

**ESSA ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

MEETING HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 9.30AM

Present: Christine Edge, Nic Ford, Ismail Kala, Khizer Rahman, Julia Pilkington, Anwer Patel (Chair), Julie Parker, Patrick Ottley-O'Connor (Interim Principal) and Andrew Cooper (Management Team Director)

In attendance: Andy Peet (Head of School), Adele MacGowan (Governance Advisor) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

Anwer Patel in the Chair

The Chair welcomed the newly appointed Andrew Cooper (Management Team Director), Patrick Ottley-O'Connor (Interim Principal) and Julia Pilkington (Sponsor Governor) to their first meeting.

PART 1

1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES

1a)

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

It was noted that Anwer Patel had been reappointed as Chair for the academic year 2016/17.

Governors were asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chair for the academic year 2016/17. A nomination was received for Nic Ford to become Vice Chair.

Agreed:

- To note that Anwer Patel had been reappointed as Chair of the Local Governing Body.
- That Nic Ford be elected as Vice Chair for the academic year 2016/17.

Appointment of new governor

It was noted that Julia Pilkington had been appointed by the Board as Sponsor Governor.

Agreed:

- To note the appointment of Julia Pilkington as Sponsor Governor.

1b)

Apologies for absence

An apology for absence had been received from Paul Davidson.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Agreed:

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 June 2016 be agreed as a correct record.
- That the minutes of the Extraordinary Local Governing Body meeting held on 22 February 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

Further to minute 6bii Ms MacGowan explained that the Publication Scheme is a document attached to the Freedom of Information policy which sets out the information provided by the Academy and indicates where this information is made available. It was noted that all statutory requirements were ready to go on the Academy's website. The Interim Principal advised that the website was an urgent priority for the Academy.

It was noted that the Data Analyst Manager would manage any Freedom of Information requests on behalf of both Local Governing Boards.

Action: Head of School to email presentation from Jenny Muter to governors.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OR CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

No declarations of pecuniary interest or conflict of interest were made.

4. EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT& STUDENT WELFARE

4a) Principal's Report

4ai) Annual report on student attainment and progress in 2015/16

The Head of School presented the student performance data for the GCSE examinations in June 2016. It was noted that the Attainment 8 score was 44.6 as compared to the forecast of 45.8. The Progress 8 measure was significantly improved from the previous year increasing from -0.20 to 0.01. The forecast results for English and maths combined was 53%, with the actual result being 52%.

The Interim Principal explained that it was important that the Academy focused on closing gaps as the current data presents a risk to the Academy. He explained that the Academy was not yet Good as it was not at the national average. However, it was noted that the Progress 8 measure was just at the right side of the line. A result of

+0.5 or better would be judged as good. The Interim Principal explained that the Progress 8 measure was improving as it had been -0.24 in the previous year. He added that the current data suggested that the Academy would be judged as Requiring Improvement. A governor pointed out that year on year comparisons were not accurate due to the different nature of student cohorts.

It was explained that the Progress 8 figure was +0.3 for girls with boys being -0.15. A governor pointed out that the actual GCSE results were consistently lower on all measures and asked how the Academy tracked students. The Head of School explained that data is collected every four weeks and this is analysed looking at gaps. The assessment is based on the GCSE syllabus. He explained that there was a need to look at the moderation of marking. A governor asked whether students were underachieving because they were boys or whether they were Pupil Premium students. The Interim Principal replied that the main groups which were underachieving were the most able students, boys and disadvantaged students and there was some cross-over between these groups. The Interim Principal explained that things had started to improve but staff needed to understand the data for each individual child in every subject. He added that there had previously been some confusion over target setting. The Academy had commissioned some work on targets from Jenny Muter and this has led to quality targets being set which are forensically tracked on a weekly basis. The Interim Principal explained that previously there had been very little external moderation and to address this situation each faculty would be partnered with external partners. He added that he also wanted to incentivise staff for them to become markers for exam boards. The Head of School explained that five progress leaders had been appointed in what is now a five year programme. The Interim Principal explained that the progress leaders would be responsible for the target groups and would focus on these key groups. This would also link into performance management. Ms MacGowan advised that the outcomes for each area were lower than had been forecast and said that the document provided did not give a comparison against the previous predictions which made it more difficult for governors to see whether or not performance was improving. The Interim Principal agreed to look into the best way of presenting data.

