

**Uttoxeter Learning Trust
Education Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held remotely (via Office 365 Teams) on Tuesday, 23 November 2021 at 5.30pm.

Present:

Rev M Sherwin (chair), Mrs P Livesey, Mr S Slater.

Dr S Clark – Chief Executive Officer

Mr R Sheldon – Clerk to the ULT

Apology:

An apology for absence was received from Mr T Sutcliffe.

269. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda items.

270. Presentation – Ryecroft CE(C) Middle School:

Mrs Rudge, interim executive headteacher of Thomas Alleyne's High and Ryecroft CE(C) Middle Schools, was present for this item to give a presentation and update on the work undertaken at Ryecroft to bring about the required improvement. Trustees noted that due to changes to the leadership team at Thomas Alleyne's High School, agreement had been reached for Mrs Rudge to work for 1 day a week (2 days were originally agreed) at Ryecroft and an outline was given of the priorities identified and progress to-date to bring about improvement. Priorities included:

- Leadership and management – the leadership team had been re-structured and included a head of school and deputy headteacher. Other staff had joined the leadership team on a voluntary basis and Mrs Rudge was confident that an effective leadership team was being developed to align with the school's vision.
- Governance structure – a revised committee structure, to mirror governance at Thomas Alleyne's, had been put in place and terms of reference agreed. Peter Taylor, an experienced governor from that school had been invited to join the governing body at Ryecroft and Mrs Rudge wished to place on record her thanks to him for the work he had already done to strengthen the school's governance, particularly with regard to financial matters.
- Health and Safety/Buildings – a number of building issues had been identified as priority work and some of the necessary work had already been undertaken, and financed by Entrust. Mrs Rudge further reported that key outstanding work related to the air handling units which could cost up to £100K to repair. Discussions continued with Entrust regarding this and it was hoped that work would commence shortly and also funded by Entrust.
- Finances – a copy of the school's 5-year budget modeller was made available and Mrs Rudge reported that the budget modeller previously agreed by trustees was no longer accurate due to a change in the number of pupils on roll. Trustees were asked to note that to continue with the previously agreed budget, and revert to the previous staffing structure, would likely result in a large budget deficit in years 4 and 5. As a result, Mrs Rudge outlined two possible options for the school's staffing structure and leadership team, both of which would be financially manageable. In short, the two options were:

Option 1 – continue with the executive headteacher role with a similar leadership team as at present (this would have implications for the leadership team structure at Thomas Alleyne's).

Option 2 – the appointment of a headteacher at Ryecroft.

Both options would be discussed later in the meeting.

- Communication and marketing – regular communication with parents to keep them fully informed of everything happening at the school.
- Teaching and learning – an outline was given of the learning walks that were being undertaken to help identify priorities and improvement strategies. A particular focus was given to the identified improvement strategies for Maths.

Trustees thanked Mrs Rudge for her detailed presentation and for the work undertaken in a short period of time to help bring about the required improvement.

271. School Leadership Structures – Thomas Alleyne's High and Ryecroft CE(C) Middle Schools:

The CEO had previously circulated a report to outline a number of possible options for the leadership structure at both schools with effect from September 2022. Trustees were reminded that Mrs Rudge had been appointed as interim executive headteacher until 31 August 2022. The CEO took trustees through the detail, and financial implications, for each of the possible options.

Full discussion followed and it was resolved –

- i) That the Education committee agrees that a substantive headteacher, and deputy headteacher, should be appointed at Ryecroft CE(C) Middle School and that immediate arrangements be made for the headteacher post to be advertised with a view to an appointment being made for the start of the summer term.
- ii) That the chair of the Trust Board would inform other trustees of this decision immediately to seek their views, if any, and for the CEO to then start the recruitment process.

272. Windsor Park CE(C) Middle School – Ofsted Report:

Trustees had been previously circulated with a copy of the Ofsted report following the school's recent inspection. The CEO highlighted the identified action points from the report and was pleased to confirm that the school's governing body had already agreed strategies as necessary to address the issues.

It was resolved –

That the Ofsted report be received and that the school be congratulated for such a positive inspection and continuing to be identified as a good school.

