

**ESSA ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

MEETING HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON TUESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 5.00PM

Present: Jordan Turner, Nic Ford (Chair), Masud Kala, Ismail Kala, Farook Atcha and Martin Knowles (Principal).

In attendance: David Howarth (Finance Director), Hannah Alexander (Vice Principal), Michelle Stansfield (HR Director), Jennie Sidebottom (Assistant Principal) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body).

Nic Ford in the Chair

PART 1

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Lucy Lees, Paul Davidson, Neelam Arshad and Andrew Cooper.

Membership

It was reported that a resignation had been received from Julia Pilkington.

It was reported that there had not been any interest in the parent governor vacancy, however, Helen Bradford-Keegan, the Assistant Head Teacher from Bolton School was interested in a Sponsor Governor position. The Chair asked whether it would be worth consulting local community groups regarding the parent governor vacancy. Farook Atcha agreed to speak to Ibrahim Kala to see if he would be interested in applying for the vacancy.

Vice Chair

It was agreed to leave the appointment of Vice Chair until the next meeting to allow those governors not in attendance at today's meeting to have the opportunity to nominate themselves for this position.

Sub-Committees

It was agreed that the following sub-committees would be established:

Finance and Premises

Membership: Masud Kala (Chair), Wasim Raja, Farook Atcha and David Howarth.

Standards and Effectiveness

Membership: Nic Ford, Ismail Kala, Jordan Turner, Jennie Sidebottom and Hannah Alexander.

Safeguarding

Membership: Lucy Lees (Chair), Paul Davidson, Neelam Arshad and Chris Airey.

The Clerk advised that each sub-committee would need to adopt terms of reference.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

2. Finance/Budget Report

Budget Monitoring Report

A draft outturn report to 31 August 2018 was presented. This showed that there had been an overspend of £228,000. The Board had agreed an overspend of £157,000 at the beginning of the year and then had subsequently agreed further amounts of £55,000 and £22,000. At the end of the year the budget had been £6,000 under the agreed overspend, however, the income had been £3,000 under budget. It was noted that there had only been 11 months of the pupil premium included and there was also a pupil premium debtor from 2014/15 of £23,000 which has now been released. Additional funding had been received in respect of SEN funding and Cadet funding. The Finance Director explained that the auditors would investigate why the income had been £3,000 less than had been expected.

The staffing budget had been overspent by £51,000, this was due to the SLT members having been appointed in April, however, this was offset by the Executive Principal having left in April. It was noted that the staffing budget had also included severance payments. A Governor asked what impact this had had on reserves. The Finance Director explained that the Trust reserves were 1.293 million against an overspend of £164,000. There had been substantial savings from central services and there had been an accrual of £120,000 from electricity. The VAT debtor had released £26,000 and there had been savings of £165,000 resulting in the reserves now standing at 1.128m. A Governor asked for an explanation of the £23,000 debtor. The Finance Director explained that the debtor had been carried on the balance sheet. A trade creditor should have been included in 2014/15 but this had never been released resulting in a loss of £23,000. The Principal explained that this highlights a bigger issue in that the pupil premium funding is ring fenced. The Principal questioned how the auditors could have missed this £23,000 previously and the £16,000 relating to the Executive Principal. A governor explained that auditors work on a materiality level which is about £200,000. The Finance Director reported that following a tender process, new auditors had been appointed: Haynes Watts who have more experience in carrying out educational audits. The Principal expressed concern that other issues

could arise going forward. A governor added that the internal processes needed to be resolved first.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted.

3. HR UPDATE (Confidential item)

This item was designated as confidential under Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy *thereby excluding the information from that which is to be made available to any interested persons.*

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Agreed:

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 June 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

At the last meeting it had been agreed that 20 whiteboards could be purchased. Mrs Sidebottom explained that it had been decided to go for a mixture of devices to allow faculty leaders to choose what was best for their department. This included a mixture of Smitboards, whiteboards and pull-down boards.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal introduced the new members of the Senior Leadership team: Abbie Rock, Assistant Principal, who is also an art teacher and had been an AHT at her previous school. Ms Rock would be leading on Teaching and Learning and would be focusing on literacy, assessment and marketing. Jane Taylor, Head of Maths has now been appointed to the Senior Leadership team as Assistant Principal with responsibility for the Pupil Premium, interventions and outcomes. Prior to becoming a teacher Jane had been an accountant.

Faculty leaders were invited to the meeting to present the GCSE outcomes and answer governors' questions.

English Sam Cosgrove

It was reported that there had been a positive progress of 0.12 and this was better than national in English language. There had been significant progress in results and attainment. A governor asked what the key areas for focus will be going forward. Ms Cosgrove replied that predictions were a key area so that the correct interventions can be put in place, although similar percentages had been predicted staff were not identifying the individual students correctly. She added that she was aware which staff had over and under predicted. A question level analysis was currently being carried

out and a lot of work was planned on moderation and holding teachers to account for data.

