

## ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
 Time: 5:45pm  
 Venue: Laurus Ryecroft High School, Lumb Lane, Droylsden, Manchester M43 7LJ  
 Clerk: C Vogt  
 Present: J Lawson (Chair), L Booth, L Casey, S Marsden, M Vevers  
 In attendance: R Carling

Item	Action	Initials
1.1	JC will make contact with AA to check future attendance.	JC
1.2	The Clerk will ensure that LC is provided with a Declaration of Interests form.	Clerk
3.1	The Clerk will update the Academy Committee Annual report to the Trust Board and circulate to the Head and Chair for approval.	Clerk
4.1	RC to provide details of governance courses suggested by Tameside Borough Council which will be circulated to Governors.	RC/Clerk
4.2	The Clerk will clarify what is required in relation to the Governor Competency Framework/Effective Government Handbook and advise Governors accordingly.	Clerk

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	S Marsden (SM) joined the meeting via video link. A Ali (AA) did not attend. L Casey (LC) was welcomed to the Committee and a round-table introduction was made. <b>Action 1.1: JC will make contact with AA to check future attendance.</b>	JC
		AOB items	None.	
		Register of interests	There were no amendments to the Register of Interests. <b>Action 1.2: The Clerk will ensure that LC is provided with a Declaration of Interests form.</b>	Clerk

		Code of Conduct	The Committee <u>agreed to</u> adhere to the Code of Conduct.	
		Part 1 Minutes	The minutes of the meeting on 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2021 were <u>approved</u> as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
		Membership: Recruitment Update/Succession Planning	MV confirmed that nominations for parent governor had closed today. There had been two nominations and a ballot will now take place. <b>Q: JC queried if the nominations were both from Y7 parents?</b> A: MV said this was the case.	
		Scheme of Delegation	The Clerk confirmed there had been no significant changes and the Committee noted the Scheme of Delegation.	
		Trust Board Update	MV advised that the last Trust Board meeting had focused on the whole Trust Development Plan and Covid risk assessment. <b>Q: JC asked what was the reason for pausing admissions at Hazel Grove High School (HGHS) Sixth Form for two years?</b> A: MV said the sixth form building was not fit for purpose. The pause would allow building work to take place for which funding and planning was now in place. JC commented that the report stated that the Laurus Free School was still going ahead. MV confirmed this was the case but the process had not yet progressed far. <b>Q: JC wondered how the nursery at Gorsey Bank (GB) would be funded?</b> A: MV was not certain, commenting that GB had a great reputation and the addition of a nursery would be of benefit.	

2	School Performance & Accountability	<p>Review Strategy and Development Plan, including Strategic Priorities and Critical Success Factors (school level) in line with Trust priorities</p>	<p>MV presented the School Development Plan (SDP) and KPIs, advising that these were updated annually. The key points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff development underpinned the four cornerstones outlined in the SDP.</li> <li>• The whole school actions had been discussed and planned by the Leadership Team. There were some additions this year resulting from the pandemic. Final agreement had been made at a meeting today on who would lead each action.</li> <li>• KPIs had been distilled into key areas of focus which could be measured more easily by the Committee. Governors agreed that the KPIs highlighted were tangible and easy to comprehend, and should be included in future reporting. MV reassured the Committee that all of the KPIs would be continued to be worked on by the school.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q: JC asked if the targets were realistic or optimist?</b> A: MV said the school was aiming high. Whilst KPIs will be met, that might not be the case with all of the targets. The school’s ambition was to be the best in the borough. In relation to appraisal objectives, staff were ambitious.</p> <p><b>Q: LC wondered if any school targets were more ambitious than others?</b> A: MV advised that the target of 72% above grades 9 -5 in English and Maths was a huge target. It had been difficult to measure progress because of the pandemic. In November, it should be possible to have a better understanding of where Y10 were and this would be reported at the next Academy Committee (AC) meeting. The school was still in recovery phase and there was no way of comparing nationally. RC commented that an attainment of 62% would put Laurus Ryecroft (LR) within the top 5% of schools. However, MV wanted to aim even higher, with LR being one of the best nationally. A Progress 8 grade above 1 may be high too but MV would like to think this was achievable.</p>	
			School Curricula and Assessment	MV confirmed that the school curricula and assessment criteria were being followed.

