

THOMAS ALLEYNE ACADEMY

Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Local Governing Body of the Academy
held on Thursday 23rd January 2014
at the Thomas Alleynes Academy, High Street, Stevenage
commencing at 6:00 pm.

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|--------------------------|------------------|----|--|
| Governors Present | Alan Euinton | AE | Interim Chair |
| | Jonathan Ellam | JE | Vice-Chair |
| | Mark Lewis | ML | Academy Principal |
| | Eirwen Palmer | EP | Parent Governor |
| | Sarah Carter | SC | Parent Governor |
| | Alan Browne | AB | Local Governor |
| | Howard Crompton | HC | Local Governor |
| | Roger Luxton | RL | Local Governor |
| | Geoff Turner | GT | Local Governor |
| | Keith Turner | KT | Local Governor |
| | Carol Hayman | CH | Staff Governor (Support) |
| | Lynsey Steadman | LS | Staff Governor (Teaching) |
| | Julia Cooke | JC | Staff Governor (Teaching) |
| Apologies | Dr Rod Pullen | RP | Sponsor Governor appointed by Trinity College, Cambridge |
| In Attendance | Julia Flanagan | JF | Staff – Vice Principal |
| | Richard Thwaites | RT | NHC Finance Director |
| | Kaylee Bonja | KB | Clerk to NHSST |

Summary of Decisions & Action Points

| Item | Decision/Action | Responsible for follow-up | Timing |
|------|--|---------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Sarah Carter and Geoff Turner were welcomed as new governors | - | - |
| 4 | The Curriculum Plan 2014-2016 was agreed and adopted. It was agreed that Pupil Premium would be a Part 1 Agenda Item at the next meeting | ML/KB | Immediate |
| 7 | It was agreed that a hire charges should be reviewed | AE/ML | Next meeting |
| | Link governors – KT and EP would be link governors for Pupil Premium, KT for curriculum and AE for finance | ML | Immediate |

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|----|---|-------|---------------------|
| 8 | KB to circulate links from the Stevenage Governors Forum regarding Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium to be the strategic item at the next meeting | KB | Next meeting |
| 10 | ML to formulate staffing plans to assist RT with budget setting | ML | Before next meeting |
| | RT to make adjustments to the way data is presented in the management accounts | RT | Next meeting |
| | AE to meet with RT to discuss revisions required to the Financial Regulations | AE/RT | Next meeting |
| 11 | Date of next meeting changed to Thursday 13 th March | - | - |

Detailed Minutes

Part 1:

1. Welcome to new Governors

AE welcomed new governors Sarah Carter and Geoff Turner to the meeting and invited them to give a short pen picture of themselves. SC is the new parent governor. She has four children; one attends Thomas Alleyne Academy, two attend the Da Vinci School and one attends St. Nicholas. SC is the chair of TASA (Thomas Alleyne Supporters' Association). GT is the owner of Care Vending. He is a local governor with experience in business. He lives in Stevenage Old Town and is an old Alleynian. Both his sons attended the Thomas Alleyne School. Introductions were made.

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from RP.

3. Declarations of Interest

AE asked if there were any declarations of interest not already recorded. There were none.

4. RAISEonline

RAISEonline report to Governors and RAISEonline 2013 Summary Report were circulated in advance of the meeting.

AE thanked governors for attending the Preparation for Ofsted training. It is important that governors have an understanding of RAISEonline as Ofsted reference it before arrival at the school for inspection. Pages with a G in the top RH corner are the pages most relevant to governors.

GT asked where the raw data comes from. It comes from schools' Census Returns made each January and October. JF said that Ofsted make initial judgements about a school from its RAISEonline data before arrival at the school for inspection.

A brief summary was included with the full report. JF took governors through the full report explaining the figures and highlighting trends and areas of particular importance to governors. Attainment and achievement of students qualifying for Pupil Premium was looked at closely.

ML added that the school is using the matrices to show student progress in Class Data Packs.

JF invited queries by e-mail after the meeting

AE thanked JF for her presentation.

It was agreed that Pupil Premium would be a Part 1 Agenda Item at the next meeting.

RT arrived

5. Curriculum Pathways

The Curriculum Plan 2014-16 Consultation Document was circulated in advance of the meeting. The purpose of the document was to present the proposed structure of the 2014-16 and to consider changes for the future. The government will possibly withdraw 'soft' GCSEs such as drama, PE and media, from the measure of best eight.

JF and ML presented the document.

It shows the links to North Herts College, the Da Vinci Schools and the pathways. Students join the school in Year 7, study for 3 years and then have a broad range of pathways at Year 10 and then again at Year 12. The four pathways are the Thomas Alleyne Academy, the Da Vinci Studio School of Science & Engineering, the Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise and North Hertfordshire College.

