

**Activate Learning Education Trust  
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY - THE BICESTER SCHOOL**

**The Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Governing Body – The Bicester School on  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 4:30pm in The Board Room, The Bicester School**

**Present:** David Dunne (DD)(Chair)(3/3); Tony Rushworth (TR)(Head Teacher)(3/3);  
Sharron Whittingham (SW)(Vice Chair) (3/3); David Jardine (DJ)(Governor)  
(3/3); Laura Asbridge (LA)(Governor) (1/1); Mark Burrows (MB) (1/1)

**In attendance:** Lee Nicholls (LN)(CEO of Activate Learning Education Trust);  
Roland Howard (RH) Deputy Head Teacher  
Julian Sonaik (JS)(Group Finance Business Partner)  
Nicola LeBrun (NL) Assistant Head Teacher  
Claire Shepherd (CS) Acting Deputy Head  
Heledd Walker (HW)(Clerk Activate Learning Education Trust)

**Apologies:** Oliver Wright (OW) (Governor) (1/3)  
Richard Mould (RM) (Governor) (1/3)  
Sarah Marsterson (SM) (Governor) (0/3) Maternity Leave  
Liz Westcott (LW) (Governor) (2/3)

**Minutes**

**1. Apologies for absence**

Oliver Wright, Richard Mould; Liz Westcott

**2. Declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality**

None

**3. Minutes**

The LGB governors agreed that the minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017 were accurate and a true reflection of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes**

The board discussed the matters arising actions with the following updates to the action tracker;

1 – Updated - The board discussed the remaining three vacancies and agreed that further enquiries should be made with Bicester Vision via the chair of Bicester Technology Studio.

2 – Updated – The head of the library would grant access to 6<sup>th</sup> form students. Further discussions ensued around the painting and decorating project. No funds are currently available and too much supervision was required. SW suggested this could become part of a PTA project.

3 – Complete – High proportion of in year admissions added to the risk register.

4 – New – Contact details for Back on Track project, a new initiative funded by the National Lottery to be passed to NL by LN

### **RESOLVED**

The board resolved to add the updates to the Summary of actions and resolutions.

### **5. Any other business that has arisen since the circulation of the agenda**

None

### **6. Governance**

The Chair introduced the item regarding the proposal of two new sponsor governors to join the LGB committee, confirming that he and the Head Teacher had met MB and LA and taken them for a tour around the school. The LGB committee heard from the CEO of ALET some background to the proposal within the Governance plan of including up to two sponsor governors on each LGB committee. As the multi academy trust continues to grow and develop, it is not sustainable that the CEO attends all meetings, therefore as part of good governance each LGB will include up to two sponsor governors. Both MB and LA who are Faculty Directors at Activate Learning expressed an interest.

16:43 MB and LA join the committee meeting.

The Chair introduced both MB and LA to the committee. LA confirmed she was a Faculty Director at Activate Learning with a 20 year background in Education and had also previously been a school governor. MB confirmed he was also a Faculty Director with the Lifestyles faculty of Activate Learning, he was new to Activate Learning and keen to become more involved in the schools division.

Both were recommended to the governing body by the Chair, all governors were in agreement to appoint as LGB committee governors.

The governors received a Governance update item from the Clerk for information, this covered the General Data Protection Regulation enforceable from 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. It was confirmed that as ALET did not employ over 250 staff there was no requirement at this point to calculate the Gender Pay Gap although with additional schools joining after 30<sup>th</sup> March, this would be a requirement in the next academic year. The governors were informed that with the release of the National Funding formulae, group finance is currently calculating the individual impacts on each academy.

### **RESOLVED**

- It was resolved to approve the Chairs recommendation to appoint MB and LA as The Bicester School – Sponsor governors.

- It was resolved to receive the Governance update for information.

## **7. ALET School Priorities – Update on Progress and Impact**

The Chair introduced this item, reiterating that it is the responsibility of the LGB committee to hold the head teacher to account and challenge the interventions in place to improve the Progress 8 scores.

The Head Teacher referred to the report which had been discussed during their recent advisory board, which highlights both internal and external factors that have contributed to the low progress 8 score.

Grades within the Science department have increased over the past two years and were at national average last year; however, inconsistencies in staffing have had a negative effect. Changes have been made which are benefitting the learners with Science currently showing a positive Progress 8 (0.114) on Sisra for 2017-18. The Chair added that an external review of Science was being commissioned with results available for the next meeting.

There were a number of staffing issues in the Technology department during the 2016-17 academic year, resulting in the subjects being absorbed into Creative Arts. The discussions concluded that these were one off issues which are unlikely to be repeated.

The high number of managed moves from the local authority was considered to have skewed the disadvantage progress 8 figure along with a number of persistent absentees. Discussions ensued with regards to reducing the number of students accepted through managed moves, and what can be done to solve this. It was concluded that the focus should be on the areas that can be solved. The governors heard how Year 7 is expected to be at the maximum pupil allocation number in September therefore reducing the number of in year admissions, however until this year passes through the school the areas of higher risk are in Years 10 onwards where there are less students. The governors discussed how the data included some students who were on the pupil roll but attended 3 days at a certain learning hub and 2 days at another hub yet had to be included on a school's roll. It was also noted that students with no KS2 data, such as those from military families are not included in the data yet often do well academically.

