

**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 6<sup>th</sup> December at 4:30pm in The Board Room, The Bicester School**

**Present:** David Dunne (DD)(Chair)(2/2); Tony Rushworth (TR)(Head Teacher)(2/2);  
Sharron Whittingham (SW)(Vice Chair) (2/2); David Jardine (DJ)(Governor)  
(2/2); Liz Westcott (LW)(Governor) (2/2) .

**In attendance:** Lee Nicholls (LN)(CEO of Activate Learning Education Trust);  
Roland Howard (RH) Deputy Head Teacher  
Heledd Walker (HW)(Clerk Activate Learning Education Trust);  
Julian Sonaike (JS)(Group Finance Business Partner)

**Apologies:** Oliver Wright (OW) (Governor) (1/2)  
Richard Mould (RM) (Governor) (1/2)  
Sarah Marston (SM) (Governor) (0/2) Maternity Leave

**Minutes**

**1. Apologies for absence**

Oliver Wright, Richard Mould

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

None

**3. Minutes**

The board agreed that the minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017 as 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 – In Progress update will be available at the next meeting.

2 – Complete – can be removed

3 – Complete – can be removed

4 – Complete – can be removed

5 – In Progress – update will be available at the next meeting

6 – Complete – can be removed

7 – Complete – can be removed

8 – Complete – can be removed

#### **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**

The local governing body received the Annual Safeguarding report which had been reviewed by the Chair along with The Bicester School Safeguarding SLT member. All agreed to approve the report.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to approve the Annual Safeguarding report.

#### **6. Governance**

The governors received the following information;

- The updated Education and Skills Funding Agency guidance – Academies Financial Handbook 2017 for information.
- ALET Governance newsletter which had previously been distributed by email.
- A training document – “A guide to school acronyms”

#### **RESOLVED**

The board resolved to receive the following information;

- Academies Financial Handbook 2017
- ALET Governance Newsletter
- A guide to school acronyms

#### **7. Quality Assurance**

The chair introduced the item giving the board some background that each area of the development plan will be visited in more detail at each local governing body meeting as per the following cycle;

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting – Outcomes for Learners

2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting – Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare

3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting – Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

4<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

The chair summarised some of the initiatives in place in this area of the development plan which include a “New Start programme” the aim to clarify the standards of behaviour required for all attending The Bicester School. The document is shared with all parents of Year 6 pupils and staff discuss the document with each parent and obtain a signature on the home/school agreement. Governor SW queried what would be the consequences of a parent not signing. DD explained that the students are bound by the documents and TR explained that to date, parents have always signed the documents. LN queried what the attendance at the home/school agreement meeting. RH confirmed that any parents who don't attend the meeting are followed up. SW queried whether

all students and parents have signed the agreement. RH confirmed that there are some gaps in the upper school which are being addressed as parents visit the school or attend meetings. DD summarised other initiatives which include all students being provided with a dictionary and calculator, an ordered start to each class and the Learning Hub is now up and running and staffed. LN queried how the Learning Hub was viewed by the wider school population. SW added that her daughters were not aware of it. TR confirmed the view was varied throughout the school, those students that have attended the Learning Hub are aware that this is their last chance, however some view the hub more negatively as a place to circumvent learning. SW queried why these students are not being permanently excluded. RH explained the process which involves Fixed term exclusion, followed by time in the learning hub and then as a final resort a permanent exclusion. TR concluded that this had worked for many students. LN commented that this intervention is a great idea however; focus needs to be given to ensure there are layers of support mechanisms in place for the students.

### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive an update regarding the key development plan priority area of personal development, behaviour and welfare.

### **8. Head teacher's Report**

The Head Teacher summarised his report to the governors, drawing attention to the recommendation to approve the 2018 targets as follows;

2018 – Subject/Performance measure	2018 Targets
English 4+	65%
Maths 4+	65%
Science 4+	65%
Languages	70%+
Foundation subjects	65%+
EN/Ma 4+, 5+	60%, 45%
Attainment 8	45 (C+)
Progress 8	-0.1 (estimated as no national data)
Disadvantaged	
Attainment 8	40
Progress 8	-0.25 (disadvantaged)

Discussions ensued around the Year 11 cohort which has some very high ability however prior learning is very low with many SEN and literacy issues.

TR explained that a Progress 8 of -0.1 is good, this figure includes the progress of three students who do not attend the school but are included in the exam results. Governors queried this, TR explained that these students achieve a -0.7 or -0.8 Progress 8 score and therefore impacts on the final Progress 8 score.

