

ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday, 25th November 2021
 Time: 5:45pm
 Venue: Laurus Ryecroft High School, Lumb Lane, Droylsden, Manchester M43 7LJ
 Clerk: C Vogt
 Present: J Lawson (Chair), A Ali, S Marsden, H Rizvi, M Vevers
 In attendance: R Carling

Item	Action	Initials
3.1	The Annual Academy Committee Report to the Trust Board to be updated with Governors' suggestions of impact	Clerk
4.1	The Clerk will ask the HR Department to reissue the GDPR email to AA	Clerk
4.2	The Clerk will check the Pupil Premium course recommended by the Trust and advise SM accordingly.	Clerk

Agenda – Part 1			
Category	Item	Notes	Action
1	Governance Arrangements	Welcome and Apologies	The Chair welcomed H Rizvi (HR) to the Committee as the newly-elected Parent Governor. A round-table introduction was made. Apologies were received and <u>approved</u> from L Booth and L Casey.
		AOB items	None.
		Register of interests	There were no amendments to the Register of Interests. The Clerk confirmed that the register had been updated with HR's details.
		Code of Conduct	The Clerk advised that HR had agreed to adhere to the Code of Conduct.
		Part 1 Minutes	The minutes of the meeting on 20 th September 2021 were <u>approved</u> as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Governors noted that all actions had been completed.
		Membership: Recruitment Update/Succession	The Chair advised that the Academy Committee was required to appoint a Vice Chair, with particular responsibility for Trips and Visits. The appointed

		Planning	<p>Governor would be responsible for approving Category 3 trips which could be done via Teams.</p> <p>Any Governors interested in the role were asked to notify the Head and Chair by Friday, 3rd December 2021.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to accept S Marsden's (SM) offer of taking on the role of Pupil Premium Governor, in addition to the SEND and Safeguarding Governor roles.</p>	
		Scheme of Delegation	The Clerk confirmed there had been no significant changes to the Scheme of Delegation which was noted by the Committee.	
		Trust Board Update	<p>The Committee noted the Trust Board Report from October 2021.</p> <p>Q: The Chair asked if there was any indication when an Ofsted inspection might take place?</p> <p>A: The Head advised that the school had no knowledge of when the inspection would happen but it was clear that Ofsted were increasing their work base to carry out more inspections.</p> <p>Governors heard that SM was in contact with a Governor from another school who had been through an inspection as Safeguarding Lead. This person would be able to provide useful information for when Laurus Ryecroft's inspection took place.</p> <p>Q: The Chair asked if clarification could be given on the changes to the school's admissions policy, as noted in the report?</p> <p>A: The Head advised that admissions had been set at 220 pupils for the last two years to assist Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council but next year the school was reverting to 210.</p>	
2	School Performance & Accountability		<p><u>2.1 SDP 2021-22</u></p> <p>Governors noted the SDP for 2021-22.</p> <p><u>2.2 SDP 2021-22 KPIs & 2.3 SDP 2021-22 KPIs AA Autumn 2</u></p> <p>Governors heard that that a summary of key KPIs had been included in document 2.2 which would be reported on each time, as agreed at a previous Academy Committee Meeting. The Head advised that document 2.3 provided focus on academic aspirations, looking at the development of and changes to the curriculum post-lockdown.</p>	

School Performance & Accountability		Review School Development Priorities	<p><u>2.4 (a-g) English</u></p> <p>The Head explained that these documents had been provided to Governors to explain the process in setting the curriculum and to reassure Governors that the KPIs were being met. The Curriculum Statement, which was on the school’s website, was a declaration of intent and referred to students gaining ‘powerful knowledge’ as distinct from knowledge acquired from everyday experience. Such knowledge helped unlock the discipline for the student. The curriculum sequence had been outlined to provide a broad overview of what was covered in English. Pupils started with historical texts and moved to more contemporary ones which allowed them to understand the development of story over time.</p> <p>Q: SM asked if there was an overlap with History? A: The Head said there was an overlap but the school was careful to acknowledge that it was sometimes difficult for students to move from one discipline to another and links between needed careful planning. HR advised that, from personal observations in the classroom, English texts were referenced to a historical period.</p> <p>The Head informed Governors that the English curriculum was cross-checked against the National Curriculum, although the Trust’s aim was to go above and beyond those requirements. An annual audit was carried out each year and the school was comfortable that all subject areas met essential criteria.</p> <p>The Chair said the information provided was fascinating and the Head suggested that it might be helpful if a subject leader was invited to attend future Academy Committee meetings to discuss their area in more detail.</p> <p>The Head added that the intention was for students to develop substantive knowledge from which they could also develop disciplinary knowledge. For example, in History the latter would result in the act of ‘thinking like a historian’.</p> <p>Q: The Chair asked if the same texts were being used across the Trust? A: Yes, the school’s Head of English, Pam Iwantschak (PI), was at the forefront of the English curriculum and was working with the trust director to develop the subject across the schools in the Trust.</p> <p>Governors heard that it was important to ascertain</p>	

			<p>what had been missed during lockdown and ensure key concepts were incorporated into the curriculum.</p> <p>Q: The Chair asked how difficult was it to encourage children to read books for pleasure rather than for GCSE?</p> <p>A: The Head said it was impossible to make a child do this, as reading would no longer be pleasurable if forced. It was more important to develop a culture of reading. PI led on the reading strategy, and the school supported reluctant readers or those who found it difficult to engage. A suggested reading list was provided for each year group. Lockdown had impacted the prevalence of reading but the situation was improving now students were back at school.</p> <p>Governors discussed the difficulties in students engaging with written texts due to other forms of electronic media being easy to access. HR remarked that because children had information always readily available, they found it more difficult to use their imagination. The Head said that the school provided disciplinary reading for a particular subject area to help engage students.</p> <p>Q: HR wondered if the school was working with parents to encourage the discussion of books with children and reading at home?</p> <p>A: The Head said that an event for parents had been planned but could not go ahead due to lockdown. However, this would take place as soon as the situation with the pandemic improved.</p> <p><u>2.5 (a-j) Science</u></p> <p>The Head said that threshold concepts, as a way of developing knowledge, were more prevalent in Science. These concepts provided a gateway for students into a deeper level of understanding of the subject.</p> <p>Q: HR asked if the Science curriculum went above and beyond the National Curriculum like English?</p> <p>A: Yes, concepts were taken to a deeper level than the National Curriculum at KS3. Some areas were covered that were not in the National Curriculum, as the school felt these were important spheres of knowledge. Evidence of the reasons for the deviation could be provided if required by Ofsted.</p>	
		School Curricula and Assessment	The Head confirmed that the school curricula and assessment criteria were being followed.	

		<p>Review Head of School Report</p>	<p><u>Head of School Report – Behaviour & Attendance Focus</u></p> <p>The Chair explained that the Head had been asked to report to the Committee on the school’s main concerns, as well as its proudest achievements. This would enable the Academy Committee to see how Governors could help the school, as well as noting its key successes.</p> <p>The Head advised that the current main concern was the impact of the global pandemic. Attainment of Y7 students was not as strong as previous years, although the results from the assessments were higher than expected given the disruption. Attendance was also not as good as pre-pandemic.</p> <p>Q: SM queried if attendance was still higher than national average?</p> <p>A: Yes, but the school still wanted as many pupils as possible in school. There had been approximately 60 cases of Covid since the start of the year, although this was not as many as some other schools. The vaccine programme had been completed. It was difficult to see how the situation could change much this academic year which was frustrating in terms of recovery. Staffing could prove an issue if Covid cases increased, as it was difficult to source supply teachers. There had been a small change in behaviour in the Y7 cohort due to the multiple lockdowns but nothing of particular concern.</p> <p>The Head was most proud of the summary of electives provided in the report. The extra-curricular offer was a true strength of the school.</p>	
			<p>The bronze Duke of Edinburgh award programme had started and the Combined Cadet Force run by the RAF would commence in the New Year. The Chair remarked that remarkable progress had been made with the extra-curricular offer, given the disruption caused by the pandemic.</p> <p>Q: The Chair asked if the Head could provide more information on Apertura and Laurus Steel?</p> <p>A: The Apertura after-school programme was available for the most able students who had the capacity to do more. It enabled pupils to develop, discuss and debate unique issues. Laurus Steel was a steel band, and development of Music was being enhanced across the Trust with the new Director of Music.</p>	

3	Governor Monitoring	Finance Update	Governors received the Management Accounts for October 2021 and noted that the school was considering ways of utilising spare funds for the benefit of children. One of the ideas was to look at splitting rooms to provide additional space. R Carling (RC) joined the meeting at this point, having been detained at a Parents' Evening.	
		Policy Reviews	RC advised that there had been minor changes to the Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies. The latter included a focus on support for incidents of harmful sexual behaviour. Governors <u>approved</u> the changes to the Behaviour Policy and the Safeguarding Policy.	
		Curriculum Policies (e.g. Religious Education and Relationships, Sex Education), Behaviour and Welfare Policies (ensure in line with statutory guidance)	MV confirmed that all policies were in line with statutory guidance, details of which were on the school website. https://www.laurusryecroft.org.uk/curriculum-statements/	
		Governor Self Review of Impact	Action 3.1: Governors outlined the main areas of impact to be included in the report which the Clerk will update accordingly.	Clerk
4	Governor Development	Governor Training – Review Trust Training Plan	The Clerk asked that Governors continue to advise of any courses undertaken to ensure that the training log for Laurus Ryecroft was fully up-to-date. Also, that the annual GDPR training notified by the HR Department should be completed by Governors. AA was not certain of having received an email about this. Action 4.1: The Clerk will ask the HR Department to reissue the GDPR email to AA. SM was looking for appropriate Pupil Premium training and the Clerk advised that the Trust may have previously recommended a particular course. Action 4.2: The Clerk will check to see if there is a recommended Pupil Premium course and advise SM accordingly.	Clerk Clerk

5	Community Engagement	Stakeholder Engagement on notable activities with Staff/Parents/Students /Governors	<p><u>Virtual Tour of the School</u> Governors were shown the virtual tour of the school used for the Open Evening.</p> <p>Q: The Chair asked how the response had been to the Open Evening? A: The Head said that it was huge, with the website being the second most visited across the Trust. The school was already over-subscribed. For Tameside, it was over by 50 on first choices. Responses were awaited for Oldham and Manchester.</p> <p>SM remarked that the student support areas were observed to be full at lunchtime. RC said that this had been noted by the school and measures put in place to increase capacity to support those students. Four additional staff would assist and key changes would ensure the breakout areas were calmer.</p> <p>The Head advised that whilst Tameside MBC had stated that community events could take place with appropriate safety measures, the school was concerned that this could lead to a rise in Covid cases. Staff absence could have a huge impact, given that there was no agency cover available. As such, the school was holding off arranging any events. An advertisement had been placed for a Cover Supervisor.</p>	
	AOB		None.	
	Meeting Dates:	All meetings start at 5.45pm	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.				
Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes				
• H Rizvi was welcomed onto the Academy Committee as newly-elected Parent Governor				
• Applications were invited for the role of Vice Chair, with responsibility for Trips and Visits				
• S Marsden was confirmed as the new Pupil Premium Governor				
• Governors approved changes to the Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies				
• Governors looked in-depth at the curriculum offer for English and Science				

Signed by the Chair:



Date: 03.03.22

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