

## **THOMAS ALLEYNE ACADEMY**

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body of the Academy  
held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at the Thomas Alleynes Academy, High Street,  
Stevenage commencing at 6:00 pm.

**Governors present:** Chair- Alan Euinton (AE), Vice-chair - Jonathan Ellam (JE),  
Executive Principal - Mark Lewis (ML), Principal - Julia Flanagan (JF), Alan Browne (AB),  
Howard Crompton (HC), Carol Hayman (CH), Eirwen Palmer (EP), Roger Luxton (RL),  
Julia Cooke (JC), Dr Rod Pullen (RP), Lynsey Steadman (LS), Stuart Melbourne (SM)

**In attendance:** Caroline Tyrwhitt (CT), Andrew McLeod (AM), Kaylee Bonja (KB)

### **Actions Summary**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
3	Tailor the content of the next Information Evening to suit a range of abilities	JF	Next Information evening
4	Provide feedback of DfE / LA visit to school	ML	Next LGB meeting
6	Re-instate Action summary table to the minutes	Clerk	Immediate
7	Assessment framework to be presented at the next meeting	JF	Next LGB meeting
	Data on Year 11 leavers summer 2014 to be available for the next meeting	JF	Next LGB meeting
	Progress evaluation of Local Governing Body	ML	June LGB meeting
	Pursue Thomas Alleynes account fund held by HCC	ML	Next LGB meeting
	Circulate updated Policy Review calendar	Clerk	Next LGB meeting
9	Request for 2 governors to join a behaviour Panel	JF	Immediate
	Notes from the Student Parliament meetings to be copied to the Chair	JF	Immediate
8	Thomas Academy School Asset Register (or inventory) to be located	JF	Immediate
	Construction of a Thomas Alleynes Academy Asset Register	AM	Next LGB meeting
12	Addition of operational items to the risk register	ML	Next LGB meeting
14	Removal of a Thomas Alleynes School sign	JF	Immediate

### **Part 1: Strategic**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were accepted from Keith Turner.

Governors were advised that KT was seconded to support Canterbury College and would resume his duties as a governor in the summer term.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

AE asked if there were any declarations of interest not already recorded.

**None**

An error on the Agenda was noted. Item 11 should read Attendance Policy. Governors were asked to confirm they had received a letter from the Chair of the Trust, Signe Sutherland, which informs them of Signe's forthcoming retirement from North Hertfordshire College and her continuing service as Chair of North Hertfordshire Studio School Trust. The letter also contained an update of the position of the Executive Principal and 3 school Principals. Appointments are subject to a one year probationary period. Governors confirmed the letter had been received. ML and JF were congratulated on their appointments.

## 3. Academy Performance Data

Two data documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting. JF highlighted the most current data and trends from the 'School Performance Charts'. This is data supplied by the DfE and shows pupils performance in GCSEs and levels of progress made in English and maths from 2010/2011 through to 2013/2014. Data comparisons are for the school, the Local Authority and all schools in England. Trends and current data demonstrate that the school's performance is improving and is closing the gap between the national average and the school. The priority this year is to close the gap in achievement in English.

JF highlighted data from the Whole School Data 2014-2015 document. The current Year 11 cohort has reduced to 50. Therefore, the effect of each student's performance is a movement of 2%. The autumn term snapshot indicates that 50% of students will achieve 5ACEM. This is the best position the school has experienced at this stage of the academic year. Quality assurance measures are being applied to ensure accuracy of the data. This includes internal and external moderation of data. Further work is required to achieve targets of progress in English, 4LP in particular. Other subjects are on track. The intervention programme shown on the document was detailed by JF. The making the grAde evening appeared to be a success in that all packs for parents and students who were unable to attend have been collected. It was noted that feedback from a parent suggested that the evening was tailored to the C/D students rather than the A\* students. The forthcoming information evening will be adapted to provide greater breadth.

**Action JF**

## 4. Children Looked After Review

CT tabled a confidential document 'Designated teacher's annual report to the Governing Body on Children Looked After'

This document will be produced annually and presented to governors. It will also be presented as evidence at the inspection of the Local Authority's CLA provision taking place at Thomas Alleyne's on 2<sup>nd</sup> February

The average school has 1 CLA on roll, Thomas Alleyne had 5 last summer and currently has 6 CLA on roll so the Local Authority and Department for Education have selected the school to visit to review the impact of the provision for CLA.

### **Question: When is the school CLA policy due to be reviewed?**

The policy review group will review this policy at its next meeting. HCC has not issued guidelines on updating the policy yet, so it may be a partial review only.

Various questions were asked about the individuals in the report. Poor attendance by one student had led to a referral by the school.

**Question: Is the school responsible for setting the CLA review meetings?** No

**Question: Will the school receive feedback on the visit?**

Verbal feedback will be given on the day of the visit. Any feedback provided will be reported at the next meeting

Action ML

## 5. Development Plan / SEF Update

The current version of the SEF had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The sections which had been updated since the last LGB were Pupils' Achievement and Quality of Teaching.

