

# Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT)

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Education Committee held in Ryecroft C.E. Middle School on Tuesday 11 October, 2022 at 2.00 p.m.

**Present:** Rev. Sherwin, Dr. Clark (CEO), Mr. Slater

**In attendance:** Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Trust Board)  
Mrs. Grattage (Headteacher – Ryecroft C.E. Middle School)

### 1 Welcome:

Trustees were welcomed to today's meeting by Rev. Sherwin. A hybrid meeting model was in place as some Trustees attended the meeting in person and others joined online. Documentation had been made available on Governor Hub in advance of the meeting along with a clear and purposeful agenda.

Whilst there was an effective level of engagement throughout the meeting, the meeting was not quorate. Any decisions were therefore deferred to the Trust Board meeting which was scheduled to take place on the following day - 12.10.22.

### 2 Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Ms. Livesey and Mrs. Bennett.

### 3 Presentation:

The meeting began with a presentation delivered by the Headteacher of Ryecroft C.E. Middle School. Trustees are aware that Mrs. Grattage took up the Headship post from Easter 2022 and it was clear from the update that she delivered that the School has made sufficient strides forward since her appointment. The following key points were noted:

#### 1.1

The Headteacher confirmed the School received a Section 8 ungraded inspection on 14 and 15 September 2022. The Report will be available online with Ofsted confirming that the School continues to be a 'Good' school. Everybody who played their part in securing this successful outcome was thanked by Trustees with the focus now being on ensuring that this good news story gets out in the local and wider community through the various communication channels that are available.

Whilst Ofsted had noted a couple of areas for improvement around the sequencing of the curriculum and consistency of assessment, there were many areas of strength that were singled out in the Report – for example 'the arrangements for Safeguarding are effective', that 'leaders primary aim is that all pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum' and that 'pupils feel happy and safe at the School.' Trustees can take in these strengths and others in the supplied narrative.

#### 1.2

The Headteacher confirmed that one of her key drivers going forward is to increase the numbers on roll through targeted marketing and promotional based activity. The Ofsted rating will help this cause with healthy pupil numbers being of crucial importance to the long-term sustainability of the School.

### **1.3**

Some of the recent Reading strategies that were launched were shared. These included the overhaul of the library provision to foster a love of reading; the use of Accelerated Reader with all of the background analytics the schematic brings; the introduction of targeted and planned interventions to move all pupils on including the 'lowest 20% of readers' and, finally, the use of bespoke initiatives in school such as the 'Battle of the Books', author visits, the Reading Café, Book Flix book trailers and the introduction of assistant librarians and reading ambassadors. All of these areas create a holistic support package that meets the needs of all learners in different ways. The Headteacher reassured Trustees that the focus on Reading has to remain strong as without a broad exposure to literary styles and vocabulary enrichment, this could have an adverse impact on pupils accessing the whole curriculum.

### **1.4**

When it comes to Writing, Trustees were informed that both the curriculum impact statement and Marking Policy have been reviewed and updated. There has been a focus on introducing more diversity into the curriculum with the authors, characters and contexts (both familiar and unfamiliar) that are being studied. The SLT is conscious of the impact of the pandemic on Writing (a national trend) and is looking at ways of both increasing the number of writing opportunities that are available to pupils whilst focusing on overall writing stamina and associated SPAG requirements. Trustees were also reassured that the progress of particular groups of learning is being monitored closely to establish where extra support needs to be targeted and deployed.

### **1.5**

Maths is the final core curriculum area and is equally receiving attention from the SLT to drive through sustained improvement. It was confirmed the necessary action plan is in place with a focus on consistent high-quality teaching and the use of high-quality curriculum resources (some online) to accelerate rates of progress. SATs papers are being reviewed to identify any knowledge gaps with the curriculum then being reordered to give priority to these areas to ensure curriculum content is suitably embedded. Arithmetic skills are receiving a renewed focus with parents being suitably engaged to support this learning within the home environment. Lunchtime and after school clubs are also being introduced to provide extra targeted support and as with the core curriculum areas the progress of particular groups of pupils is being analysed to establish what additional interventions may be required.

### **1.6**

Behaviour for learning is a crucial area for the Headteacher as it provides the framework within which accelerate academic progress can be made. The Headteacher outlined various steps that have been taken in this area including the updating of the Policy; the positive phone calls home; the updated rewards system that has been introduced; the promotion of various initiatives around pupil leadership; the focus on positive character development and the modelling of positive behaviours by staff and other stakeholders on a daily basis. All of these initiatives are having a positive impact on creating an environment where pupils can really succeed in their academic and pastoral development.

