

**ESSA ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

MEETING HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2017 AT 9.30AM

Present: Anwer Patel (Chair), Julia Pilkington, Jordan Turner, Ismail Kala, Wasim Raja and Andrew Cooper (CEO).

In attendance: Andy Peet (Deputy Principal), David Mole (Finance Director), Michelle Pogson (HR Director), Julie Green (Director of Achievement - Item 6 only), Hannah Alexander (Item 6 only) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

Anwer Patel in the Chair

PART 1

1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES

1a) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Patrick Ottley-O'Connor, Paul Davidson, Nic Ford and Neelam Arshad.

1b) LGB Membership Update

The Chair reported that he had received a resignation from Christine Edge.

2. FINANCE AND RISK

Budget Report 2016-17

The Finance Director presented a report to the end of February 2017. It was reported that the budget position was positive with an underspend of just under £26,000 which took into account contributions from reserves; it was noted that the Board had approved a contribution of £105,000 from reserves last year. There was a negative variance in respect of income, being mainly due to reduced funding for SEN. The staffing budget overall was balanced, however, there was an overspend in teaching supply costs which had been used to cover a cover teacher. Changes to staff hours had also affected budget variances. Additional resources for staff development had been identified in the budget, some of which has not yet been spent.

The premises budget included £20,000 having been identified for wall displays. The SLT was currently reviewing how this would be spent. It was noted that the cost of printing could be higher than expected in the lead up to exams. The learning resources budget was likely to be spent by the end of the year.

The hospitality expenditure had been tightly controlled. This was due to not as many events being held at the academy this year, however, more marketing was due to take place in the summer term. A review was currently taking place on how events were put on and the costs associated with them.

The contingency budget had increased as a result of the savings exercise. It was noted that money from this pot could be committed to other budget areas if necessary.

An aged debtors and creditors report for EFAT as a whole was provided to show that the Trust is paying suppliers and collecting money in that is owed on a regular basis.

Draft Budget 2017-18

The Finance Director reported that the draft budget showed a four year budget projection and explained that most schools and academy trusts were looking at funding being either frozen or reduced at the same time as costs increasing, in particular with respect to staffing costs. It was noted that staffing costs at the academy accounted for around 75% of the budget.

The Government is planning to introduce a national funding formula in September 2018. The Finance Director explained that the new formula was likely to create some winners and losers. Essa Academy was a potential loser under the formula; however, it would be entitled to the Minimum Funding Guarantee. The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) acts as a cushion to ensure that a school's per pupil funding will reduce by no more than 1.5%. This is to protect against the adverse affects of changes in the way schools are funded. This guarantee does mean that if pupil numbers remain the same, the amount of funding the Academy would receive will fall. Over time the MFG protection will reduce to nil.

The Finance Director advised that the academy would have to make some significant savings as the budget would not be affordable going forward. A shadow staffing structure has been put together and currently a review of the Associate Staff and a regrading exercise has been carried out which will be fed into the shadow staffing structure. It was explained that hopefully the academy could move towards the shadow staffing structure within the next couple of years. This would mean that staff leaving the academy would not necessarily be replaced. The Finance Director said that he hoped that this exercise would be completed by 2019/20 and that this would be accomplished through staff turnover and the appointment of new staff so that no further action would be required. In the interim period the revenue budget would need to be supported from reserves for the years 2017/18 and 2018/19. Once the new staffing structure is in place the budget would be affordable. The overspend with the current structure was expected to be £300,000 in 2017/18 reducing to £200,000 in 2018/19. Assuming that appointments are made to the shadow staffing structure a surplus should be seen in 2019/20. The surplus would reduce in the following year due in part to the reduction of the financial support provided by the Minimum Funding

Guarantee. After 2020/21 the budget should stabilize as the amount of funding protected by the Minimum Funding Guarantee reduces.

It was explained that the draft budget allowed for increases in inflation costs and also salary increases but did not include any inflation in respect of income. The Finance Director added that if inflation at 1.5% had been added to income the projections would be higher.

Risk Register

A copy of the risk registers for EFAT and for Essa Academy had been provided with the papers for the meeting. The main risks identified by the Principal at the recent review of the Risk Register were currently being tested. It was noted that the risk registers were looked at on a regular basis by the Trust's Audit and Risk Committee. It was explained that the major risks were: a poor Ofsted judgement, student progress being below target and attendance being below target.