- Pupils' Achievement JF talked through the actions to improve pupils' achievement (page 6).
- Quality of Teaching – this is now graded on a combination of observation of staff, achievement, and behaviour. The quality of feedback given in the data pack is critical to the teaching and learning judgement. Full use of the data evidences progress over time. Support is being given to 4 staff through management targets and a coaching programme. They will be observed again after half term.

The Behaviour and Safety section had been reviewed by staff today and the updated SEF will be circulated to governors when the section is completed. Governors were informed there are no longer any 'dual registered' students at the school as the transfer of students to ESC rolls had been completed.

The updated development plan had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The second indicator column had been RAG'd (flagged Red, Amber or Green) and comments given to the right of the table. The plan should be considered in conjunction with the updated SEF report. JF invited questions on each strategic objective.

Objective 2 **Question: Why had action point 2.3 changed from a green flag to yellow?** This was because inconsistencies had been discovered on the Gold Assessment Sheets. This is being addressed.

Progress is being made with most of the action points, in particular under objective 3. Action point 4.1 was the only item to be flagged red for the first half term. Some progress has been made and this is now flagged yellow.

## Part 2: Regular Business

### 6. Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Subject to the correction of a typographical error on page 3 the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair of governors.

Item 4.ii – The cohort is much smaller, 53 students against 191 last year.

Corrected to read - The cohort is much smaller, 53 students against 91 last year.

The new format of the minutes was discussed and it was **agreed** to re-instate the Actions summary table.

Action Clerk

### 7. Matters Arising

**Item 3:** The academy did not opt in to the Progress 8 measure.

**Item 4i:** The new assessment framework is in progress and will be presented at the next meeting

Action JF

**Item 4ii:** Connexions provide the data on the progression of leavers and this will be available for the next meeting

Action JF

**Item 7.6: Evaluation of the local governing body.** This will be considered across the whole group and the target is to have something in place by the academic year end. The format of the meetings is now common across the group.

Action ML

**Item 8.1: Fund held by County.** This item has not been actioned and is carried forward to the next meeting.

Action ML

**Item 11:** The date of the next Policy Review Group meeting has been set and the policy calendar updated further. The calendar will be circulated to governors for the next meeting.

Action Clerk

The 4 policies brought to the last meeting were approved at the Trust meeting held in December. The policies are available on the academy website.

**Item 12:** The Gold Assessment sheets have been modified following feedback from the Governors in School Day.

**Item 13:** The annual safeguarding report has been submitted.

The next item was taken out of sequence:

**9. Principal's Report**

A report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

- 1. Numbers on Roll: Nothing further to report.
- 2. Achievement: KS4 achievement had been detailed in the report presented in Part One of the meeting. KS5 data is the current data and is very positive.
- 3. Curriculum: The response to activities for feeder school had been particularly good from Almond Hill School. Woolenwick School is one of the academy's main feeder schools and should be encouraged to engage more with activities. Changes to the timing of activities and the offer of transport has had limited impact so it is unclear why participation from primary schools is low. The academy will extend its focus to other local primary schools. The vocational route will be broadened in future years.
- 4. Teaching and Learning: This was covered in detail in Part One of the meeting. It was noted that the support given to the teacher previously placed on management targets had impacted positively.
- 5. Behaviour and Safety: The merits of re-introducing a behaviour panel were discussed. Governors will be contacted by Nicola McCarthy who will circulate panel meeting dates to the interested governors. The panel must not include any governors who would be on an exclusions panel.
- 6. Enrichment: Nothing further to report. AE requested notes from the Student Parliament meetings.
- 7. Staffing and Personnel: A Science Technician was appointed last week and the Data Manager post has been filled. The finance role will be partially filled by NHC as part of the SLA in place.

Action JF

Action JF

**Question: Has the provision of English in the academy suffered as a result of the loan of a senior member of English teaching staff to the Da Vinci schools for one day per week?**

There is no evidence of an adverse effect on the academy.

**Question: Will a payment be made by the Da Vinci Schools to cover the cost of the serving for English?**

This will be considered closer to the financial year end when the resource implications can be fully assessed.

**Question: Are any reciprocal arrangements in place?**

None at present, but the multi-academy trust structure will facilitate this in future when required.

- 8. Property Update: The bid for installation of a fire detection system, upgrade of fire doors, and refurbishment of student toilets was submitted. The total value of the bid is £240,000.

**Question: Is there any progress on the White House?**

Monthly e-mails are sent to HCC to request updates. HCC has asked if the academy is interested in the building. The academy response is that there is interest in taking over responsibility for the building.

- 9. Safeguarding: Nothing to add to the report
- 10. Health and safety: Nothing to add to the report

The governors recorded their formal thanks to the retiring members of staff and wished them well for the future.

AM arrived

## 8. Financial Report

AM was welcomed to the meeting and thanked for the quick turnaround of the December Management Accounts, received within 2 weeks of the end of the period. The 14/15 Management Accounts were taken first.

