

Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT)

Minutes of the Meeting of the Education Committee held at Thomas Alleyne's High School on Tuesday 15 November, 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

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

In attendance: Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Trust Board)
Mrs. Rudge (Headteacher – Thomas Alleyne's High School)

1 Welcome:

Trustees were welcomed to tonight's meeting by the Chair. As well as the normal standing agenda items that are routinely discussed by this committee, there was a presentation provided by Mrs. Rudge on her school's performance data as at the end of 2022-23. Trustees had received a data update at a recent meeting which indicated at KS4 that the attainment 8 measure for Thomas Alleyne's High School was lower than 2019 whereas at KS5 the attainment had improved both in academic and vocational subjects. Trustees were therefore keen to hear what strategies senior leaders will be implementing at the high school in 2023-24 to bring about an upward performance in the School's performance outcomes, particularly at KS4.

Documentation had been uploaded to Governor Hub in advance of the meeting along with a clear and purposeful agenda. There was a healthy level of engagement throughout the meeting as Trustees asked questions and sought points of clarification, both in relation to the presentation from Mrs. Rudge and the meeting's wider strategic remit.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That an apology for absence be received and accepted from Mrs. Bennett.

3 Declarations of Interest:

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

4 Presentation:

Mrs. Rudge was invited at this point in the meeting to share her presentation with Trustees. Whilst the presentation was both informative and transparent in nature, the following key headlines were noted in relation to KS4:

1.1

She began by providing some context to the supplied data set, confirming that Ofsted will use 2022 outcomes cautiously and data for 2021-22 will only be used to inform discussions with school leaders. Whilst all educational providers have been impacted by the disruption to education from the pandemic in recent years, variables such as the Advanced Information notices that went out to schools in advance of public exams; changes in the way school and college performance measures were calculated and grading schools on a mid-point across the different curriculum areas (i.e. setting the grade boundaries based on a profile that reflects a midpoint between 2021 and pre-pandemic grading) have all impacted schools and colleges to varying degrees.

The direction of travel is that the education system will return in time to a pre-pandemic grading profile which provides school leaders at Thomas Alleyne's High School with a good opportunity to take stock of its data; to determine where the necessary improvement strategies/changes in approach need to be deployed and to monitor the on-going success of any new initiatives over the course of the next twelve months.

1.2

Mrs. Rudge shared with Trustees some of the headline statistical data for the School along with comparative Local Authority (LA) and national benchmarks where they are available. There was some discussion around the performance of boys: girls, particular vulnerable groups and individual subject areas to ensure Trustees had a holistic overview of where any performance improvements need to be realised. Trustees were informed that many of the statistical headlines will be captured in the IDSR and ASP which Ofsted will use as initial diagnostic material when preparing for a graded/ungraded inspection. These documents are published and are available to the relevant Link Trustee if needed.

1.3

Alongside the data outcomes, Mrs. Rudge confirmed that one of the areas that will need an additional focus over the course of the next 12 months is attendance. This is an area that many schools have faced challenges with during the pandemic and Thomas Alleyne's is no exception (some attendance-based statistics were shared). Alongside the academic initiatives, it was confirmed there will be a general tightening of practice and procedure in this area. Those staff with accountabilities around this KPI will work closely with families who struggle to get their children into school every day and will look to make more visible the amount of learning that can be lost from pupils not accessing the curriculum on a daily basis.

1.4

There was some discussion around the attainment 8 performance measure – a metric that is calculated by adding together pupils' highest scores across eight government approved subjects. Mrs. Rudge provided some contextual analysis as to why the School had faced particular challenges in this area when particular buckets have not been filled by individual students. It was confirmed that this will be an area alongside attendance and the performance of particular pupil groups (i.e. boys; disadvantaged) where the SLT will be looking to deliver a marked and sustained improvement over the course of the current academic cycle.

1.5

Mrs. Rudge provided Trustees with an insight into how the SLT has used the performance outcomes at the end of 2021-22 to inform next steps. It was confirmed that a significant data analytics process has been completed with key lines of enquiry noted; clear lines of accountability established for any follow up work and updates to various departmental improvement plans actioned.