The school is in early stages of entrepreneurship and will continue to develop this. There are currently 20-25 students whose current profile identifies that 8 GCSEs are not appropriate. The school is looking to offer a two-day per week vocational programme at the college for these students. Donna Lodge will be invited to Open Evenings to speak about the Da Vinci Schools. The proposal would give students an informed choice and provide them with what is best for them as students. AB agreed that it provided improved opportunities to the students. Students would be given more pathways than at any other school and events to give guidance would be held for students and parents.

AE recommended the adoption of the model proposed. Agreed and adopted.

JF left the meeting.

Part 2:

RT was welcomed to the meeting

6. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th November 2013

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

7. Matters Arising

5. Item 2d School Lettings

Michelle Harris had prepared a paper and this was circulated in advance of the meeting showing details of lettings – name of hirer, income per session, number of sessions and costs. The report shows a profit from lettings.

AB asked whether the caretaking costs include a charge for heating and lighting.

ML said the caretaking costs are generous and would cover heat and light. The caretaker is often on site anyway. AB queried the differences in hire costs. ML said the cost was dependent on several factors, for example, the period of time, the number of courts/pitches required.

Target income from lettings is £27,700 and the school is £600 short of this at present.

AE added there are currently 3 enquiries for additional lettings and there is no concern that the target income will not be met.

ML was asked if a comparison with costs of other local facilities had been carried out.

ML replied this would not be a straightforward exercise as the quality of other facilities is not the same so the quality of the facilities needs to be relative to the cost. ML added that the facilities are in need of an upgrade.

AB asked if the commercial hirers are charged more than the not for profit and community group hirers. AE was uncertain but agreed a review of hire charges should take place.

10i Recommendation from Principal's Report

AE thanked everyone for their interest and apologised that the small curriculum working party had not been formed due to the pace of curriculum development. Additional governor engagement was outlined as follows: KT and EP Pupil Premium, KT curriculum and AE Finance.

10ii Governors Handbook

The new governors handbook had been circulated.

10iii Student Parliament

The minutes of Student Parliament had been circulated.

8. Principal's Report

A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Academy SEF and Strategic Plan had been circulated as appendices to the Principal's report. A typographical error was noted on page 4 of the SEF. The sentence should read – The gap between pupil premium students attainment (%5ACEM) is only -4% which is smaller than the national average which is -26%.

ML gave the following updates:

Numbers on Roll:

The school has received 132 first preferences and 7 late first preferences. The number of second preferences allocated to the school is very low, 11. Another local school has reported similarly which suggests that there are fewer students in this cohort and most are getting their first preference.

The total number anticipated for entry at Year 7 in September 2014 is 150. The academy roll will continue to increase as 92 students will leave Year 11 and 150 students will be coming in at year 7.

Response to last Governing Body meeting:

EP gave additional information on pupil premium. It had been introduced in 2011 to provide extra support to Children Looked After (CLA), children entitled to or who have been entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) in the last six years and children with a parent serving in the Armed Forces. The funding per pupil will increase to £1,900 for CLA, £900 for FSM and £300 for Armed Forces. Schools may decide how to spend the money but they must be able to demonstrate how the money has been spent and the impact on these students' achievement and attainment. Last term Caroline Tyrwitt, assistant principal, attended the national conference on pupil premium. Caroline is the lead on Pupil Premium at the school.

Details of how pupil premium has been used at the Thomas Alleyne Academy can be found on the School's website in the policy section. ML recommended that all governors read this. The Preparation for Ofsted training held last week at the school gave some focus to pupil premium and the Stevenage Governors Forum held on 14th January 2014 gave in depth coverage of pupil premium. AE asked KB to circulate the links to the documents and to the 6 questions that governors should have knowledge and awareness of.

ML said that pupil premium is an ongoing item at SLT meetings. It was discussed at today's meeting and the pupil premium spend will be spread to lower year groups. It was agreed that pupil premium would be the strategic item at the next local governing body meeting.

Teaching and Learning:

ML added that a governor in school day will take place on the morning of 10th February.

The activity linked to the book 'Mr Stink' by David Walliams was very well attended.

Behaviour:

ML added that three students had been given five day exclusions. One student was re-admitted and the other two accepted the offer of a managed move to North Herts ESC. AB said he was pleased to note that achievement points are working and that the emphasis is on rewards rather than sanctions. ML said that sanctions are still used and that the 'pink report' works well.

Enrichment:

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme has got off to a good start. Due to such a high demand the number of places on the French trip has been increased to 74. This has still meant disappointment for some students and ML has sent a letter of apology to parents whose child missed out on a place. ML said that governors are welcome to attend any school event and asked them to contact the school in advance. The fortnightly school newsletter gives details of events and is circulated to governors.

