

**ESSA ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

MEETING HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON TUESDAY 31 JANUARY 2017 AT 9.30AM

Present: Neelam Arshad, Anwer Patel (Chair), Julia Pilkington, Jordan Turner, Patrick Ottley-O'Connor (Interim Principal), Wasim Raja and Andrew Cooper (CEO).

In attendance: Andy Peet (Deputy Principal), David Mole (Finance Director), Michelle Pogson (HR Director) 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 Paul Davidson, Ismail Kala, Nic Ford and Christine Edge.

1b) LGB Membership Update

The Chair welcomed Wasim Raja, the newly appointed Sponsor Governor to his first meeting.

Agreed: To confirm the appointment of Wasim Raja as Sponsor Governor.

2. FINANCE AND RISK

2a) Budget Monitoring

The Finance Director presented a report to the end of December 2016. He explained that he had met with the Interim Principal to review the budget and a number of savings had been identified, some of which were in the staffing budget. This had resulted in some money being moved from staffing to the contingency budget and there had also been increases to other budget areas. The budget for CPD had been increased by £30,000 and the Alliance for Learning budget increased by £15,000. There had also been an increase to the budget for furniture, fixtures and fitting in order to stimulate learning by using wall displays. There had been a small increase to the Year 7 Catch up grant.

It was noted that the Trust Board had previously approved the use of £70,000 of reserves to be used across the budget. The Finance Director explained that the budget would be overspent compared against the allocation by £70,000 but this was because this amount was being used from reserves.

The staffing budget had been slightly overspent due to changes in posts and there had been an overspend on agency staff due to sickness absence and staff vacancies. Budget savings had been made by looking at expenditure on postage and there had been savings against the energy budget due to a milder winter. There had also been savings for insurance. There was a saving under Strand and learning resources in respect of More Able students, however, it was planned that this would be spent later in the school year. There was also a saving on catering as the academy was no longer supply meals to Bolton Muslim Girls School.

A report showing creditor and debtors was provided for information. The Finance Director explained that the amount under the 60 day creditor column was due to an invoice which had been received late which has subsequently been paid.

2b) Budget 2017-18

The Finance Director reported that there would be a National Funding Formula from 2018-19, he said that he did not expect that this would affect the academy significantly as it was currently subject to a minimum funding guarantee which guarantees a certain amount of funding per pupil and a maximum reduction in funding of 1.5%. Part of the funding for 2017/18 for academies was likely to come to an end this was funding which compensates academies for money that Local Authorities receive and this could represent a loss of between £60,000 and £70,000. It was expected that indicative funding would be known by the end of February/March.

The Finance Director reported that savings in the budget were already being identified and there was also a need to look at staffing requirements. Although there were significant resources in the Trust as a whole the allocation from reserves should be seen as a one-off allocation and the academy should look at matching income to expenditure.

The Interim Principal reported on projected pupil numbers and informed governors that in the next academic year there were 92 too few secondary school places across the Local Authority and in the following year there would be 180 too few places. A new academy was putting in proposals to create a 180 place free school which could prove to be a threat to student numbers at Essa Academy. A governor asked whether the UTC also posed a threat to student numbers. The Interim Principal replied that the UTC was not now taking as many students from Essa Academy. The academy was working with Year 9 students as they were currently being targeted. The Interim Principal added that in order to attract and maintain student numbers the academy needed to improve the quality of its teaching and learning and outcomes.

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 22 November 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

It was confirmed that the North Star presentation had been forwarded to governors.

Action: The clerk to check whether Nic Ford had completed an updated Register of Business Interest form.

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

The Interim Principal reported that he was looking to improve the cycle of Quality Assurance process. Joint shared agendas were being developed for line management meetings and these meetings were being minuted.