		<p>Review Head of School Report</p>	<p><u>Head of School Report</u></p> <p>MV advised that JC had suggested including commentary on what MV was most proud of and what was causing the most concern. For the former, it was the Y9 GCSE Spanish results this year, with 41% of students reaching Grade 7+. Three years of preparation had been disrupted by Covid and the exams cancelled. It was frustrating not to be able to prove the success externally but there had been a rigorous process in awarding the grades. Other subject leader specialists from schools within the Trust had been brought in to ensure assessment processes were fair. The uniqueness of the teaching was a significant factor with pupils encouraged to focus on speaking Spanish first and then go onto writing.</p> <p><b>Q: JC asked if that was the case with other languages?</b></p> <p>A: MV said this was the case for all modern languages but Latin was different. Whilst Latin was a 'loss leader', with only 5 students taking the course, the school was aspirational and wanted to ensure it was a KS4 option. RC commented that there was a full range of students in Y9, including Oxbridge prospects.</p> <p><b>Q: JC wondered if there had been any surprises in relation to KS4 options chosen?</b></p> <p>A: MV commented that most of Y9 had wanted to take hospitality which was due to the popularity of the subject at KS3. Several master classes had been held to give pupils a taster of what the courses would be like.</p> <p><b>Q: JC queried why the Hospitality course was BTEC rather than GCSE?</b></p> <p>MV responded that the school wishes to provide a range of subjects that were not just GCSE. Certain courses suited some learners better and it was felt that the Hospitality BTEC was a superior course. For some subjects like Media, both options are offered to tailor requirements to suit a particular student.</p> <p><b>Q: JC asked if the school was confident that each pupil has chosen the right topics for their own requirements?</b></p> <p>A: MV said that the school looked carefully at options chosen, in consultation with students and parents.</p>	
--	--	-------------------------------------	--	--

			<p><b>Q: LC wondered if there had been any issues with students wishing to change their options at the start of term?</b></p> <p>A: MV said there were very few wishing to change but there is scope to do so, if required.</p> <p><b>Q: JC wanted to know about any students struggling. How could they be put back on track?</b></p> <p>A: MV replied that, due to the disruption with Covid, the new Y7s were the most difficult cohort. Some baseline testing would take place in English and Maths but the school was being careful in doing the assessments to ensure these new students were not unduly affected. Any issues with Y9 and 10 had been picked up in the summer. English was included as part of the electives, as it had been more difficult for students to engage with the online studies. The school felt that working with students direct, rather than bringing in external tutors, was the better option as staff knew the pupils best and where the gaps were. RC commented that the current Y8 had settled very well.</p> <p><b>Q: LC asked was the school confident that there were robust procedures in place for those whose attendance is poor?</b></p> <p>A: RC said the school was very confident and absence was still significantly below national figures. There were a couple of refusers and there had been successful prosecution. There were some students who had behaviour issues but the school was not reducing their timetable. MV remarked that the Head of the PRU had commented that there had been no referrals. This was because the school preferred to deal with issues in-house wherever possible. Monies expended for the PRU service will be used for support in other ways, such as on elective programmes.</p> <p>Behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were being dealt with together by the pastoral team which includes a designated social worker, the SENDco and Head of Year. SEND attendance was nearly 94% during Covid, and behaviour had improved. 18% with 100% attendance was a very strong result. SM had met with RC to check on SEND. SM said the discussion had been very informative, in part focusing on providing training to staff and students to be aware of issues such as FGM, county lines and peer on peer abuse. Other areas which were being highlighted to SM as areas of increasing concern were e-safety globally, sibling on sibling abuse, gambling through the use of gaming equipment,</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

		<p>and eating disorders. Details had been provided to RC with the suggestion that hashtags be added to school computers to provide alerts for any of these issues. OFSTED expectations had also been discussed, including keeping evidence chains. Sexual harassment and exploitation were key areas of focus. RC said that staff had been appraised of the importance of logging concerns on CPOMS. Monthly sampling was taking place to understand any spikes and patterns. RC confirmed that staff had been trained in considering local issues, such as FGM.</p> <p>Going onto the matter of most concern, MV said that Covid was the most pressing issue. Any future restrictions could impact heavily on education. There were currently 6 confirmed live cases in school. Public Health had been very helpful in providing clear direction and measures were in place to mitigate any potential outbreak. This included the holding of virtual Open Evenings. Tours of the building will be possible but with limited numbers. Governors asked if there was any way the AC could support the school. MV thanked Governors but said there was no particular help required currently.</p> <p><b>Q: JC asked what was the plan for the vaccination programme in school?</b></p> <p>A: The programme would be administered by NHS staff; with schools simply sending out information and providing the results to the administration team. MV remarked that there was some concern about anti-vax protesters.</p> <p><b>Q: LC asked if there was guidance on how to deal with any fallout, such as where there were disputes between child and parent?</b></p> <p>A: MV said it was not the responsibility of the school to become involved. If there were any issues, parents would be directed to a contact at Tameside Borough Council. The advice had been to call the Police if there were anti-vax protesters.</p> <p><b>Q: LC wondered if a child was affected by the vaccine and took time off school, would this be classed as Covid absence?</b></p> <p>A: It was unclear how this would be recorded and the school will look into this.</p>	
--	--	---	--