Discussions ensued around the difficulties with students who are permanently excluded from schools or moved through a managed transfer but don't attend the school. Their data is included in the schools overall data and therefore impacts the results, however the school does not have any input into the students academic progress. It was noted that there is a statutory requirement for all students to be in education. Questions were raised as to why so many students are sent to The Bicester School, TR confirmed that this was partly due to the school being below the Pupil Allocation Number and therefore there is capacity to accept the students. It was noted that The Bicester School needs to ensure that the targets are stretching enough for the high achievers which are attending the school, if they achieve, this in turn will ensure the overall outcomes for the school improve.

Discussions moved to the 6<sup>th</sup> form and how it is difficult to attract students due to the facility and the available resources. The governors discussed various solutions including accessing text books via Activate Learning, Brookes University or Bodleian library. Other solutions included a painting and decorating and refurbishment project. The discussions changed to finances and how to reduce the deficit from £140k and save another £30k. Suggestions including leasing the facilities over the week end, approaching the Rugby Club and charging for parking at the weekends. Reducing the duplication of roles within The Bicester School was raised with confirmation that a reasonable start had been made in this area but there is still further duplication to address.

The discussions concluded to receive the head teachers report and approve the targets set.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved that the local governing body received the head teachers report and approved the 2018 Targets.

### **9. Feedback from Pay Committee**

The local governing body received feedback from the Chair and governor SW who formed the pay committee which took place on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017. 31 recommendations from the head teacher were reviewed and approved, 2 members of staff had moved to the upper pay scale and 4 members of staff had received an increment on the leadership pay scale.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the feedback from the Pay Committee confirming that the 31 recommendations from the head teacher were approved.

### **10. Working groups/Advisory groups**

#### **Finance Advisory Group**

The governors received the management accounts draft results to the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017. The Group Finance Business Partner summarised that The Bicester School had made an operating surplus of £10k against a budgeted deficit of £57k, the variance is largely attributable to an uplift in funded income, predominantly pupil premium and post 16 funding along with a reduction in non-pay expenses. Governor SW queried what had changed to cause a reduction of income in the facilities area, it was noted that this was due to no actual income

committee which had taken place earlier in the week. It was noted that the outcome was to uphold the head teacher's decision to permanently exclude the student.

**RESOLVED**

It was resolved that the board were advised of the outcome from the governors discipline committee which upheld the head teacher's decision.

**14. Risk Register**

The local governing body received the Risk register for information. The review concluded that an additional risk should be added around the high proportion of in year admissions, as a result of capacity. All were in agreement.

**RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the updated risk register for review and discussion. It was agreed that an additional risk should be added for the high proportion of in year admissions.

**15. Next meeting:**

Wednesday 28.02.18

Wednesday 13.06.18

**Meeting finish time: 18:36**

*DP. Dune 28/2/18*

from car parking. TR informed the governors that the variance is between budgeted potential income and actual income received, with no income received from car parking. Discussions ensued around changing to receive the payment for the car parking in advance. The Chair informed the board that this was discussed during the Finance committee. JS summarised that there had been an uplift of £5k on pay costs which had been dated back to September and would therefore reduce the staff savings. DD queried that this should be £4k however it was agreed that the difference was due to rounding. LN queried whether there would be any cash flow issues if there is spending ahead of profile. JS assured the members that there would not be any issues and more clarity would be available with the implementation of the new BPS system. It was noted that there is currently no provision for employment termination costs and maternity costs. TR assured the governors that the new system provides greater financial modelling. SW asked whether this was discussed during the finance committee. DD confirmed that a deeper level of scrutiny over the detail takes place in the finance committee. The discussions concluded that the management accounts were received for information.

The governors received the Finance Advisory group minutes for information.

The governors received feedback from the Academic Standards Advisory group along with the minutes for information. The Chair summarised that most issues were covered however there are some concerns with support staff which the SLT and Governors should acknowledge the high demands on them.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the management accounts for information and discussion along with the minutes from the Finance Advisory group.

It was resolved to receive the minutes from the Academic Standards advisory group along with a summary from the chair,

#### **11. Policy Review**

The governors received a policy review update for information. It was noted that all policies are the responsibility of ALET, however via delegated authority, ALET has produced a schedule of policies that the Trust has responsibility and others that are the responsibility of individual academies. Whilst the Trust policies continue to be developed and approved as a full suite, each academy is responsible for the upkeep of their previous policy schedules.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved to receive the policy review update for information.

#### **12. Preparations for consideration of the Principals Pay review**

The Local Governing Body were advised that this had already taken place in September 2017.

#### **RESOLVED**

It was resolved that this had already taken place earlier in the year.

#### **13. Discipline Committee Feedback**

The local governing body received an update of the governors discipline