The Deputy Principal explained that the Quality Assurance process was driven by regular data collection to inform the Academy Improvement Plan to drive changes. It was explained that the KPI document is reviewed and following this the SEF is updated and then the AIP is reviewed. The AIP is a live document which feeds into LGB and Trust Board meetings. A governor asked whether a six week cycle for Quality Assurance was a normal cycle. The Deputy Head Teacher replied that it would move to a three week cycle next year. The Interim Principal added that RAP meetings take place every week.

Responsibilities had been identified in respect of the Senior Leadership Team, middle leaders and for teachers and others. The Interim Principal added that every time that new data was collected different issues had been identified which were being bottomed out. All performance management targets were focused on distinct groups.

An external review of the Pupil Premium Grant was due to take place later in the week carried out by a National Leader of Education.

It was explained that flight paths should be able to be created for Year 11 GCSEs to look at progress and there should be a matched strategy implemented for Year 7 and Year 8. The Interim Principal explained that this was being interpreted differently by different faculties and he added that an overhaul was being carried out as currently the impact of strategies was not being captured accurately.

Agreed: That the Principal's report be noted.

6a) SEF

A copy of the Self-Evaluation summary as at January 2017 had been provided with the papers for the meeting.

Agreed: That the Self-Evaluation Summary be noted.

6a) Academy Improvement Plan update

A summary of the AIP was reported, the full plan having previously been provided to governors. A governor asked whether all students were tracked individually. The Interim Principal replied that there was a board for each year group which showed the data for all students individually and for groups. For example the Year 11 board showed that the low prior attainers were making better than expected progress and the high attainers were not making progress where they should have done. Weekly RAP meetings were held which also looked at other issues impacting on progress which might include attendance or homework issues. Additional English, maths and science were being taught in Pod time. For Year 11 students a compulsory period 5 had been introduced; the Interim Principal added that parents had been supportive of this initiative. There had been legacy issues in science with Year 7 not having studied discrete science last year and years 8, 9 and 10 only having three hours per week of science. This year students have four and a half hours per week of science lessons and additional catch-up sessions.

The curriculum model had moved from 9 periods per week to 18 and staff and students were in agreement that this was a good model. The Interim Principal explained that this was being reviewed and the reform may go even further as some subjects might need shorter more frequent lessons.

A governor asked whether governors had received the KPI documents. The Interim Principal explained that this document was not yet right; it was still being reviewed and an external consultant was helping to shape it. The issues with the current document were explained. At Autumn 2 the report showed predictions at A* to C which was no longer a measure. This year the measure would be on grades 5 to 9 in a 1 to 9 scale. The data was currently showed that only 6% of students would achieve grades 5 to 9 in English and maths and 21.6% of the most able students achieving this level. Considering the no barriers grade,

which was an aspirational grade, it was believed that 33% of students would achieve a level 5 in summer which was the equivalent of a B grade on the old measure. However, this year schools would be measured on grades 4 to 9 which would mean that the figure increases to 52% which is only two or three percent lower than last year. The current Year 10 would be measured on grades 5 to 9 when they are in Year 11. It was explained that the current KPI document does not capture this information and a better solution was required for capturing data which would also include individual groups pulled together in one document.

The CEO commented that appropriate actions seemed to be taking place with good Quality Assurance and clear objectives; however the data was not significantly shifting. There was a significant difference between key groups and the CEO asked how the Trust could assist in improving the outcomes. The Interim Principal replied that the gap for the Most Able and Disadvantaged pupils was minimal and in some areas those students entitled to the Pupil Premium Grant were performing better. The gap was between a particular group and the national picture and not an in-school gap. Performance management targets had been set around groups and this was the focus of learning walks. The Interim Principal said that he did not think that moderation and staff training had been strong enough. The academy had not been good at working with local schools on moderation. Faculty leaders were now attending local hub meetings for this purpose. There had also been problems around measurement and systems. The CEO added that he recognised that there were legacy issues and that the academy was playing catch-up. He asked what could be done to ensure that Year 11 students get the best possible grades. The Interim Principal replied that there was a strong strategy in place and staff needed to be able to deliver on it. The staff governor commented that everything possible was being done in terms of the time spent on the provision with sessions during the February half term, on weekends and before and after school. Students, staff and families were all engaged in the process. A small cohort of targeted students had been entered for ECDL accreditation to boost their Progress 8 score. Some students had been pulled out of certain subjects where they were not expected to achieve to focus on those areas where they are able to achieve. The Interim Principal said that staff were willingly pushing forward and interventions were also being put in place for Years 9 and 10.

