

THE BURGESS HILL ACADEMY

Minutes of the 2nd meeting of the governing body held on 18th October 2016

Present: Riika Jokelainen (Chair), Caroline Hill, Susan Thorpe, Ian Hughes, Peter Talarico, Richard Bowles, Linda Dorgan, Jon Francies (Principal)

Also present: Jenny Jones (U of B Academy Trust), David Pamment (clerk to the governing body)

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Anthony

1. Declaration of Business Interests

- 1.1 Caroline Hill declared her employment with the University of Brighton and Ian Hughes his employment on academies policy with the Department for Education.

2. Peer Review of Academy

2.1 Jenny Jones, the Academy Trust's lead on school improvement and the professional partner to the principal, was welcomed to the meeting. Jenny had visited the academy on 7th October to undertake the first peer review. This was the first of three expected visits and reviews in the academic year. Jenny had been accompanied on this review by Kay Tinsley, the principal of the St Leonard's Academy. She distributed a summary of her findings, described the process and commented on key issues arising from her visit.

2.2 The academy was demonstrating a number of strengths already. Building on a strong GCSE performance from the final year of the predecessor school she identified a positive attitude from students to learning; behaviour in the classroom and wider school was excellent and she noticed that students not only felt safe but generally were hard working, happy and keen to learn. Staff, especially middle leaders, were committed to the improvement agenda and aware of the actions required to raise standards and student progress. The senior leadership team had a clear understanding of the need for a more rigorous and robust approach to target setting, data capture and progress tracking going forward. The new principal had made an impact and created a sense of optimism about the future within the academy. Jenny wished in particular to mention the student body who she had found 'amazing' in their motivation.

2.3 She then highlighted the three key areas for development:

- to introduce a framework for teaching and learning that provides for teaching that is consistently good or better;
- to ensure data has integrity and is utilised to plan lessons and drive standards;
- middle leaders to demonstrate an understanding of their key accountabilities for standards and student progress

and outlined actions the Academy Trust would take to support the academy in meeting these objectives in particular through training and peer review.

Jon Francies further clarified a number of actions in place or planned to address the key development needs, including the setting up of a lead teacher group and a framework for teachers to use in helping to meet expectations of a good or outstanding lesson.

- 2.4 Governors discussed the findings of the review and focussed in particular on the role of middle leaders who they saw as crucial in driving forward standards. Governors agreed that middle leaders had to be fully engaged as an integral part of the leadership of the academy and were important 'cogs' in ensuring that staff received greater clarity and feedback. They asked if some staff were 'defensive' about the changes that Jon was seeking to put in place and were therefore reluctant participants. Jon said there may be one or two isolated instances of defensive attitudes but generally he was content that staff were fully engaged, optimistic and enthusiastic about the academy's future prospects.
- 2.5 The governing body thanked Jenny Jones for her presentation and looked forward to her next peer review visit in term 3 (January/February).

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the governing body meeting held on 13th September 2016 were agreed with the correction of minor typing errors

4. Matter Arising

4.1 **Sex Education Policy:** A draft based on the previous Oakmeeds policy had been circulated. It was agreed that this should be re-drafted by the relevant senior leadership team lead referring to the policy in place in the Hastings Academy and represented next time.

ACTION: John Francies

5. Results Data

- 5.1 Jon Francies presented the data summary of the 2016 GCSE performance which had been circulated to all governors. He referred governors firstly to the overall performance measures under the new accountability arrangements:

- Basics (students passing Eng.Lit/Lang or Maths	79%
- Progress 8	0
- Attainment 8 grade	5.42/c+
- Ebacc	28%

There were a number of issues to note:

- pupil premium students performed less well;
- girls generally outperformed boys
- many of the non-core subjects were lagging behind performances in English, Maths and Science

- 5.2 Governors also noted that last year's cohort like this year's, had entered the school with high expectations based on their primary school assessments. In this respect 86% of the current year 11 were assessed as being of middle to high ability range

which meant that progress and attainment levels were necessarily high. Governors also agreed that the emphasis on progress rather than attainment outcomes ensured that the academy would be able to focus on the achievements of all its students and not just the most able.

5.3 Jon Francies also distributed a table comparing the progress and attainment levels by Oakmeeds in 2016 compared to other local secondary schools. It was noted that three secondary schools in Mid-Sussex were within the top 20% of secondary schools nationally on Progress 8. He had set a target of the academy also being in that top 20% within 3 years.