Mrs. Rudge made it clear to Trustees that the upturn in performance outcomes at KS4 is a collective responsibility across all staff. As she explained, there is no single department that requires remedial action but instead all staff need to focus on sharpening their practice, being forensic in any internal data analytics that are carried out and being prepared to change direction when a particular intervention is not delivering the right level of impact. The LGB can also play its role in this process by carrying out one of their core competencies – i.e. holding the SLT to account for its action plan in ensuring the improvements that are being articulated around data are being realised.

1.6

Beyond the data analytics and ensuring that quality first teaching remains a staple offer within the School, Mrs. Rudge outlined some of the wider strategies that the SLT is looking to introduce over the course of this academic cycle. Reference was made to the decision to

reduce the length of lessons from 75 minutes to 60 minutes from September 2023 and the positive impact this should have on pupil progress. There were also comments made about reviewing the current lunchtime arrangements to determine the best model going forward; looking at how the assessment requirements within an academic year are communicated to parents/pupils; tightening up the current protocols around punctuality and attendance (i.e. clearing corridors and imposing consequences if arriving late at lessons); removing study leave post May half-term; securing a greater consistency around the setting and monitoring of homework; establishing a culture where pupils are empowered to take control of their own learner journey and to understand how far they need to go to fulfil their true potential and, finally, carrying out detailed work scrutinies across the curriculum to establish areas of focus and those groups of pupils who need particular attention.

Together, these wider strategies alongside quality first teaching and the need for on-going data diagnostics should provide the SLT with the toolkit it needs to drive through sustained improvement in academic performance – both in the short and longer term.

As an aside, there was also a discussion around the role curriculum resources can play in facilitating academic progress. Mrs. Rudge confirmed the subjects which have seen some significant financial investment in recent months which can only benefit pupils directly. There was also confirmation that the Maths department has changed its Scheme of Work and that a new vocabulary programme and reading test have been bought into the English department – again positive developments which will generate additional data to inform any subsequent actions that are taken.

1.7

There was a general discussion around the Ebacc curriculum and the fact Thomas Alleyne's does not convert well against this headline measure when compared to the LA and national averages. The Headteacher confirmed that the high school and its LGB is currently reviewing the approach taken in this area which historically does not mandate a language. Trustees gave their perspective on the situation acknowledging that this decision was operational in nature and therefore needed to fall under the jurisdiction of the LGB.

1.8

Finally, the Headteacher confirmed that the School is committed to the pastoral development of children as well as their academic progress. Mrs. Rudge spent a few moments outlining how the School is going to push this agenda over the course of the next twelve months with the focus very much on character development and motivating pupils to be the best version of themselves in everything they do. Trustees welcomed these pastoral initiatives and agreed that the academic and pastoral areas must work in tandem with one another if a child is going to succeed during their time at Thomas Alleyne's.

Trustees thanked Mrs. Rudge for her insightful presentation that covered a lot of territory. Trustees felt from the presentation that the Headteacher at Thomas Alleyne's has a clear strategic plan in place to address the shortfalls in the performance data. It was pleasing that a root and branch review has been carried out on last year's KS4 results and it will be interesting to see (from the data reports that are shared with Trustees each term) how successful senior leaders are being in bringing about improvements in key areas – whether it be the performance of groups; improving attendance; raising the profile of the Ebacc or improving standards across the board when the various accountability measures are applied.

Trustee Challenge: It should be noted that throughout the presentation, Trustees asked questions and sought clarification in relation to some of the points made. This challenge linked to any correlation between poor attendance and disadvantaged pupils; the three key areas that the SLT wanted to improve over the course of the next 12 months (referenced above); strategies that could be deployed to increase Ebacc take up; the benefits that the SLT feels have come out of the work scrutinies; any additional support that the School needs from

the Trust to support its continuous improvement programme and, finally, where the SLT expects the data to be in 12 months' time given from a data perspective there is a drive to return to the pre-pandemic standard.

Where necessary, the Headteacher gave her perspective on each of these points raised.