A governor asked how many of the high prior attainers had achieved a Grade 6. It was explained that this was the weakest area as these students should have achieved similar grades to what they had achieved in maths and science. This was on the action plan. Lucy Yeomans, Assistant Principal would be helping with observations and planning in the department and looking at over and under predictions. It was planned that regular meetings would take place with the Head of maths to look at the targeted list of students.

It was noted that there is now time within the curriculum to do the revision. The after and before school interventions focus on a particular group of students.

A governor asked how accurate the prediction had been. Ms Cosgrove replied that the prediction was between 3 and 4% off but it was not the right students. A governor asked why this had happened. Ms Cosgrove replied that it was difficult to predict in English and a lot of staff were being cautious.

Science Nabeela Ghuffar

There had been a 44% pass rate in Combined Science which was still 11% below the national average. It was reported that the data would be right once the teaching is right. This year the department is fully staffed. There are 7 NQTs in the department who can be trained up.

There had been an issue with the gender and SEND gap and predictions had not been accurate. It was explained that there had been a new specification on a 17-point scale and three members of staff had carried responsibility for all 120 students. There were now 11 strong staff in the department who all know what a Level 5 looks like. Last year the classes had to be split due to staffing leaving in October.

Those students who should not have been studying triple sciences have been taken off the course and put on Combined Science. It was explained that it was now about getting the message out to the community that students need Level 7 or above in all subjects rather than triple sciences. The Chair added that parents need to know that English also needs to be at that level. There were five students studying triple science and they would be stretched as far as possible.

A governor asked what the provision for the SEND high prior attainers was. Miss Ghuffar replied that she was working with the Senco on practical skills and access arrangements for those students taking the triple award. It was proposed that there would be an entry level exam for those students who would not be doing the Maths and English GCSEs. This would be offered to some EAL students who had not been long in the country.

Mr Ford offered support from Bolton School with assessment.

A governor asked whether there were specialists in each of the science subjects. Miss Ghuffar explained that there were two chemistry specialists, the Head of Department

and one other teacher Physics specialists and the remainder were Biologists. Most of the cohort were following Combined Science. The Principal commented that it was remarkable for the department to have two physics teachers. The next challenge was to develop teaching and learning. He added that physics and chemistry teachers would be targeted when any of the biology specialists move on.

A spiral curriculum was being used in the department for years 7 to 11. This was based on the AQA scheme of work tailored to the students. The department was also part of the Brilliant Club which fits into the Essa Experience.

Ms Alexander added that for the Year 8 to 9 options the top cohorts had been defined and conversations with Year 8 parents had already taken place.

MFL Ruth Koller

There had been concerns in the language department and Ms Coller was now managing them. There had been continued success in Urdu with 57% of students achieving Grade 7 to 9.

It was explained that the current Year 11 had to pick a language, and some were studying Urdu who had not wanted to do so.

There had been a substantial decrease in the Spanish results; there had been just one Spanish teacher in the department. A governor asked which area of the curriculum was pulling the results down. Ms Coller explained that Speaking and Listening had declined. There was now a new Spanish teacher in the department who has not yet had the opportunity to identify what the issue is.

It was noted that all Year 10 and 11 students had been forced to study a language previously because of the Ebacc.

There would be more mocks for students to be tested on speaking and those students of lower ability have targeted lessons. Several students in years 10 and 11 have come off Spanish and Geography lessons and a Year 11 Photography group has been established.

Year 9 pupils would be targeted to study a language. Currently the Year 10 and 11 classes were studying Spanish.

The academy was receiving support from the Head of MFL at another school via the Alliance for Learning. The Principal added that the former Head of MFL, the Spanish and German teacher were no longer working at the school. Two new native French speakers had been appointed and the core offer in languages is now French and Urdu.

Humanities Ruth Koller

There had been improvements to the results in Humanities. The department had consisted of two NQTs, the Head of Department and the Principal with the results having been better than expected. A new History teacher and Religious Studies teacher had been appointed just before the exams. This was the first year of these

particular exams. It was noted that the subject knowledge had been enough to get the high prior attaining students through. Next year students would be studying the AQA syllabus which would give them better opportunities to achieve grades 7 to 9.

It was explained that there had been staffing issues last year in history. It was noted that Pupil Premium students had performed well. Support had been received from a Support Assistant, who is also a history graduate, who had provided intense intervention.

History results had improved by 47% which was higher than the national average by 8%. Results in Religious Studies had been 7% below the national average.