Health and Safety Committee

It was reported that the Health and Safety Committee had been set up to lead on Health and Safety issues across the Trust. The Committee included representatives from all areas of the Trust and was being supported by Adele MacGowan. The committee had recently reviewed a large number of Health and Safety policies and a number of these were ready to go for approval either from the Local Governing Bodies, or by the Trust Board. It had been agreed to commission a Health and Safety audit which would probably be carried out at some time in the next few weeks. A governor asked how often the committee meets and what its composition is. The Finance Director replied that it meets on a half-termly basis to ensure that work is ongoing with the policies. The committee has around eight or nine members including the Facilities Manager, representatives from the PE, ICT and science departments, a representative from the primary academy, the nursery and also the catering manager.

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 31 January 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

It was confirmed that Nic Ford had completed an updated Register of Business Interest form.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that he had emailed copies of the RaiseOnline report to governors.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OR CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

No declarations of pecuniary interest or conflict of interest were made in respect of the items to be discussed at the meeting.

6. EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT & STUDENT WELFARE

6a) Principal's Report

6ai) Principal's Report

In the absence of the Interim Principal, the Deputy Principal presented the Principal's report. It was explained that the development of the Academy Improvement Plan and SEF had been tightened up and now includes an action tracker.

The QA process was becoming more robust. The strand leaders meet with the staff in their departments and then the outcomes from these meetings are reported at the SLT meeting. The strand leaders were now all using the same set of questions to ensure consistency.

Work has been planned for the "Bubble" and there was now a greater number of people working in the Reception area. Migration has taken place to move the science area from a carpeted to a non-carpeted area. The staff governor commented that this was now a much safer environment. The CEO pointed out that some classroom spaces were not appropriate. The Deputy Principal agreed and said that the number one issue identified by staff was the improvement of the physical space. It was expected that this work would be carried out over the summer break.

There has been a move away from lesson observations to a triangulation process which gives a more accurate picture; however, this showed a large reduction in the percentage of teaching reported as being good or better. Julia Pilkington reported that she had met with Lynn Cardwell to look at Teaching and Learning and pointed out that although there had been a reduction this was a more realistic percentage. The CEO explained that Ofsted would want to look at a typical picture on any day at a given point in the school year rather than a judgement made on a planned observation which would have been prepared for. The CEO added that Teaching and Learning had been judged as Requiring Improvement on the SEF and explained that Ofsted would want to know whether the academy was RI but improving and at what rate it is improving and when it is expected to become good. The staff governor commented that a lot of work has gone into the QA model and the process is now a lot more supportive to staff. The Deputy Principal explained that an instructional round of QA had been carried out which had been very successful and had identified strengths, however, it had also identified a lack of consistency. There is a need to use Teaching and Learning

coaches and IRIS to improve the quality of teaching. All staff are now on a personal development plan which has been based on feedback received. There are now three Teaching and Learning coaches who work with staff.

It was explained that there had been a significant investment in CPD for staff, including staff taking part in the NPQML course and also a course for RI staff moving towards becoming consistently good. The Acting SENCO was completing the SENCO qualification. The Academy was working with the Alliance for Learning.

Attendance was improving but was not yet at the national average. The data for persistent absentees was being looked at and the SLT was working with the Social Capital team to use attendance data more strategically. There was now a focus on those persistent absentees with attendance around 89-91% as it was thought that this was the group where improvements in attendance would be more achievable.

The behaviour policy has been implemented which has led to a degree of consistency. However, there were some staff who had been giving disproportionate rewards.

There had been more problems with the behaviour of Year 7 students than had been seen in previous years but it was suggested that this might be due in part to the new curriculum model.

Careers education and guidance were a strength of the academy and work in this areas is started in Year 7. Careers assemblies are led by professionals and students can volunteer to attend particular assemblies in areas that they are interested in with the aim of having a positive impact on Teaching and Learning.

The conduct of students in lessons was reported as being positive; however, students were sometimes passively positive. The CEO reported that Professor Hopkins had reported positively after his visit and said that there had been a high level of respect from students towards staff and that this was a strength of the academy.

The Deputy Principal reported that there was still a significant underperformance from the White British cohort and these students remained a focus.

The current number of students on roll was 875, including a lower Year 11 cohort due to students having left to join the UTC. Applications for Year 7 places for September were higher than they had been in previous years and for the first time there was a waiting list. The Deputy Principal explained that this was due to the success of the academy, the high birth rate in that particular year and a shortage of secondary school places in Bolton. He added that this picture might not last as there were plans elsewhere to open a Free School. The Deputy Principal added that he had already attended two appeals hearings in respect of admissions to the academy and said that this was encouraging; with a waiting list of 28 children the academy could be confident of being full in Year 7 in September. Once the current Year 11 cohort leaves there would be 900 students on roll.