### **1.7**

The Headteacher summarised the priorities going forward for the School which include:

- Addressing the two priority areas arising from the Ofsted inspection.
- Improving the end of KS2 outcomes.
- Preparing for a SIAMS inspection which is due this year.
- Increasing the number of pupils on roll.

Steps are already being taken to address these areas which will continue in the coming months/years.

## 1.8

The Headteacher thanked the Trust for the support it has provided both to the School direct but also the support she has received on a personal level when developing the new look SLT.

**Trustee Challenge:** Trustees welcomed the update that was provided. As well as Rev. Sherwin commenting favourably on the recent tour she had had around the School (in advance of today's meeting) where various questions/challenges had been raised, Trustees also followed up on some key lines of enquiry around the performance of vulnerable groups, how barriers to progress are being overcome and how parents are being engaged to extend learning beyond the School day.

The Headteacher responded to each of these lines of enquiry with the proactive action the SLT and staff are taking in each of these areas.

Trustees finished this section of the meeting by congratulating Mrs. Grattage and her staff on the recent Ofsted outcome.

Mrs. Grattage gave her leave of absence from the meeting.

## 4 Election of Chair:

There was a requirement to elect a Chair at today's meeting. As the meeting was not quorate, a recommendation will be put to the Trust Board that Rev. Sherwin is elected Chair of this committee forum.

## 5 Election of Vice-Chair:

It was agreed the election of Vice-Chair will be deferred to the next meeting of this committee.

## 6 Confidentiality:

Trustees were reminded that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting.

## 7 Declarations of Interest:

No declarations of interest were made by Trustees in respect of any items appearing on today's agenda.

## 8 Committee Terms of Reference:

It was confirmed that the Committee Terms of Reference is included within the overall ULT Scheme of Delegation. Trustees saw no reason to recommend any changes to this document that would require further ratification by the Trust Board.

## 9 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

As the meeting was not quorate, the Minutes from the Education Committee that took place on Tuesday 28 June, 2022 could not be ratified at today's meeting. It was agreed these minutes would instead be forwarded to the Trust Board for formal ratification.

## 10 Matters Arising:

The Clerk generates an action matrix to each set of minutes. It was suggested that from this point forward a check could be carried out on these actions to ensure all have been suitably progressed/closed off since the last meeting.

Looking specifically at the action matrix from the June meeting:

Minute	Owner	Actions	Action Update
5	CEO	Make April minutes available as a public record if required.	Complete
5	Clerk	Sign April minutes on behalf of Chair.	Complete
9	Trustees	Send through any data related questions in advance of future meetings.	Complete
9	CEO	Consider timing issue with data and put data support request to Trust Board.	Ongoing
9	CEO	Consider summary sheet to sit alongside data sets, drawing out top level, salient points.	Ongoing
10	CEO	Forward proposals as referenced to Trust Board for further consideration.	Complete
10	CEO	Share response to Government Green Paper with Trustees once available.	Complete
11	CEO	Forward approved policies to Trust Board.	Complete
11	CEO	Respond to Trustee feedback around ULT Parent Code of Conduct.	Ongoing

There was an update supplied on the outstanding actions during the course of today's meeting.

#### 11 Risk Register:

The Risk Register remains a standing item at meetings. The CEO continues to update the Register to reflect any changes in the internal and external landscape that are impacting the Trust.

At today's meeting, the attention of Trustees was drawn to three high risk areas that have been discussed in depth at the Finance and Audit Committee, notably Risk 3 (Sustainable Budgets); Risk 6 (IT/Cybersecurity) and Risk 7 (Condition of Buildings). The CEO provided the context as to why these three areas are currently designated high risk which included reference to the energy costs and unfunded pay rises for staff; any financial implications of the 'Harper Trust v Brazel' ruling; the expansion of the JCB Academy and how this could impact pupil numbers; the long term absence of the IT Lead and the ongoing mitigation that has been put in place and, finally, the due diligence that needs to be applied by the Trust Board to future CIF Bids to ensure there are sufficient revenue reserves to cover a school's individual contribution. Trustees spent a few moments reflecting on these risk areas, some of which will no doubt be discussed in further detail at the next Trust Board meeting.

The CEO was thanked for the ongoing due diligence she continues to exercise in relation to this strategic document.

#### 12 Data Updates:

A number of data-related updates were shared with Trustees at this point in the meeting:

##### High School Data

Trustees had been given access to a data report from Thomas Alleyne's High School as part of the pre-meeting documentation. Various trends and patterns could be identified in this report linked to subject performance, groups of learners and progression beyond each Key Stage – for example, at KS4 the attainment 8 is lower than 2019 and KS5 the attainment has improved both in academic subjects and vocational compared to 2019 (APS/average grade).