It was reported that the data for Year 10 was more positive than for Year 11. Year 11 was at -1.51 on the Progress 8 score in December compared to -1.35 for Year 10 who still had a year to go. A governor pointed out that the data looked like there was a decreasing trend when looking at Year 10. The Interim Principal explained that the data was not clear under the current reporting system and said that one year equated to one point on Progress 8. He expected that the new system would be clearer. A governor asked whether the data was accurate. The Interim Principal replied that it was not accurate but was more accurate than the document showed. A governor said that it looked as though standards were declining and asked whether staff were getting to grips with the new curriculum. It was explained that only the most able students were doing the higher paper in maths. A maths review had been carried out and the issue had been identified as mainly a context and time issue. It was explained that additional time allocated to maths would address some of the problems. A

governor asked whether support would continue for Year 10. The Interim Principal replied that it would as there was a two year intervention plan.

This year schools would be reporting on grades 4 to 9 and the academy was currently at 50% compared to 52% last year. There had been issues with Bucket 3 last year and the results in this area were expected to be significantly higher this year as those subjects which had not had good results such as Psychology and Economics had been replaced and were no longer taught at the academy. A full KPI grid would be brought to the next meeting. A parent governor commented that the parent view was that Period 5 had made a difference. Improvements had been made in maths and staff had gone out of their way but parents felt that this had been too late. A governor asked why the curriculum could not be fully taught in normal lesson times. The Interim Principal replied that there were issues in the quality of teaching with last year the quality of teaching having been judged as 99% of it as being good or better which did not equate with the results. This year quality assurance has included learning walks and now 63% of it is judged as good or better. He added that the quality of teaching was improving as previously there had been an overuse by teachers of the I-Pad rather than using it as a tool.

A governor asked whether the staff in the English and Maths departments were supported enough to ensure that the data is accurate. The Interim Principal replied that a National Leader of Education and a Specialist Leader in Education would be carrying out a review of the department and the SLE would be working alongside the Faculty leader; this would be a five week external programme to skill up the department. An English review had not yet taken place but the academy would be receiving support from the Local Authority Secondary School Improvement Group in this area. The Interim Principal explained that he was trying to get the academy to be part of the local community in driving standards forward. A review of ICT provision and its impact on teaching and learning had been commissioned. Years 10 and 11 were receiving catch-up lessons and processes had been put in places for years 7, 8 and 9. It was explained that a re-timetabling had taken place after Christmas to allow members of the SLT to teach. Last year none of the SLT taught but now they teach for up to 40% of their time on a regular teaching schedule and additional time has been allocated to Strand Leaders.

A governor asked whether science results were expected to improve in two years for the Year 10 cohort. It was explained that all areas had been allocated increased time. Previously the number of students studying separate sciences had been increased but this had been done with students only having three hours of teaching time per week. Some pupils have now returned to studying for the Dual Science award with only a handful of students still studying triple sciences.

It was explained that 94% of exclusions last year had been down to students entitled to the Pupil Premium Grant; this year it has reduced to 75%. These students are being targeted to work with the Social Capital team. It was explained that the academy's exclusion level was below the national average. A governor pointed out that attendance was still low. Absences due to holidays

taken in term time mainly occurred at the Christmas holiday period with families taking two additional weeks to visit families overseas. The Deputy Principal said that the impact of students with persistent absences was massive and that attendance would be around 98% without these students. The CEO added that it also had an impact on learning. The Interim Principal explained that attendance was a high priority and that the academy was now working more closely with the primary academy in respect of the shared families in order to improve attendance.