Julie Green, Director of Achievement and Hannah Alexander joined the meeting to report on attainment.

The Director of Achievement gave an overview on the curriculum plan which had been put in place for the current year and the plans for the next academic year. It was explained that a curriculum review had taken place last year to ensure that the needs of all students had been met and to allow an equal allocation of subject areas. The timetable had originally consisted of nine lessons per week. The structure was reviewed and changed to enable a greater allocation to the core subjects of English, maths and science and an amended option system was put in place. Further changes to the curriculum plan were planned for September having taken into account views from staff and students on the current structure. One key area which was raised as requiring some change was the provision for INA students and which aspects of the curriculum they access in Year 7. It had been proposed to introduce a banding structure for Year 7 to allow some students to access more English lessons and to drop a modern foreign language. An enrichment session would also be introduced for Years 7, 8 and 9. The banded structure would have one band following the full provision, a further band for students who require literacy intervention which would study additional English lessons and a third smaller PBL band which would aim to develop literacy and social skills. This same structure would be maintained as they go into Year 8 to enable them to go to a three year GCSE programme. Students would choose their options at the end of Year 8. There would be more vocational qualifications offered from September to enable all students to achieve. These had been reduced in the previous year to allow all students to follow the EBacc pathway.

The Year 8 option choices, both vocational pathway and GCSE pathway, would be guided choices which would be reviewed by the SLT. This would allow students a breadth of choice so that they are able to study what is best for them. Students in Years 10 and 11 would continue on their current courses with interventions taking place if they are not on appropriate courses.

A governor asked how the academy would determine which students would need additional English sessions in Years 7 and 8. The Director of Achievement replied that the Key Stage 2 scores would initially be analysed, however, some students will arrive in Year 7 without Key Stage 2 scores. During their second week at the academy students would have baseline tests which cover a range of assessment to determine which pathway they would follow and this would be reviewed at the end of their first term.

A governor asked for examples of the enrichment sessions which would be put in place for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. The Director of Achievement replied that these would be purposeful and curriculum related. One area which was currently being looked at was the Cadet programme and the Duke of Edinburgh programme. Ms Alexander added that high attainers in maths could study statistics during these sessions. A governor asked whether all Year 9 students would start the GCSE programme. The Director of Achievement replied that some students might need to start on Level 1 programmes before moving to the full Level 2 qualification, in particular those students starting in-year in Year 9. A governor asked whether the students could take GCSE exams at the end of Year 10 if they had finished the course. The Director of Achievement replied that there were no plans to do so, however, sometimes this had been done in the past with language qualifications and if this is the right thing to do for an individual student then it would be arranged.

A governor asked whether the expected percentage of students following an Ebacc curriculum in Year 9 had been analysed. The Director of Achievement replied that this has not yet been done and added that the academy wants the students to make their choices around what they are interested in whilst being mindful of the suitability of the choices. Ms Alexander added that the SLT would look at the option blocks to ensure that all the bucket choices are filled. In previous years all students have studied a modern foreign language and a humanities subject but the Ebacc route is not the right route for all students. A governor asked how many INA students were on roll at the academy. The Director of Achievement replied that 23 students access PBL and these were largely INA students. The Deputy Principal replied that this could change when the academy is full as it will be more in control of admissions and will not be able to take in-year admissions. Ms Alexander added that some of the students following PBL were not INA students.

Ms Alexander gave a presentation on data collection and headline measures. It was explained that end of year targets had been introduced for all year groups to help track progress. Progress leaders have also been introduced as part of the middle leader team. There has also been a change in how data is collected. Previously the expected grades were collected but now the “working at” grades are collected. The Years 7 and 8 assessment framework would be replaced with the 9 to 1 framework being introduced in September. Previously the Key Stage 3 assessment framework had been used but this had not demonstrated accurate progress for Years 10 and 11. The aim of the 9 to 1 framework is to demonstrate progression and support students in achieving milestones. Previous results had shown that the academy was underachieving in a number of areas and for some key groups and there was a need to ensure that targets are met. Flight paths have been introduced for students based on their starting points. Through the interrogation of practices, a rigorous process which includes the data cycle has been factored in to ensure robust assessment. It was noted that this was an area of work still in progress.