Resolved: That Mrs. Rudge be thanked for her presentation. She gave her leave of absence at this point from the meeting.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Education Committee held on Tuesday 11 October, 2022 be approved as an accurate and true record. It is noted that this meeting was not quorate with any key issues discussed by the Trust Board the following day.

Resolved: That the Minutes, Agenda and all reports and other papers considered at the meeting be made available for public inspection if required.

The Clerk will sign and date the ratified minutes on behalf of the Chair. This task is important to ensure the PA to the CEO can ensure there is an electronic copy of historical minutes, retained for future reference and audit purposes.

6 Matters Arising:

As the meeting on 11 October was not quorate, there were no specific actions to address at tonight's meeting.

The only area that will need to be revisited at the next meeting will be the appointment of Vice-Chair for this committee. It is likely one of the newly appointed Trustees may take this position in the Spring Term.

Resolved: That this item be added to the next scheduled committee agenda.

7 Risk Register:

The Risk Register is a standing item with the latest document shared with Trustees in advance of tonight's meeting.

The CEO drew Trustees attention to a number of areas of the Register – notably Risk Area 1 (Growth of the Trust) and the possibility of a less sustainable education model if the ULT does not sufficiently increase in size. Risk Area 5 (School Performance) was highlighted, particularly the changes in the SIAMS Inspection Framework and the need for schools to be ready for this external scrutiny. There was reference made to Risk Area 7 (Condition of Buildings) and the due diligence that will be applied by the Finance and Audit Committee to current and future CIF Bids. Finally, there was reference made to Risk Area 9 (School Improvement) and the need for schools to provide a sustainable model in relation to intervention/additional tuition as the Government subsidy is set to drop by 2023-24.

In all of these areas, the CEO confirmed that discussions remain ongoing in terms of the various mitigations that are being put in place. The CEO reiterated the point that she is always available if Trustees have any follow up questions in relation to this strategic document. For now, Trustees were happy with the information that was shared with them at tonight's meeting.

8 Safeguarding Update:

There were a number of notable updates in relation to Safeguarding.

1.1

Information that had been taken from the NGA governance portal linked to the Safeguarding/SEND Link Trustee role had been shared on Governor Hub in advance of tonight's meeting. Trustees had agreed that each term they would consider one of the Link Trustee roles to understand more about what was involved in a particular area with Christian Distinctiveness the next area that will be scrutinised in the Spring Term. In terms of Safeguarding and SEND, momentum may have to be put on hold in this area with the imminent departure of Mrs. Bennett from her Trustee role and the appointment of a new Trustee to this committee who may in time be persuaded to take on this Link Trustee role.

Resolved: That a Link Trustee be appointed to Safeguarding/SEND in the Spring Term. Rev. Sherwin to provide an input on the Christian Distinctiveness Link Trustee role at a future committee meeting.

1.2

A distinction was made between statutory training for Trustees (with the training record to be held centrally by the PA to the CEO) and wider enrichment-based training that Trustees can access at their leisure (with the individual training profile to be maintained by a Trustee in Governor Hub). Safeguarding clearly falls into the statutory bracket with there being some discussion about how Trustees can access the necessary CPD in this area should some form of refresher training be required.

Resolved: That the PA to the CEO contact Trustees if any aspect of Safeguarding CPD needs to be refreshed. Trustees to get their individual training profile up and running on Governor Hub.

1.3

Finally, the CEO confirmed that there are currently ongoing discussions around the possibility of using the space available at Bramshall Meadows First School to facilitate alternative provision. Other external providers have also been in touch (i.e. Insight HR) about using some of the available space as a training venue. It was agreed this matter would be escalated to the Trust Board for further discussion as all Trustees needed to have the opportunity to express their views and feelings on what is clearly a sensitive matter.

Resolved: That this item be discussed at the next scheduled Trust Board meeting.

9 Outcomes and Inspections:

Ryecroft CoE Middle School Ofsted Report

The outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection was shared with Trustees being notified that the School in question continues to be a Good school. The accompanying report from Ofsted makes for pleasant reading with the CEO confirming that the two areas identified by Ofsted for development have been incorporated within the target setting process for the Headteacher and staff as part of the ongoing appraisal process. Trustees were pleased to see that this feedback loop from Ofsted is already being addressed.