A governor asked what the boy/girl percentage was in the Academy. It was explained that 66% of students were boys. A governor asked that now the Academy has appointed Progress Leaders how was this expected to impact in the classroom. The Interim Principal replied that staff were accountable and added that there was a real focus on teaching and learning and staff were looking at the barriers to learning for individual students. He explained that this could include the quality of teaching or behaviour of the student. The Social Capital team should be used to remove barriers to learning. He explained that he was currently looking at the systems and structures in place.

There had been an improvement on all indicators with the exception of the Ebacc measure due to underperformance in geography. This was explained as being due to a geography teaching leaving which had a knock-on effect leading to a gap in students' knowledge. It was also noted that there had been a poor performance in French. The Interim Principal explained that these results would be reviewed with the Strands. A governor asked what percentage of students complete the Ebacc. It was explained that around 56% of students complete the Ebacc pathway compared to

previous years where every student had completed it. The Interim Principal explained that the move away from the three hour lessons was a positive move with staff and students being in favour of the changes being made. The Interim Principal suggested that Ebacc should become the fourth priority for improvement with the main areas being English and maths combined, Progress 8 and Attainment 8. He added that the Ebacc course was not the right pathway for some students. A governor agreed that languages could not be taught successfully in three hour lessons and asked what was being done to address students' gaps in geography knowledge for Year 11 students. The Head of School explained that there had been a change in staffing to address this issue. The Interim Principal added that there would be a lag in knowledge for some students and Year 11 would be an intervention year. Ms MacGowan pointed out that there was an error in the papers provided for the meeting. The figures had stated that the national figure for English and maths combined was 58% when it should have been 69%.

A governor expressed concerns over maths as this subject was now significantly below the national average and was showing a declining trend. The Interim Principal explained that there were also issues to address in science which were due to curriculum entitlement. He added that data from lesson observations in the previous year had showed that 48% of lessons were outstanding with 99% good or better. He explained that the outcomes did not back up these judgements. A governor asked what was being done to improve middle leadership. It was explained that training on how to have difficult conversations was taking place and these needed to be modelled in order to impact on the data. A governor asked whether the strand leaders understood their role. The Interim Principal explained that the strand leaders had expressed some frustrations around the SLT and governance. A governor pointed out that governors often receive information too late to be able to change things. The Interim Principal explained that changes had been made in how communication takes place with the SLT. He added that staff had also raised a concern about initiative overload. Staff had raised a communication issue at all levels and also consistency of information.

It was noted that there had been a declining trend in maths for the past three years and this had been based on three hours per week of maths lessons. It was also noted that the Academy had previously put forward students for early entry in the subject which had impacted positively on the results.

A governor requested the more detail be provided for individual underperforming groups of students. The Interim Principal suggested that link governors could look at key groups and the link governor could champion individual areas. He added that this would help to improve governor ownership. Ms MacGowan advised that the Governor Handbook contains a description of the role of specialist governor and a visit protocol with key questions to ask staff. Ms MacGowan explained that it was up to the governor to establish contact with the key personnel and it was the Principal's role to explain the purpose of governor visits to staff.

The Management Team Director reported that there had been a good analysis and scrutiny of the results and explained that with the three year declining trend in maths the Academy was at risk of being judged as inadequate. The B11 report indicated that all evidence was there to show the issues but these were not being tackled. The MTD

added that there was a need to turn this knowledge into credible actions and there needs to be rapid improvement to show that the weaknesses are being addressed.

The Interim Principal said that all areas raised by governors were on the radar of the SLT and added that there was a need to demonstrate that the SLT and governors were in it together. The number of priorities in the Academy Improvement Plan had been reduced from 18 to 6.

The Chair expressed a concern about the decline in MFL results as this had previously been an improving area. The Head of School replied that this had been a boy-related issue in respect of speaking and language in French. Urdu and German had performed well but results in French had let the department down overall.