Maths Sophie Perry

Progress had been positive at 0.37. There had been an increase in attainment, however the school was below average at Level 4+. It was noted that the predictions had been accurate.

It was explained that there needed to be an improvement in progress for the low prior attainers.

The tiers were constantly being evaluated and there was a need to look at new targets to check whether the tiers were correct.

The gap between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium was not significant.

Question level analyses had been carried out on all topics.

There are 16 SEN students in the current cohort with 12 of them having targets of a Grade 2 or 3. It was explained that there was also a need to look at their progress.

The main focus would be on those students expected to get English and not maths, a push for those at a Level 4 to try to get to Grade 5 and also Grade 3 to try to get to Grade 4. There would also be a focus on Grade 6 to 7.

A governor asked how many students had got maths and not English. It was explained that this was around 8%, with the issues having been around comprehension.

Arts Alex Temms

It was explained that the Arts covers Art, Drama and Music.

Results in Art had been strong however, the number of passes at Grades 9 to 4 had declined.

There was an issue with the engagement of boys. It was noted that there were more Lower Prior Attainers opting for this subject. The scheme of work has been reviewed

and two new art teachers have been appointed to the department. Graphics and photography have now been introduced.

Ms Temms explained that she knew that there would be difficulties with the new specification in drama. Some of the students had been marked as a 0 in their practical because their performances had not been of the required length. It was explained that on the day of the exam they had rushed their performance. Students also needed to have extra-curricular engagement in this subject with a need to rehearse or practice. Momentum was being built lower down the school.

The results for GCSE music had been 100%, however, only 6 students had opted for the subject. There was an aim to encourage more students to take up music.

There was a visible difference in the department with two groups of students taking up music, with one of the groups being a strong GCSE group. The other group were studying AQA technical for music and drama.

Year 10 have already completed the AQA exam with 54% of students already at Grade 2 or above.

The main focus was the Quality Assurance of the department.

It was explained that all key areas of the faculty had underperformed as they had tried to deal with the issues themselves.

Health Faculty Sian Lewis

The GCSE group had achieved 41%, which was lower than the prediction. A governor asked what has been actioned to improve results. All courses were now vocational with no GCSEs being taught. A governor asked whether the value of these courses was still good enough for colleges. It was explained that colleges do accept the Cambridge National course.

A governor asked what the participation was like in Key Stage 3 in sport. It was explained that core PE only took place once per week as lessons had been cut which had led to a restriction in what was being taught. It was noted that the new coursework was based.

Computer Science and Business Paul Eaton

Computer Science results had been very strong being 20% above the national average. They had been slightly below the previous year's 100% result. It was noted that it was mainly high ability students studying these subjects. The students had been held up by controlled assessment because of the exam board having pulled it which had led to the loss of learning time.

The results in Business Studies had been disappointing as there had been a lot of borderline Ds. The subject was moving forward onto a new specification. It was explained that boys had suffered because of the controlled assessment. There was now a need to work on exam practice and to look at application and justification skills.

A governor asked what was being done to ensure that borderline students don't fall on the wrong side of the grade boundary. It was explained that the students would have a lot of exam practice. The teaching of the content was due to be completed shortly and this would be followed up by revision. A governor asked whether skills were being built in Year 3. It was confirmed that this was happening.

SEND Zoe McCall

Ms McCall reported that progress for SEND had not been good. She explained that she had taken over the role in January and found that provision had not been good enough and students had not been identified. There were 5 EHCPs throughout the school which was small for a school of this size and it was felt that this should be at least 20. The initial work carried out was to look at staff issues and understand the needs of the students. A plan had been put together and a department was recreated to include a safe space for students. Ms McCall explained that she was working with the outcomes team with the main focus being access arrangement including reading pens, keyboards and bilingual dictionaries. The Chair asked about how proof is put together to ensure that students are allowed extra time. Ms McCall explained that she was constantly having to remind faculties.

The next step was to work on increasing the number of EHCPs which in turn would increase funding and a plan would be put together for Year 11 intervention.

An EAL specialist across the Trust had been appointed. The Chair pointed out that there were different levels of EAL with those students newly acquiring English and those who were high level bilingual. The Principal explained that this is a key area which will be discussed at the Standards sub-committee meeting.

It was noted that the support for students with EHCPs was consistent however, there was a need for some specialist teaching assistants who have subject specialisms. A governor asked how the students were supported to make their option choices. Ms Alexander replied that moving forward faculties will own their own option choices.

A governor asked why with 154 SEND students on the SEN register there were only 5 EHCPs. Ms McCall replied that she had been working on promoting additional needs, including pushing I-pads with keyboards and encouraging students to use overlays. In order not to single out students with these needs in health all printing is done on yellow sheets so that this is collective rather than singling out individual students.