3	Governor Monitoring	Finance Update	<p>Governors received the Management Accounts for July 2021.</p> <p>MV commented that the aim was to spend surplus for the benefit of students. Retractable seating for the library had been purchased, as well as an external cover to allow students to go outside in bad weather.</p> <p>A large screen for the sports hall had been ordered. This would be beneficial for morning meetings, as well as recording PE to show on screen and improve performance.</p>	
Policy Reviews		<p>Governors <u>approved</u> the changes to the School Uniform Policy.</p>		
Curriculum Policies (e.g. Religious Education and Relationships, Sex Education), Behaviour and Welfare Policies (ensure in line with statutory guidance)		<p>MV confirmed that all policies were in line with statutory guidance, details of which were on the school website.</p>		
Safeguarding and SEND Link Governor Updates		<p>SM reported that some students were being assessed for EHCP but a more detailed report would be given at the next meeting, once final decisions had been made.</p>		
Educational Achievement of Looked After/Previously Looked After Children (Designated Teacher Update)		<p>RC said that 3 such children had joined at the start of the year and there were 5 previously. The school had taken credit for the new students within Fair Access. There were significant concerns about two students, with emergency meetings planned with professionals. For one student, an alternative school would be suggested as all reasonable adjustments and support had been put in place by the school. SM commented that one of the looked after students had benefitted greatly from going on the Military Mentors programme.</p>		

		Governor Self Review of Impact	<b>Action 3.1: The Clerk will update the report and circulate to the Head and Chair for approval.</b>	Clerk
4	Governor Development	Governor Training – Review Trust Training Plan	It was noted that SM had undertaken a number of training courses and JC said that the focus should be on all governors taking further courses this year. <b>Action 4.1: RC to provide details of courses suggested by Tameside Borough Council which will be circulated to Governors.</b>	RC/ Clerk
		Governor Competency Framework/Effective Government Handbook	<b>Action 4.2: The Clerk will clarify what is required for this item and advise Governors accordingly.</b>	
5	Community Engagement	Stakeholder Engagement on notable activities with Staff/Parents/Students /Governors	<p><b>Q: JC wondered if there had been any progress with community engagement?</b> A: MV said relations with neighbours generally were very good. There were some current issues with proposed roadworks, including a crossing for students. The placement of this crossing and movement of the bus stop was causing concerns, with objections being raised locally.</p> <p><b>Q: JC asked if a list of events for Governors to join could be provided?</b> A: RC suggested the upcoming Exploitation workshop, and Y7 Maths and English evenings for parents would be good opportunities.</p> <p><b>Action 5.1: RC to provide a list of events which Governors can attend.</b></p> <p><b>Q: SM asked whether the school was considering running an online e-safety course for parents?</b> A: RC said that parents were provided with a link each month to a PDF from the National Online Safety website. SM was concerned that some parents may not look at the website and it was important to provide other forums for those parents who did not access information via the computer. RC said an e-safety evening was a good idea.</p>	
	AOB		None. There being no other business to discuss, this part of the meeting closed at 7:24pm.	
	Meeting Dates:	All meetings start at 5.45pm	Autumn Term 2    Thursday    25.11.2021 Spring Term        Thursday    03.03.2022 Summer Term       Monday      21.06.2022	

## Agenda – Part 2

The press and members of the public to be excluded from the meeting at this point under 2003 (school governance procedures) (education) regulations because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Category	Item	Notes	Action
----------	------	-------	--------

### Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes

- Leo Casey was welcomed onto the Academy Committee as a new Governor
- Governors heard that a ballot for a Parent Governor to join the Committee was taking place
- Governors reviewed significant KPIs and will continue to track these at future meetings
- The July management accounts for the school were reviewed and spend of surplus for the benefit of students noted
- Governors will aim to attend appropriate school events, such as the Y7 Maths and English evenings for parents
- Governors suggested an e-safety evening was held by the school for parents

Signed by the Chair :

*Julie Crawford*

Date:

25.11.21