A governor asked when the data for the current Year 11 cohort would be available to governors. The Head of School replied that there would be a data trawl in two weeks' time. A governor asked what the cohort had been like when they were in Year 10. The Head of School replied that this cohort was a concern as 40 of the brighter students had left the Academy and added that the Academy would have to mitigate against the change in demographics. It was explained that only four students had been lost to the UTC this year. The Chair noted that the strategies put in place by the Academy to reduce the impact of the UTC had worked well.

4a ii) Targets for 2016/17

The Head of School explained that targets would be set as a range between 20% and 5% on FFT Aspire. The Interim Principal explained that targets for Year 11 had already been set and said that they needed to be realistically aspirational. A governor asked whether students were involved in the target setting process. The Head of School replied that students were currently recipients but said that this could be changed. The Interim Principal explained that flight paths were being used for students in Years 7, 8 and 9 to enable them to look at data over time. He explained that students should be able to talk about where they are at

It was explained that targets had been set in school in the previous year and that the Academy might stay with the targets for the current Year 11. The targets would be presented to governors at the next meeting.

4 a iii) Academy Improvement Plan and SEF – first 100 days

The Academy Improvement Plan had been re-focused to the new priorities. The Interim Principal explained that he was creating a shadow SEF which would become the main SEF document after the October half term. The Academy Improvement Plan would be put together from the new SEF.

The Interim Principal gave a presentation on the plans for his first 100 days at Essa Academy.

A staff perception questionnaire had been carried out with all staff on day 2 and this would be repeated later in the term. There had been 99 responses to the questionnaire and staff had indicated that they felt disillusioned.

The Interim Principal explained that he was reviewing the following areas:

- Whether the Academy was using the right exam boards for its students.
- How and what mock exams would be used for.
- The accuracy of assessment and predictions.
- To provide links for moderation.
- The creation of RAP groups.
- Whether students are on the right pathway

One issue facing the Academy was the legacy issue in English, maths and science. The Interim Principal added that he wanted to develop coaching in school.

Action: The Interim Principal to email the inspection booklet to governors.

The Interim Principal explained that there was a need to create a sense of urgency and also to create consistency. It was also explained that if the Academy went into an Ofsted category a Sponsors' Statement of Action would need to be produced which should mirror the Academy Improvement Plan. Ofsted would also say that there would need to be a Pupil Premium review. The Interim Principal suggested that in order to be proactive a Pupil Premium review could be commissioned now.

Challenges faced by the Academy were as follows:

- The quality of the SLT and middle leaders
- The quality of teaching
- The budget.

The Interim Principal said that he was in the process of meeting students and had been visible around the Academy in order to become established. He explained that RAP meetings make a difference and a number of students had been picked for these meetings in order to kick start improvement.

Parent surgeries had been held and also the Interim Principal had made phone calls on a random basis to parents to collect parents' views. Surveys would be carried out on day 50 and also on day 100.

The Interim Principal said that he planned to meet all governors on a one to one basis.

To improve community links and develop relationships the Interim Principal had visited St Andrew's Primary School which is 0.9 miles away from the Academy. This had been the first visited made from a high school to the primary school during the time that their current head teacher had been in post.

The Interim Principal explained that he would be spending at least three hours per week on learning walks and this was an area where governors could get involved. There was also a need to look at how impactful I-pad learning had been as it had been noticed that there were several students turning up to lessons without one.

There would be a greater focus on teaching and learning, with everyone needing to know their place and how they impact on learning.

With regards to the budget there is a need to know what percentage is spent on teaching staff and also to be more explicit on Pupil Premium expenditure.

Action: Interim Principal to email 100 day presentation to governors.

A governor asked whether staff were on board and whether there had been any union issues. The Interim Principal replied that he had met with the unions on day three and added that there were still some historical HR issues. He added that the expectation was that everyone would come on board.

Agreed: That the Principal's report be noted.

4aiv) Completed Equality Template 2015-16

Agreed: That the report be noted.