Target Setting Hannah Alexander

All students had been set FFT20 targets with the high prior attainers having FFT5 targets. The Year 11 students were staying with their current targets. The Progress 8 target was 0.01. Ms Alexander said that she was confident that an improvement in progress would be seen again this year. There had been a 7% improvement at Grade 4+ and a 4% improvement at 5+ and a 12% improvement at Grades 7 to 9. The Principal added that only attainment figures are published in Bolton, however, the academy was above the national average on progress and is probably around the fifth highest school for progress in Bolton.

Agreed : That the FFT 20 targets be approved.

Teaching and Learning Review Jen Sidebottom

Mrs Sidebottom reported that a Teaching and Learning review had been carried out on 12 September by the Alliance for Learning. It had been noted that behaviour for learning had improved. There had been a consistent approach for presentation and books, with the “do nows” being used consistently. There was still a need to improve pace and challenge. Schemes of work were in place.

Areas for improvement identified were:

- Planning for Progress
- Pace of lessons
- Challenge and pitch
- EAL
- Literacy
- Pupil Premium
- SEND

Challenges for the staff:

- Review ICT Support for school
- Improve co-ordination and leadership of SEND
- Science technician training (Health and Safety)
- IT problems regarding SIMS
- Reprographics
- Admin to support Teaching and learning.

It was explained that staff were doing their own printing and laminating. The Principal added that there needed to be a discussion around support services. It was explained that the academy budget is top-sliced by 12% for central services and the ICT service is part of this.

Non-negotiables had been worked on to include pact, strategic seating plan. The staff governor commented that the rewards system was working better.

Induction

There had been 26 new staff starting in September. An induction day had taken place in the summer. A staff handbook had been created and a comprehensive CPD package had been put together to link to priorities. The non-negotiables would be embedded, and the QA cycle would start for all staff. A governor asked if this had gone well. It was confirmed that it had, and that providing consistency is the key. A governor asked whose job it was to keep it updated. It was confirmed that this is done by Lucy Yeomans, Assistant Principal. A governor asked whether IRIS connect would be compulsory. It was confirmed that it would be part of the QA system. The Principal explained that middle leaders should be filmed first. A governor asked whether this

was connected through the network. The Principal replied that the academy does not have a network.

The Principal explained that the ICT infrastructure had been highlighted as an issue by the Teaching and Learning review and added that this would be flagged up with the Trust. The CEO had met with the ICT Manager to raise concerns. A governor asked how the 12% top-slice had been calculated. It was explained that this was a legacy issue and other MATs had a top-slice around 4%.

It was reported that the Pupil Premium funding had been set against the budget and it underpins a lot of the salaries. The budget would need to be restructured to free up the Pupil Premium. Jane Taylor is now the Assistant Principal with responsibility for Pupil Premium. The Chair added that Ofsted had asked governors about the Pupil Premium and they had reported that governors had not held the school to account for the pupil premium. Money had been locked down on contracts previously, but this has now been separated from the central funding. The Principal explained that outcomes needed to be tied to the job if this system was being used.

A governor asked why an exact budget was not known. It was explained that this is the EFAT budget. The Principal explained that he would be proposing to EFAT that the academy should have more admin support as teachers were often carrying out administrative tasks which should not be undertaken under the teacher workload agreement. He added that the reduction in admin staff was a false economy.

A governor asked what the impact would be on the academy's budget if the top-slice was reduced to 4%. It was explained that the Head of the site was managed by the HR Director, the Head of Catering by the Finance Director and the IT manager was managed by the CEO. The Principal said that he felt that these members of staff should be managed by both Principals.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Approval of Policies

Agreed: That the following policies be adopted:

Restraint Policy
Reasonable Force Policy

It was noted that 12 members of staff had been trained in team-teach.

Kings Leadership Academy

The Principal reported that there had been a proposal that the King's Academy, which has schools in Warrington and Liverpool, would be opening on the land adjacent to

Essa Academy. Although this proposal has not yet gone through planning they were already advertising that a 1100 place academy would be opening in 2019. It was planned that they would be opening by using mobile classroom on the wasteland of the Essa site. The Principal advised that this would create traffic issues in the local area. It had also been proposed that the Vantage Trust would be opening a two-form entry primary school on the same site in 2020.

Staffing (confidential item)

This item was designated as confidential under Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy *thereby excluding the information from that which is to be made available to any interested persons.*

7. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS

It was agreed that consent be given to all governors who were absent from the meeting.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:

- That meeting dates for the next academic year be as follows:

Tuesday 13 November at 5.00pm

Tuesday 5 March at 5.00pm

Tuesday 11 June at 5.00pm

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Agreed:

That in accordance with Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy the following matters be designated as confidential:

Minute Numbers 3 and part of 6

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____