Trustees felt that it would be a useful exercise to invite the Headteacher from the High School to the next meeting so there could be some informed discussion around key trends and patterns in the 2021-22 data, key lessons learned to inform practice this year and how the current in-year data is shaping up given the national driver appears to be moving again from a mid-point in 2022 to the pre-pandemic standard in 2023. A level of due diligence has already been applied at a local level through the LGB but Trustees wanted to pose a number of overarching, strategic questions in relation to the data overview that had been shared. The CEO confirmed she would make the necessary arrangements for this input to be provided at the next meeting.

### **First and Middle Schools Data**

The CEO reported on the following key headline trends:

As a Trust, EYFS teacher assessment data exceeds the national comparator for 2022 for Good Level of Development. National averages for Reading, Writing and Maths are expected November 2022 but Trust averages currently do exceed 2019. At KS1, Trust attainment matched the 2022 national figure for Phonics, and exceed Reading, Writing and Mathematics at expected standard and greater depth, except for Writing at greater depth. This area had been identified as an area that had been negatively impacted due to Covid. Picknalls, The Richard Clarke First School and All Saints were externally moderated at Key Stage 1 and All Saints at Early Years. All centres maintained their teacher assessment estimates and some scores were in fact raised at The Richard Clarke First School. There is variation at school level but small cohort sizes affect significance levels. The national averages that are available are lower in 2022 compared to 2019. Headteachers do report challenges in relation to profiles of different year groups within each school but are responding with interventions to support catch up.

At KS2, as a Trust attainment exceeds the 2022 national figures, except for Grammar Punctuation and Spelling at a higher level. Again there is variation at a local level with stronger attainment at Windsor Park and lower attainment in Writing and Mathematics at Ryecroft. Writing was externally moderated at Ryecroft and actions have been shared with Trustees regarding this area. A new curriculum lead is in place. Maths is again a priority for the SIP and appraisal. The national averages are lower in 2022 compared to 2019, except for Reading. Headteachers are engaging with NTP funding but using their own staff to deliver interventions.

**Trustee Challenge:** Trustees felt that it was vital that at a local level LGBs are holding senior leaders to account against their performance data. This is one of the key Governor core competencies and this is where the due diligence should be applied around data in the first instance.

The CEO acknowledged that she would reiterate this point to Headteachers and stress that data related challenge should be captured in meeting minutes for transparency and audit purposes.

### **Data Management across the Trust**

The CEO confirmed that she had explored an internal solution for generating a more effective analysis and reporting of performance data but no quick fix has been found. As a result, there has been a move to secure external support with the CEO currently in discussion with Redbourne who provide data analytics for all UTCs via Baker Deering. As part of these discussions a report that will serve a three-tier system is being explored.

**Trustee Challenge:** It was suggested that the CEO may also want to explore FTT when looking into an external provider.

The CEO thanked Trustees for this suggestion. An update will be provided once the services of an external provider has been secured.

### **All Saints CoE First School Ofsted Report**

The CEO confirmed the two areas for development that were picked up in the Report (i.e. support and development of curriculum leadership and the introduction of a new Phonics scheme) and explained what support/training the School is receiving to ensure sustainable progress is being secured in each of these areas. Trustees welcomed this update.

### **Ryecroft C.E. Middle School Ofsted Report**

This item has already been referenced during the course of today's meeting.

## **13 School Improvement:**

### **ULT Staff Training**

The CEO outlined all of the training that is being offered to ULT school at the present time. The training offer is extensive and covers off a number of scenarios – i.e. schools responding to Ofsted feedback; Ofsted Readiness training; network opportunities for Subject Leaders; bespoke one-off events such as Light Up Uttoxeter and core curriculum events which ensure like-minded practitioners can come together and share best practice. Some of the events have external facilitation and there are also electronic resources available in some areas that will support on-going professional practice. The CEO reported that the offer has been warmly received by staff with the necessary evaluations also being taken to inform any future offer.

### **Trust Improvement Lead/Teaching College**

The CEO confirmed that a leadership job description has been shared with Headteachers to promote discussion and secure feedback on current and future needs. This is clearly an area that will be revisited in future meetings with Trustees acknowledging different ways that the model could be deployed, potentially sharing costs with other MATs.

## **14 Safeguarding:**

### **Link Trustee Role – SEND and Safeguarding**

Trustees had received some useful materials from the NGA on how this role might play out in a Trust environment. There was a discussion around how Trustees might want to explore a Link Trustee role in more detail each term; how the interface should work between the Link Trustee and local schools and how Trustees can make sure their input around their designated link area does not overlap with the key accountabilities of staff or governance at a local level. Trustees were asked to go away and reflect on the circulated material before sharing their thoughts on this area at a future meeting.