Agreed: That the report be received.

6aiv) Updated Pupil Premium plan 2016/17

A draft self-evaluation Pupil Premium Strategy statement had been provided with the papers for the meeting.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

6b) Health and Safety

It was reported that there was now a more rigorous and robust approach to Health and Safety following the establishment of a Trust-wide Health and Safety committee. The Health and Safety concerns of staff had been taken on board and work had been carried out to the stairways and also in the Reception which would be divided into two separate areas because of heating issues.

It was explained that there was a requirement for a Safeguarding Link Governor. Christine Edge had expressed an interest in fulfilling this role.

Agreed: That Christine Edge becomes the Safeguarding Link Governor.

A governor asked how often the ICT equipment was checked. It was explained that weekly meetings took place which were documented. The Chair requested that an updated report on any breaches of policy be provided to the LGB. The Interim Principal highlighted a difficulty with access to the You Tube having been stopped in school. This had presented a difficulty to students who had used it to research artists; however, staff were now creating their own resources for this purpose.

There had been changes to some classes because of Health and Safety issues. Year 7 science had been taught in the Year 7 pods and this had not been fit for purpose; one of the Technology rooms has been converted into two science labs which has resolved the problem. The Interim Principal explained that there were still some Health and Safety issues in respect of the building being fit for purpose in regard to the curriculum; three classes being taught in one space caused difficulties when teaching languages. There were plans in place to either build walls or create partitions to separate classes. The Food Technology area was being developed to improve provision. A governor asked whether the proposal for the building work had gone to the Trust. The CEO replied that he was not prepared to present piecemeal work to the Trust and added that he was currently looking at the priorities for the next few years with business plans being presented to the Board for them to consider alongside

resource implications. The Interim Principal pointed out that there needed to be a strategic plan when considering ICT and minibus replacements.

The CEO questioned the impact of the investment on staff development and training on Friday afternoons and also with additional activities. The Interim Principal replied that middle leaders were now driving teaching and learning in their own areas. They were focusing on joint planning and moderation. Six members of staff were on the Securing Good programme with the Teaching School Alliance. All staff were on a support/development CPD plan to impact on their improvement in the classrooms. He added that the academy does not now send staff on one-off courses. There is stronger training focused on the priorities of the academy. A governor asked how the 63% of good or better teaching had been quantified. The Interim Principal explained that lessons were no longer graded and the quality assurance programme took into account what students say about where they are at and their next steps. The process also looks at work scrutiny and listens to Student Voice. The percentage was typically based on all the evidence. A governor asked whether the Interim Principal was happy with the consistency of all the Strand leaders. He replied that this was becoming stronger and all observations had been paired observations. Middle leaders were being encouraged to own teaching in their own areas. Data remained a key priority.

The Chair requested an update on the car parking issue explaining that a letter had been received from Mr Bamber at the Local Authority to say that the academy was in breach of their planning contract. A parent governor had not been happy with this situation and had spoken to residents and parents about this matter. The Interim Principal replied that he had requested that the parent governor meet with him to discuss the situation but this invitation had not been taken up as the parent governor only wanted to meet with the CEO. However, this meeting had not taken place. A complaint had been received from other parents who had said that the parent governor had knocked on doors to speak to parents. The Interim Principal pointed out that this was not an appropriate action for a governor to take.