### i. **Management Accounts**

Management Accounts to 31 December 2014 were circulated in advance of the meeting. Points highlighted:

- Actual year to date surplus £9,044 and full year forecast surplus £7,117
- Staff costs have increased by £31,682 compared to budget and the full year forecast overspend is £28,932.
- Agency staffing costs are over budget by £39,135. The significant increase to the overspend is attributed to 6<sup>th</sup> form teachers supplied by North Herts College that had not been re-charged to the academy in the October management accounts. The oversight was noted a few days after the previous LGB meeting. AE and HC were notified immediately of the error. This has had a significant impact on the full year forecast surplus reported at the November meeting. The decision was taken to report the error at this meeting.

**Question: Are similar errors likely to emerge?**

Errors of this magnitude are unlikely to recur due to the improved financial systems across the trust

**Question: Activities for generating funds are showing a positive variance. Is this likely to result in a positive variance at the year end?**

The full year forecast is showing income at the level budgeted as the current positive variance may be a timing issue and lettings could reduce over the year. Lettings are on target and comparable to the same period of the previous year.

### ii. **Adopted Report and Accounts 2013/2014**

The consolidated accounts will be circulated after the meeting. Management accounts for the year ended 31 August 2014 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Inherited fixed assets and pension fund accounting is excluded for the figures. A surplus of £149,482 is shown for the academy. Income for the year exceeded the budget by £55,789. This was made up of several factors but largely from one-off income streams - the start-up grant and the Local Authority revenue income and revenue surplus. Expenditure

was quite close to budget overall although there were some significant variances within the separate expenditure headings. These were highlighted in the comments section.

**Question: Can records be checked for an asset register? The understanding is that an asset register was a requirement of the conversion and was in place and being maintained.**

This will be checked. However, it was believed that an inventory was required rather than a full asset register.

Action JF

An asset register will be constructed and maintained. The use of asset tags was suggested.

Action AM

The academy is financially stable and the auditor's report was good. The academy continues to have a rising roll and the future looks positive.

AM was thanked and he left the meeting.

### **10. Executive Principal's Report**

ML gave a verbal report.

- Matt Hamnett (MH) has been appointed as the new Principal of NHC and will take up the position in March. He was given a tour of the Trust schools on Tuesday and met with the Principals. He was particularly impressed by the students' tour and is keen to develop the group identity and partnership between the Multi Academy Trust and North Hertfordshire College
- Student recruitment across the group is positive. Recruitment to Yr10 for both Da Vinci Schools is higher than this time last year – 70 for the Science and Engineering school and 38 for the Creative Enterprise school. The expectation by the DfE is that the new schools will reach full capacity 5 years after opening
- The impact of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) has been positive for all the schools in the trust and the schools are receiving good value for money.
- Sharing of resources across the schools is also working well and is having a positive impact across the Da Vinci schools. Examples given led by the academy include the role of exams officer, timetable co-ordinator and shared expertise and support from the academy English department.
- ML reported that there has been interest in the partnership at national level and that he has been invited to speak at a national conference on 14-19 partnerships. The conversion of the Thomas Alleyne School to Academy status is being viewed as a model of a sponsored conversion. It was considered that an important factor contributing to the success of the conversion is that the sponsor is an educational organisation and local.

The chair requested that the reviews and evaluations of the SLAs are recorded and presented to the local governing body.

There is a vacancy for a Trust nominee on this local governing body. Subject to approval by the Trust at its next meeting, Dame Pat Collarbone has been invited to join the governing body.

### **11. Attendance Policy**

A proposal to bring forward the closing time of registration by one hour was made to help support the staff tackle lateness and absenteeism.

40% of students that regularly arrive late have low attendance records. A student arriving after registration has closed is recorded as absent for the whole morning so this will allow staff to progress paperwork more quickly

towards issue of a fixed penalty notice. The change would be used as a tool to improve attendance. Approximately 70 students arrive between 9am and 10am each day. The immediate impact on attendance figures was discussed. It was recognised this could be a dip but it would be tackled immediately. The change is proposed to take effect from next Monday and notice would be given to parents in tomorrow’s newsletter.

**It was agreed to accept the proposal and to review the impact on attendance at the next meeting.**

The wording on page 3 of the Attendance Policy – **Academy Routines, Registration** will be amended to read ‘The morning register is taken at 8.30.am and closes at 9.00 a.m.’

**12. Risk Management**

A first draft of the academy specific risk register had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Feedback from governors was positive however a more operational focus was requested.

Action ML

Governors were asked if any risks had come to their attention. None

**13. Dates of future meetings**

Please note the date of the next meeting is re-scheduled to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at 6pm.

**14. Any Other Business**

- i. The academy has a regular slot in the Stevenage Magazine. Students write the article and gain sponsorship from local businesses. The next issue will be March and students are looking for a local business to sponsor the magazine space.
- ii. Governors were invited to the Primary heads visit taking place next Friday. Governors please e-mail LS if able to attend.
- iii. Governors were informed of the date of the NHSST summer conference. It will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Venue and programme tba.
- iv. A Thomas Alleyne School sign remains in place to one side of the school. This will be removed.

Action JF

The meeting closed at 7.50pm

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting

Chair’s signature: .....

Date: .....