### **Training of Governors and Trustees, KCSIE 2022**

It was confirmed that the PA to the CEO will check that all training requirements related to Trustees are being met in this area. It is important that as a minimum all Trustees complete Level 1 Safeguarding training – whether that be through the ULT or they already hold the necessary certification in other professional roles.

### **School Safeguarding Audits**

It was confirmed that all schools have completed the S157 Safeguarding Audit online tool which generates an action plan in line with LA deadlines. It was also confirmed that an external review of Safeguarding took place at Ryecroft on 08.07.22. prior to the Ofsted Inspection with the feedback arising from the review extremely positive.

### **Headteacher Response to the Green Paper**

The CEO thanked Mr. Gliddon for his support in co-ordinating a response on behalf of the ULT. Key elements of the response were shared as follows:

- We were very pleased to see the Government acknowledge that the current SEND framework is confusing and not working at a national level.
- A significant amount of the Green Paper strategy is focused on improving the quality of classroom teaching, however it does not provide detail of how this will be achieved
- Much of the consultation focussed on compliance in schools. We feel it will be more effective if schools have a 'culture' of inclusion
- There is an acknowledgment that previous well intentioned Government policy had actually made the situation more complicated and in some cases disadvantaged inclusive schools.
- We welcome the suggestion of improved SEND training for all staff
- We stress the need to simplify the EHCP application process for both schools and families
- We stress the importance of any reforms helping to create capacity in schools in order to support high quality SEND provision

## 15 Policies:

A series of policies were shared with Trustees in advance of today's meeting. They included:

- ULT Online Safety Policy
- ULT Safer Recruitment Policy
- ULT Safeguarding Policy
- ULT Staff Code of Conduct
- ULT Staff Discipline policy
- ULT Parent Code of Conduct.

As the meeting was not quorate, it was agreed the policies would be forward to the Trust Board for formal ratification.

The CEO did outline where tweaks/modifications had been made to the policy documentation to date:

- ULT Online Safety Policy – updated in red (KCSIE 2022).
- ULT Safer Recruitment Policy – updated in red (KCSIE 2022). Online searches for Central posts were recently conducted by Insight HR
- ULT Safeguarding Policy – Trustees to agree that schools follow LA policy with the following amends
  - P5 add V Bennett Trustee into table
  - P15 Role of Trustees added
  - P16 Alteration to note – LA audits
  - P17 link to ULT Whistle-blowing policy inserted
  - P22 amend who checks SCR and how often
- ULT Staff Code of Conduct – updated in red (KCSIE 2022).
- ULT Staff Discipline policy – updated in red (KCSIE 2022).
- ULT Parent Code of Conduct. – requested updates in red (KCSIE 2022).

Trustees welcomed the transparency around these changes and offered a couple of points of feedback of their own.

**Trustee Challenge:** Specifically, Trustees did focus on the ULT Parent Code of Conduct and suggested a few tweaks to the document (i.e. calling it a Parent Agreement and softening the language) before it is put in front of the Trust Board. The CEO confirmed she would tweak the document in advance of the Trust Board that would be convening the next day.

**16 Any Other Business:**

The CEO queried whether the ULT Governor and Trustee Code of Conduct should be shared with Members. Mr. Slater confirmed he would progress this matter and share the document accordingly.

**17 Confidentiality:**

Trustees were asked to identify if there were any items/materials which needed to be excluded from any Agenda, Minutes, reports or other papers discussed at the meeting which would normally be made available for inspection following the meeting.

Trustees were also asked to identify any items included on the Agenda which require recording in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

It was confirmed that no item needed to be recorded in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

There were no items/materials identified for exclusion.

**18 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:**

The meeting schedule for 2022-23 has already been determined.

The next meeting of the Education Committee will take place on Tuesday 15 November, 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

All that was left to do was for Rev. Sherwin to thank all Trustees for their attendance and contributions to today's meeting,

The meeting was brought to a close.

PP P. Davies

15.11.22

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**Chair**

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**Date**



## Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT)

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Education Committee held in Ryecroft C.E. Middle School  
on Tuesday 11 October, 2022 at 2.00 p.m.**

### **Decision Matrix – MEETING NOT QUORATE**

Minute	Owner		Update
To TB			
4	NA	Election of Chair to be confirmed as Rev. Sherwin.	
5	NA	Minutes from 28 June to be formally ratified.	
15	NA	Policies to be formally ratified.	
		The CEO and Clerk will identify any other areas that need progressing in advance of the next committee meeting given quoracy issues.	

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 15 November, 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Trustees to be informed.