273. Minutes:

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 21 September 2021 had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting be received and approved, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 278 – Risk Register: The chair of the Trust Board requested that the minute be changed to make clear that discussions with the RSC to discuss possible growth of the ULT had been held a while ago and that the RSC had recognised the potential for growth of the ULT. This could include additional schools joining the ULT or working with other MATs. Arrangements would be made for a further meeting to be held with the RSC at a point in the future to discuss growth options further.

274. Matters Arising:

a) Bramshall Meadows (Minute 265(a) refers)

The CEO was pleased to report that Mrs Andrea Kenny (All Saints CE First School), had recently been appointed as interim executive headteacher for 2 years. Communication with prospective parents had been very positive and a number of admission requests already received. Trustees would be kept updated.

b) Middle School Improvement Plan (Minute 266(b) refers)

The CEO reported that the views of trustees, as discussed at the previous meeting, had been shared with the middle school headteachers. School improvement plans had already been updated to reflect those views.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteachers be thanked for updating their school improvement plans and that the CEO be requested to invite them, as appropriate, to future meetings of the Education committee to discuss the detail of their plans.
- ii) That Mr Glidden, headteacher of Oldfields Hall Middle School be invited to the next meeting to discuss his school improvement plan.
- iii) That the first school headteachers should also be given the opportunity of meeting with the Education committee as considered appropriate.

275. Risk Register:

A copy of the updated risk register had been previously circulated and the CEO highlighted the key changes that had been made to the register, which included:

- Compliance matters – due diligence was required for a number of matters to ensure that the ULT remained compliant with its responsibilities, including in particular health and safety issues and GDPR. The CEO gave an assurance that all ULT schools had service level agreements (SLA's) with the local authority to provide appropriate support and that support was also being sourced from the Local Authority to help determine appropriate ULT policies.
- Succession planning – following the recently announced resignations of trustees and members the need for succession planning was important and the CEO was pleased to report that opportunities to register an interest had been included in the recent newsletter to all parents and that this had prompted some interest. Trustees would be kept updated.

The CEO also suggested that consideration be given to arranging a training course around risk registers and that trustees, headteachers and governors be invited to attend.

It was resolved –

- i) That the updated risk register be received and noted and that trustees welcome this item being included higher on future agendas.
- ii) That trustees welcome the idea of a training course around risk registers and that school risk registers should inform the ULT register.

276. Safeguarding:

The CEO reported that updated safeguarding training was necessary for some trustees and that arrangements would be made as necessary. The CEO also reported that the single central record had been identified as an action point following the recent Ofsted inspection at Windsor Park CE(C) Middle School. As a result, support had been sought from the ULT's HR adviser and the CEO confirmed that the school had addressed the issues as necessary. The CEO further reported that, in recognition of the issues identified by Ofsted, arrangements were being made for all schools to have a safer recruitment audit. This had been received positively by schools and had already resulted in the sharing of good practice. No serious concerns had been identified but changes had been made where recommended. Safer recruitment training had also been arranged for governors and all schools had been represented.

It was resolved –

That the safeguarding update be received and noted, with thanks to the CEO for the work undertaken around safer recruitment.

277. Reporting of KPIs to the Trust Board:

The CEO reported that it was important for governors to share school outcomes with trustees and that a Key performance Indicator (KPI) pro-forma could help with this. A suggested model for reporting KPIs had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

That trustees agree to adopt the KPI model pro-forma as presented but that it be kept under review.

278. Policy Review:

The following policy had been previously circulated:

Staffordshire County Council Model Safeguarding Policy

A copy of SCC's model safeguarding policy had been previously circulated and the CEO reminded trustees that approval had been previously given for the ULT, and all schools, to adopt the model policy. Rather than re-producing the model policy in its entirety each year, the CEO suggested that the ULT issues a policy statement to make clear that the ULT and all schools adopted the policy as presented by SCC. The Authority's safeguarding lead had confirmed that a policy statement would be sufficient.

It was resolved –

That the policy statement to confirm adoption of SCC's model safeguarding policy be approved.

279. Other Business:

Record of Thanks

Trustees noted that this was to be the clerk's last meeting of the Education committee and placed on record their thanks to him for the help and support previously given.

280. Date of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Education Committee would be held on Tuesday, 1 February 2022 at 5.30pm. The venue for the meeting to be agreed nearer the date.

Signed: Rev. Sherwin
PP (P. Davies - Clerk)
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Date: 01.02.22
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