Property:

Maltings Building – the ceilings will be removed next week and the works are on track for a September 2014 handover.

ML gave further detail of the bids for academies capital funds. Both bids include category D1 funding – immediate. The roofing bid is for a sum of £459,000 and the bid for replacement windows is for a total of £190,000

Road Safety Petition:

The petition will be presented to the Highways Agency on 4th February.

SEF and Strategic Plan:

ML reported that the only red area on the Strategic Plan, a consistent approach to line management meetings, is expected to be green at the end of half term.

9. Report back from Trust Meeting

AE gave a verbal report. Key points from the Trust meetings held in December: Minutes are shared between the Trust and the LGBs.

ML was appointed a director of the Trust.

GT was appointed to the Thomas Alleyne Academy LGB.

There was positive feedback on the Maltings building.

Feedback was given on Finance – the budget and the new accounting system.

The Financial Reports and Accounts were presented at the AGM. Signe Sutherland was re-elected as Chair and Wagstaffs were re-appointed as auditors.

AE asked if there were any other points arising for the Trust Board minutes or any questions. There were none.

10. Finance Report

i. Budget 2013/2014

RT gave his apologies for not being present at the previous meeting when the budget was presented. He has met with AE a few times to go over the budget and also with Michelle Harris at Thomas Alleyne Academy. At the time of constructing the Budget RT was unaware of the fund account which held £20,000. This is a historical amount accumulated from trips and school uniform. ML said it should be part of the budget.

The sum to be transferred from HCC to the academy on conversion to an academy was expected to be £200,000 and this is the sum RT included in the budget.

However, the actual figure is £227,000. Michelle Harris has checked with HCC that there are no outstanding unpaid invoices to be deducted from this sum and specifically queried energy bills. HCC responded that it is not expecting any.

RT added that now the school has some idea of admission numbers for September 2014 he can construct an early draft budget for 2014/2015. He asked ML to

formulate staffing plans so that he can bring a draft budget back to the governors for discussion before approval. RT will refine the 2014/2015 budget when the funding statistics become available from the EFA.

ii. Management Accounts

Management accounts were circulated in advance of the meeting. A typographical error was noted - the final column on the right should read - Full Year Budget.

Income – It was explained that Activities for Generating Funds includes school lettings, catering, music and the balance from NHC. Catering and lettings should reach the targets. NHC will either provide income or cover the costs of support. RT said that in future he would separate Other Income into sub headings and provide a commentary to explain variances. He will also add a column to show the full year forecast. Information will be provided on a more regular basis. Xero, the new financial management package will aid this and AE is able to login online and check the accounts.

The first tranche of pupil premium has been received. The budget was based on the pupil premium received the previous year but this has changed. Rates relief has not been received and no payments for rates have been made.

Expenditure - Staff costs: Variances in teaching staff, supply staff and educational support staff were explained by vacancies in teaching staff, sickness and maternity, and the use of agency staff to cover gaps. Overall the staff costs are £41,000 over budget. RL said that the variance will close but that staff costs need to be controlled. The school is looking to shared teaching with NHC to give efficiency savings.

The loss of students at Year 10 leads to a loss of income but this is partially offset by an intake of students at Year 12.

RT informed governors that in April 2014 the payroll function will transfer from HCC to NHC. IT services will also shift from HCC to NHC.

Non Educational Supplies and Services is over budget but RT advised this is a timing issue. Many of the costs were start-up costs, not ongoing costs.

Educational Supplies and Services expenditure is under budget by £12,000 and Premises Maintenance expenditure is £7,000 over budget. Several roofs are leaking water and the repairs had to be carried out.

RT said that the accounts of all three schools would be consolidated and the schools would be supporting each other by sharing some costs.

There were no further questions.

iii. Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were circulated in advance of the meeting. The document is a version of the NHCs regulations so the terminology used is more relevant to the college. Financial regulations are required to be adopted to ensure that the schools and the Trust are fully compliant. RT acknowledged that changes are required for the regulations to fit the school environment. AE made a number of observations and will arrange to go over them with RT. The revised document will be brought back to the next meeting.

11. Calendar of Events

A calendar of meeting dates had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

AE informed governors of the Hertfordshire Association of School Governors Event to be held on 13th Feb Event at Robertson House 7-9pm. There is no need to book in advance and KB will circulate details.

Governor in school visits are scheduled for 10th February and 4th June.

The date of the next meeting was changed from Thursday 6th March to Thursday 13th March 2014.

12. Any Other Business

Concern was expressed by governors about the volume of the reports circulated for the meetings. ML suggested that if governors would like a printed copy of a large document then they could contact the school and a copy would be ready for them for collection.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting

Chair's signature:

Date: