes in the English department and wished to place on record her thanks to Mrs K Fisher for the support she had given to this department and the school as a whole, but was leaving at the end of the current school year.

Governors noted and challenged the possible reasons for the increase in staff absences during the spring term 2019. The headteacher outlined the reasons for the increase.

It was resolved –

- i) That the staffing update be noted and that the headteacher be requested to include a staff organisation structure in Office 365 to help governors better understand any future staff changes and to help them challenge and support as necessary.
- ii) That governors note the reasons for the increase in staff absences and would continue to monitor future levels of staff absence.

g) CIF Bids

Governors were pleased to note the successful CIF bid for the re-roofing of large sections of the school. The headteacher reported that agreement had been reached for work to be carried out over a two year period to minimise disruption to the school.

h) Swimming Pool

The headteacher was pleased to report that work on repairing the swimming pool had now been completed and would shortly be filled with water prior to its re-opening.

It was resolved –

That governors place on record their thanks to the headteacher and other members of staff for all of the work undertaken to ensure that the swimming pool was able to re-open.

i) Behaviour and Attendance

The headteacher reported that work continued to improve overall student attendance but was pleased to further report that there had been an improvement in the attendance of persistently absent pupil premium students. The headteacher also reported on the Return to Learning unit in Dover House and was pleased to report that the revised strategies for isolating students to minimise classroom disruption were proving effective.

150. Managing and Resourcing Committee:

Minutes of meetings of the Managing and Resourcing committee held on 26 March and 7 May 2019 had previously been made available in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the meetings of the Managing and Resourcing committee held on 26 March and 7 May 2019 be received and noted.

151. Learning and Standards Committee:

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee held on 14 May 2019 had previously been made available in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the Learning and Standards committee held on 14 May 2019 be received and noted.

152. Steering Committee:

The chair reported that the Steering committee continued to meet with a particular focus on monitoring and reviewing the School Improvement Plan.

It was resolved –

That the update on the work of the Steering committee be noted.

153. ULT – School Representation Board:

Governors had been informed earlier in the meeting of the interview arrangements for the appointment of a chief executive officer and Mr Johnstone further reported that trustees were continuing discussions with several other schools with a view to them joining the ULT at some point in the future.

It was resolved –

That the ULT update be noted with thanks to Mr Johnstone for his continued attendance at meetings of the School representation Board.

154. Self Evaluation Form:

As reported previously the headteacher confirmed that work would continue on updating the School Improvement Plan and further reported that, together with the chair of governors,

the self evaluation form would be updated to reflect new Ofsted guidance which was expected shortly.

It was resolved –

That the headteacher be requested to keep governors updated on changes to the self evaluation form.

155. Health and Safety:

The headteacher reminded governors of the significant building work being undertaken across the school site but gave an assurance that appropriate measures continued to be taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. Work was being closely monitored by the Managing and Resourcing committee.

It was resolved –

That governors fully support the measures being taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff during the building work.

156. Safeguarding:

The headteacher confirmed that safeguarding remained a priority but that there were no specific issues to report at this moment in time.

It was resolved –

That the safeguarding update be noted.

157. Other Business:

a) ULT Trustee/School Links

The headteacher reported that trustees had linked themselves with individual schools across the ULT and was pleased to report that Mr Slater, chair of trustees, was to be the link trustee for Thomas Alleyne's.

b) Pupil Premium

Governors discussed the importance of their role in understanding and challenging the impact of pupil premium funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students. The headteacher confirmed that this was a standard agenda item for all meetings of the Managing and Resourcing committee but agreed in future to also include a pupil premium section in her termly report to governors.

It was resolved –

That pupil premium funding and its impact should also be included as a standard agenda item for all meetings of the Learning and Standards committee.

158. 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 self evaluation form with a request for this issue to be included as a training item prior to the start of the next meeting. (Minute 149)
- 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 discussions arising from the headteacher’s report. (Minute 149)
- KPI 7 – governors operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities approved
Evidenced through the training session prior to the start of the meeting and a decision to establish a review group for staff wellbeing.

159. Date of Next Meeting:

Governors had been previously circulated with a meetings schedule for the school year 2019/2020. They noted that the next meeting of the full governing body was to be held in the school on Monday, 23 September at 4.00pm. The meeting would, as usual, be preceded by a governor training session (to focus on the School Improvement Plan) at 3.30pm.

M. Prescott
Signed.....

23 September 2019
Date.....