5.4 Governors reviewed the remedial actions being taken in less well performing subjects with particular concerns expressed about PE and geography. Jon was asked to report back in due course on progress on these subject areas.

ACTION: Jon Francies

6. Academy Three Year Improvement Plan

6.1 John Francies presented an outline summary of the targets for students, staff and the wider community. Its key focus was on providing increasing challenge and enrichment for students and was informed by the targets set by the Academy Trust.

6.2 Governors did not have any difficulties in supporting the specified targets but thought the plan needed 'fleshing out' with action plans and timeframes linked to each target to facilitate closer monitoring of progress. Jon Francies agreed to re-draft and re-present.

ACTION: Jon Francies

7. Report from Pay and Performance Committee

7.1 The clerk reported on the outcomes of the meeting of the committee earlier that day. The committee had endorsed the principal's recommendations for incremental progression for those staff who had applied on both the main (MPS) and upper (UPS) scales which were based on the Pay and Performance policy agreed by the Oakmeeds governing body in 2015. In the case of two members of staff progression had not been recommended and the committee also supported this position. It was possible appeals would be made to the governing body in these two cases and would need to be heard by governors not involved to date.

7.2 Of greater concern was the fact that the current appraisal system at the academy was not working effectively and was a key priority for improvement. The principal would draft a revised Pay and Performance policy for the current academic year more in line with that used by other academies and mainstream schools and submit for governing body approval early next term (November).

ACTION: Jon Francies

8. Other Business

8.1 Proposed new Cof E Free School in Burgess Hill: Caroline Hill raised this for information and suggested the governing body needed to keep a watch on developments in case, if approved, it would have an impact on the academy in

terms of reduced student numbers. Ian Hughes explained the rationale for DfE approval of new free schools based on local need. The governing body agreed it was vitally important to increase the year 7 intake to the academy as a major year 1 Improvement Plan priority. Currently of 367 school leavers in its feeder primary schools only 143 students had moved on to the academy this September and this needed to increase significantly in 2017 not least because of the budgetary pressures that would result from continuing falling rolls.

8.2 Feedback on Year 7 Parents Evening: Jon Francies reported that some 250 families had attended the open evening on 30th September which augured well for possible applications for admission in September 2017. There had been a number of follow up morning events to promote the academy with local parents.

8.3 Governor Visits to Faculties: Governors agreed that regular visits and discussions with subject leaders were essential to creating rapport between governors and staff and to help governors gain a better understanding of key teaching and learning priorities. It was agreed that the principal and clerk should draw up a protocol, lead governors and timetable for visits.

ACTION: Jon Francies/David Pamment

8.4 DBS Checks for Governors: Linda Dorgan would co-ordinate action to ensure that all governors were properly vetted under the Disclosure and Barring Scheme.

ACTION: Linda Dorgan

8.5 On-Line Safeguarding Course: It was agreed that all governors should undertake this course. Linda Dorgan agreed to co-ordinate.

ACTION: Linda Dorgan

8.6 Future Agendas: It was agreed that Ian Hughes as lead governor should liaise with Jon Francies and present a report to the governing body next time on developments, progress and priorities for improving the performance of pupil premium students. Governors were also reminded that if they wished to place an item on the agenda for any of the monthly meetings they should inform the clerk up to 8 days prior to the meeting.

ACTION: Ian Hughes/ All governors

9. Date of Next Meeting: 6.00pm Tuesday 15th November 2016

ACTION PLAN

- 1. Present for approval revised Sex Education Policy** Jon Francies
- 2. Report back actions being taken to improve outcomes in less well performing subjects** Jon Francies
- 3. Present for approval academy Pay and Performance policy** Jon Francies
- 4. Re-draft and present three year academy improvement plan with measurable targets, action plans and timetables for implementation** Jon Francies
- 5. Draw up protocol, lead governors and timetable for subject area visits**
Jon Francies/David Pamment
- 6. Ensure that arrangements were taken for all governors to be vetted under the Disclosure and Barring Scheme** Linda Dorgan
- 7. Co-ordinate arrangements for governors to undertake on-line safeguarding course** Linda Dorgan
- 8. Prepare and present a report on pupil premium activity and progress**
Ian Hughes/Jon Francies