The Interim Principal reported that after speaking to parents they had agreed that the car park was now much safer. He also explained that the academy has a duty of care towards the students on the site. Previously there had been a few near misses and the car park was not a safe place. The decision to make the changes to the car park had been taken from a Trust perspective to include the primary school and also the nursery. People were allowed on the site to drop off and pick up their children and those with disability issues were allowed a longer time to do so. Mr Bamber had agreed that the planning permission was ambiguous and said that following his meeting at the academy he was happy that this was being managed by restricting access to two key half hour slots. A governor expressed a concern regarding the knock-on effect of the traffic on Lever Edge Lane. The Interim Principal acknowledged that there were some highway issues and added that the road was a busy road and that some staff were outside at the key times to assist. The CEO reported that he had asked Mr Bamber for support to provide a crossing patrol or some calming measures, however, Mr Bamber had said that the criteria for having a crossing patrol was based on the number of accidents in the area and only one child had been knocked down outside school in the last five years. The CEO added that the academy has limited control on public highways and that their responsibility is to users of the site. There are five pick up and drop off points for the primary academy and five for the secondary

academy to allow this to be done quickly. The Interim Principal added that no other school allows free access to the staff car park. He explained that he had received only four complaints about car parking issues here which was significantly less than he had had at other schools and these complaints had been during the week after the measures had been introduced. The site was now much safer and those people with accessibility issues are able to access the site safely. A governor said that there was now an issue with traffic outside the academy and asked whether a survey of parents could be carried out. The Interim Principal replied that Health and Safety decisions had been made about the site and the site was now much safer for students. He added that he had spoken to the police and to the council and they had agreed that the pick-up and drop-off was acceptable. He added that he could not allow the car park to be used inappropriately. The Interim Principal said that this was a Trust issue and decision and there was a responsibility for students and staff on the site. A governor asked if there was anything else that could be done outside the school. The CEO replied that this was an issue for the highways department.

6c) Holiday Pattern

It was explained that the Local Authority had reviewed the school holiday pattern and had proposed some changes to the current pattern. The proposed academy holiday pattern included the retention of two INSET days at the start of the year and differed from the Local Authority pattern by having the end of the autumn term put back so there would be two full weeks holiday. The Interim Principal explained that the Trust had discussed having a longer Christmas holiday but had agreed not to do so because of extended holidays taken by students at this time of year this could present a difficulty if siblings attended other schools. The suggestion would be taken forward for further discussion for future years.

Agreed: That the holiday pattern for 2017/18 as presented be adopted.

7. GOVERNANCE

7a) Approval of Policies

7ai) Behaviour Policy

The Deputy Principal explained that the Strand Leaders and the SLT had re-drafted the policy to give clearer guidance and give a more consistent approach. The impact of the policy was now being tracked. The number of behaviour points awarded had been reduced as these now have to be earned.

Agreed: That the behaviour policy be approved and implemented.

7b) Adoption of Policies approved by the Board

7bi) EFAT Safeguarding Policy

Agreed: That the EFAT Safeguarding Policy be adopted and implemented.

7bii) Managing Sickness Absence Policy

It was noted that the policy had not changed but was being applied in a more robust way. It was explained that previously teaching staff had been granted leave of absence which was paid whereas for Associate staff this had been without pay. The policy was now being applied fairly and appropriately across the board.

Agreed: That the Managing Sickness Absence Policy be adopted and implemented.

7c) Governor Training and Development

The CEO reported that the recruitment process for additional governors and directors was going well.

A governance plan had been put in place to allow Chairs to manage their teams.

The areas included in the plan were as follows:

Governors to be assigned to specific areas

This would allow governors to meet with key personnel in the academy and to provide support and challenge to leaders. Governors would have the opportunity to visit the academy to be able to test what is being said in a meeting by shadowing leaders.

Governor Training

The plan included examples of Local Authority training available so that governors could keep their knowledge and understanding up to date.

Engagement with pupils, parents and staff

In order to understand the effectiveness of the academy governors should look at how stakeholder views are tracked from year to year to gain an understanding of views over time.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A governor requested that governors be given access to the RaiseOnline report. The Deputy Principal agreed to email the report to governors.

Action: Deputy Principal to email the RaiseOnline report to governors.

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 4 April 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 11.40am

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____