SIAMS Framework

The CEO confirmed that the SIAMS Inspection Framework is set to change from September 2023 with the role of Trusts to become more pivotal in the overall judgement. Rev. Sherwin and the CEO are already working together on a number of initiatives to support ULT schools

from a SIAMS-Readiness perspective and there has also been a review of the Scheme of Delegation carried out to ensure Christian values are at the heart of the ULT's mission and vision. In addition, there was also talk of a Working Group being set up by Trustees to focus on Christian Distinctiveness and Rev. Sherwin in her Christian Distinctiveness Link Trustee role will also ensure that she is sharing any advice and guidance with school leaders and Trustees as inspections get underway and common themes start to materialise in relation to the new framework.

Outcomes from 2022 – KPIs and Performance of Groups

All of the related documentation linked to this agenda point had been uploaded to Governor Hub in advance of tonight's meeting.

Trustee Challenge: Trustees were quick to identify some of the notable successes in the performance of groups analysis with it being clear that a number of schools within the ULT are successful in what they are doing to improve the outcomes for different pupil groups. In terms of challenge points, Trustees asked whether any schools at a particular level could learn from the successes of others and what can be done to ensure this best practice spreads. Finally, there was some acknowledgement of the challenges that come when comparing First Schools data (small cohorts and statistical skewing being an issue) and Trustees enquired as to when the external audit outcome that is being carried out around Pupil Premium provision at Oldfields Hall Middle School will be available.

The CEO provided the necessary clarification where needed on the points raised by Trustees.

Trust Wide Reporting

The CEO confirmed that the necessary due diligence is being applied to source a new Management Information System (MIS) across the ULT that will better meet the needs of schools. Both Arbor and PowerBi have been considered to date with all schools supporting a move to Arbor in terms of what benefits it can deliver. It was confirmed that further work is now needed in relation to the longer-term costs and necessary due diligence associated with this external provider. In addition, Trustees were informed that contact has been made with Fisher Family Trust (FFT) to procure Trust wide reporting on pupil progress. Once up and running, both of these areas will add some real strength and weight to data reporting across the ULT which will not only enhance challenge around data at a local level but will also give Trustees a more 'at a glance' insight into the performance of first, middle and high schools within the Trust structure.

10 Policies:

The following policy was shared with Trustees in advance of tonight's meeting:

- ULT Exclusion Policy.

Resolved: That this policy be approved by Trustees.

This policy will now be forwarded to the Trust Board for formal ratification.

Resolved: That this policy be uploaded to Governor Hub in the relevant folder for the next Trust Board meeting.

11 Any Other Business:

There was one item of additional business that was discussed at this point in the meeting – **see Confidential Appendix.**

12 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.

Resolved: That it be confirmed that the following item needed to be recorded in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes:

- Minute 11.

There were no items/materials identified for exclusion.

13 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 24 January, 2023 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.

Chair

Date

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Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Deadline	Action Update
5	CEO	Make October minutes available as a public record if required.	NA	
5	Clerk	Sign minutes on behalf of Chair and forward onto PA to CEO.	15.11.22	
6	Clerk	Add election of Vice-Chair to agenda for next meeting.	14.01.23	
8	Committee	Appoint Safeguarding/SEND Link Trustee in Spring Term.	24.01.23	
8	Rev. Sherwin	Provide input on Christian Distinctiveness Link Trustee role at future meeting.	24.01.23	
8	PA to CEO	Contact Trustees if any refresher Safeguarding CPD is required.	January 2023	
8	Trustees	Get ball rolling with training profile on Governor Hub.	Next meeting of Trust Board	
8	Clerk	Ensure lettings issue at Bramshall Meadows First School is discussed at next Trust Board meeting.	07.12.22	
10	Clerk	Upload policy to Trust Board folder for next meeting.	07.12.22	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 24 January, 2023 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Trustees to be informed.