The LGB committee received assurances that Grades 4+ in English and Maths were very good with the emphasis now on the Grade 5's, it was noted that the Year 11 attainment on entry was significantly lower than the national average. The mock examinations have now finished with data being analysed to ascertain which interventions have been successful. It is considered that Geography and History remain vulnerable therefore extra lessons are taking place on Wednesday afternoons, further targeted sessions are taking place in the mornings and after school. There is currently frustrations around the lack of grade boundaries and guidance from the exam boards, therefore the strategies are based on the old GCSE grades. Significant progress has been made with the disadvantaged cohort, closing the gap. The interventions have included raising aspirations for long term goals.

The governors commended all the interventions in place and the scrutiny of the data which currently indicates that the progress 8 score is -0.07, a huge progress forward.

## **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the ALET school priorities for information and discussion.

The governors commended the interventions in place along with the scrutiny of the data.

NL leaves the meeting at 5:55pm

## **8. Quality Assurance**

### **a) Development Plan Priority – Quality of Teaching and Learning**

The LGB committee received a Behaviour, Literacy, Interleaving, Modelling, Plenaries and Silent Concentration (BLIMPS) handout along with a Teaching and Learning update handout which detailed an overview of the development in these areas.

The links via the Head of the library with Oxford University have resulted in access to the Bodleian library. In preparation for Ofsted, Learning patrols are taking place with SLT visiting difficult classes, learning walks are also taking place on a weekly basis. Book are being scrutinised to ensure consistent marking of spelling, punctuation and grammar. All teachers have to produce a lesson plan for each lesson.

### **b) Equality and Diversity Annual Report**

The Equality and Diversity Annual Report was received for information and approval. It was resolved to accept and approve.

### **c) Health and Safety Annual Report**

The LGB committee received the Annual Health and Safety report which had been carried out externally by Oxfordshire County Council. There were a number of unmet actions identified in the report which need to be followed up. The committee were assured that there was no risk to the school

### **d) SEND Report**

The SEND report was received for information and approval

## **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive an update on the quality of teaching and learning.

It was resolved to accept and approve the Equality and Diversity Annual report.

It was resolved to approve the Health and Safety annual report on the proviso that the outstanding actions would be completed

It was resolved to approve the Annual SEND report

## **9. Head Teacher's Report and Self Evaluation**

The head teacher summarised his report, drawing attention to the Data overview confirming that the data was moving in a positive direction. An improvement in behaviour has led to a reduction in fixed term exclusions. Attendance was now at

national average and staff costs as a percentage of income is also reducing. The grade 3 prediction in outcomes is not considered good enough as already discussed, plans are in place for an external review of the Science and technology area to implement some changes. Queries were raised around the accuracy of the target percentage and actual percentage of teachers rated at good or better being 90%. The head teacher assured the committee that the NQT's were seen frequently, weekly by their own professional tutor and also via learning walks, they also visit other teachers. Further questions were raised as to how many NQT's are in the Science department, it was confirmed to be 1 in a department of 9 staff. Overall the figure is around 10% of the teaching staff which is higher than in previous years. The key is to retain staff. It was noted that at one point turnover was as high as 40% yet this has dropped considerably to 5% there has been an overall reduction in support staff. Queries were raised around the number of fixed term exclusions in year 9. It was noted that there are a number of very challenging students in this year group, all with similar abilities therefore in the same year group. There are a number of interventions and mentoring in place to target the behaviour. The discussions concluded to receive the report and approve.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the Head Teacher's report and approve.

#### **10. Policy Reviews**

The LGB received the following policies which were approved pending replacement by overriding ALET policies.

Appraisal Policy

Sickness Policy

Attendance Policy

General Data Protection Policy

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to approve the policies pending replacement by ALET policies.

#### **11. Finance**

##### **a) To receive feedback from Finance Advisory Group**

The Chair summarised feedback from the finance committee which included a requirement for greater emphasis on growth of commercial income. Payment for parking from Bicester Vision and rental from Meadowbrook is due. It was confirmed that further discussions around the lettings would take place at the next Finance Advisory group.

##### **b) To receive minutes from Finance Advisory Group**

The minutes of the Finance Advisory group held on 7<sup>th</sup> February were received for information.

##### **c) To receive Management accounts and mid-year forecast.**

The Group Finance Business Partner summarised the management accounts stating that the positive variance of the actual deficit of £19k to a

budgeted deficit of £48k was largely attributable to an increase of funded income, mainly pupil premium.

**RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive and approve the management accounts.

**12. Working Groups/Advisory Groups**

The LGB committee received the Academic Standards advisory board minutes for information.

**RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the minutes from Academic Standards advisory board for information.

**13. Risk Register**

The risk register was received and reviewed with no amendments required.

**RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive and review the risk register.

**14. Next meeting:**

Wednesday 13.06.18

**Meeting finish time: 6:47pm**

DP, Runk  
13/6/2018