The data provided for Year 11 was a no barriers grade and the data for students in Years 7 to 10 is the working at grade. It was explained that the High Prior Attainers and Disadvantaged Students group were key groups for the academy. A governor commented on the 41% prediction which is lower than last year’s results. It was explained that it was difficult to compare this year’s predictions with last year’s results because of the new system of assessment and this was a national issue. The CEO advised that Ofsted had been instructed not to ask schools about predicting outcomes this year but to look at the current performance of pupils looking at progress over time. Ms Alexander explained that the academy had engaged in a lot of moderation with other schools and was not working in isolation. It was noted that for this year a Grade 4 is an official Standard pass grade. The four headline measures would be Progress 8, Attainment 8, English and Maths and Ebacc. It was noted that the picture was changing with subjects being graded from 9 to 1 next summer. A governor asked how the end of year targets had been set. It was explained that these had been based on Key Stage 2 data and reviewed by the SLT to see if they were appropriate for the intake. The assumption had been made that if a student was at a Level 4B on arrival they should achieve a Grade 5 plus at the end of Year 11. A governor asked whether the flight path would be put in place for the full five years. It was confirmed that this would be the case. A governor commented that with the data provided the current Year 10 cohort should be expected to have higher outcomes than the current Year 11.

Ms Alexander replied that any student in Year 10 who was already working at a Grade 4 in English and maths would be expected to make one grade progress by the time that they reach the end of Year 11.

6a) Pupil Premium Review and Strategy

Ms Alexander reported on the Pupil Premium Grant. An external Pupil Premium review had taken place in February and this had proved to be a valuable exercise which showed that gaps were reducing. The Pupil Premium action plan had been shared with governors. It was explained that the mind-set of staff was positive and there was a key focus on having the curriculum fit for purpose for the PPG children and the open bucket should be targeted for them. The report advised that the data for the PPG children needed to be tightened up, and to address this, external moderation was taking place where possible. Work was ongoing to simplify the Teaching and Learning model to ensure that there was challenge for all pupils. There was more strategic planning for the PPG children in respect of behaviour and attendance. It was explained that a lot of action had been taken to tighten up practice in these areas and these had been built into the Pupil Premium Strategy. The final section of the report looked at additionality and what the academy was providing extra for the PPG children. It was explained that the first four areas of the report would be focused on first before moving on to the additionality aspect. Ms Alexander commented that although the gaps were reducing the performance of some of the groups were not where they should be.

Agreed: That the Principal's report be noted.

6b) Health and Safety

The work to replace the flooring of the walkways was due to be completed over the Easter holiday; once finished the academy would have a complete non-slip floor.

A governor asked whether there was any update on the car parking issue in relation to parents dropping children off at school. The Deputy Principal replied that the new system appeared to be working and the car park was a calmer place. There is now someone on duty on the gate in the morning and parents have settled into the new routine. The Deputy Principal added that there were still some issues around the driving behaviours of parents but the Council had said that they were unable to provide a crossing patrol on Lever Edge Lane as the road had not had any accidents in the past six to seven years. A governor referred to another school which has removable signs placed outside the school in the mornings and after school which say Don't Park Here. It was requested that the governor provides the academy with a photograph of the sign to see if it could be used at the academy.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

7. GOVERNANCE

7a) Governor Training and Development

The CEO encouraged governors to visit the academy and meet with their link member of staff or to visit the academy to see what leaders are doing in respect of monitoring.

Governors were encouraged to attend governor training opportunities provided by the Local Authority as training and visits to the academy would enable governors to triangulate the information that they have been given.

The Deputy Principal expressed a concern that there was no longer a Safeguarding Governor due to the recent resignation of the governor who had this remit. Julia Pilkington offered to carry out this role in the interim period and said that as she was due to visit the academy later in the week to meet with her link member of staff she would also look at safeguarding.

Agreed: That Julia Pilkington take up the role of Safeguarding Governor in the interim period.

A governor raised a concern over the hiring the sports centre and explained that the local community was being charged the same fee as other hirers from outside the community, in addition, this also meant that the sports centre was often fully booked up for several months. The charge had also increased from £40 to £80 per session. The CEO agreed to speak with the Finance Director about this matter as he had recently started chairing the Sports Centre Management Committee.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Business raised.

9. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS

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

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting take place on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at 9.30am in the boardroom at Essa Academy.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

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

Minute Number 3

The meeting closed at 11.00am

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____