4av) Annual Review of Year 7 Literacy/Numeracy Catch-Up Funding

The Head of School said that the report needed to include future planned spend for the catch-up grant. The Finance Director said that this grant amounted to around £20,000 which was included in the budget but had not been allocated. It was noted that this was part of the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators work. Ms MacGowan advised that both reports needed to be published and advised that the Pupil Premium Grant be reviewed in respect of new instructions.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

4avi) Pupil Premium Spending Plan 2015-16 Progress Review

Agreed: That the report be noted.

5. FINANCE AND RISK

5a) Budget 2016/17

The Finance Director presented a summary report on the budget for 2016/17 showing income received from the General Annual Grant and the Pupil Premium grant.

The Finance Director explained that the Academy had previously had a contract with Bolton Muslim Girls School to provide school meals which brought an annual income of £30,000. The Academy had submitted a bid for this year but had been unsuccessful which had resulted in the budget having to be adjusted to account for this decrease in income.

It was explained that an apprenticeship levy would be starting in April. The Finance Director agreed to clarify what impact this would have for the Academy.

A governor asked where the deficit of £68,000 would be coming from. The Finance Director replied that this would be coming from reserves held by the Trust.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

5b) Draft outturn

The Finance Director explained that work was ongoing with the 2016 outturn. The final figure would be reported to the Trust Board and then circulated to the Local Governing Body,

5c) SISRA IT Contract

The Finance Director explained that this is a three year contract. Although the amount was only around £5,000 this was an ongoing commitment. The Head of School explained that SISRA was used to provide access to data in a user friendly way enabling staff to interface with the data.

Agreed:

- That approval be given to the three-year contract with SISRA

6. GOVERNANCE

6a) Adoption of policies and actions approved by the Board on 1 July 2016

6ai) Redundancy Policy

It was reported that there had been no change to the content of the policy. The policy had been updated to reflect the correct wording to show that it is appropriate for both Local Governing Bodies and the Central team. Ms MacGowan explained that there was still some work to be completed with the unions with regard to TUPED staff and staff at the primary academy to harmonise some of the differences in conditions.

Agreed:

- That the updated policy be adopted for use in relation to staff employed to work in the academy (except the Principal).

6aii) Pay Policy for staff employed to work in the academy

The pay policy had been updated to reflect the responsibility of the Local Governing Bodies. It was noted that the previous policy had not reflected that the Trust is the employer.

Agreed:

- To adopt the updated policy which applies to all staff employed to work in the academy, except Principals.

6a) Implementation of Policies

Ms MacGowan suggested that the Local Governing Body should check whether all of the policies which had been adopted during the previous academic year had been implemented and to identify key action points.

Agreed:

- To check whether all policies adopted last year had been implemented.

6b) Governor Vacancies and upcoming ends of terms of office

It was noted that the election process for the staff governor vacancy was underway.

There was also a vacancy for a parent governor due to the end of term of office of Ms Arshad. Ms Arshad had indicated that she intended to stand again for this position once the election procedure had been implemented.

Agreed:

- That the Interim Principal implements the election process for a new parent governor.

6c) Governor Training

It was explained that the MTD would oversee governor training. Training needs would be discussed at the Governor Strategy day.

An updated skills audit had been carried out and an analysis completed.

Ms MacGowan pointed out that the Local Governing Body needed to identify a budget for training and also needed to agree a training programme at a future meeting.

Agreed:

- That a programme of governor training be decided at the governor strategy day.

6d) Update on Essa Academy Principal Appointment

The MTD reported that an appointment had not been made in May to the post of Principal and it had subsequently been agreed that individuals could be approached to create a shortlist of candidates. Three candidates had been put forward by Veredas and three others through the MTD's own contacts. The MTD reported that there was a significant challenge as it had been difficult to attract strong candidates; however, the Academy had secured Mr Ottley-O'Connor as Interim Principal for one year. The Interim Principal added that staff and students had highlighted instability as being an issue.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

7. **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.*

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Business raised.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting take place on Tuesday 22 November at 9.30am in the boardroom at Essa Academy.

10. **CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS**

It was agreed that consent be given to the absence of this meeting to Mike Francis

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 7 and Part Minute 5a

The meeting closed at 11.45am

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____