

**Uttoxeter Learning Trust  
Education Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held remotely (via Office 365 Teams) on Tuesday, 26 January 2021 at 6.00pm.

**Present:**

Rev M Sherwin (chair), Mrs P Livesey, Mr R Oldham, Mr S Slater, Mr T Sutcliffe.

Dr S Clark – Chief Executive Officer

Mr R Sheldon – Clerk to the ULT

**217. Declarations of Interest:**

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

**218. Minutes:**

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 24 November 2020 had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

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

Present – Mr Sutcliffe had not been present at the meeting (his apologies had been accepted and recorded).

**219. Matters Arising:**

a) New School (Minute 207(b) refers)

The CEO reported that meetings with DfE and the local authority continued and it was hoped to shortly promote and market the new school, with the support of SERO. Arrangements were being made for contractors to be on site from May to start the building work.

b) IT Review (Minute 211 refers)

The CEO reported that she was shortly to meet again with Mr Harper, trustee, to discuss the IT review and hoped to present a detailed report for discussion at the next meeting of the trust board. The views of headteachers were also being sought to help shape the IT review and subsequent outcomes. With regard to the vacancy for an IT technician the CEO reported that the technician supporting Windsor Park and Oldfields Hall Middle schools was also now supporting the first schools. A decision had also been taken to appoint a part-time (0.6) temporary technician for the remainder of the school year.

c) Policies in Progress (Minute 212 refers)

The CEO gave an update on the following policy reviews:

- Children Missing in Education/Children Missing Education for Health Reasons – work continued to develop both policies in accordance with local and national model policies. Both would be presented for formal approval at the next meeting of the Education committee.

- GDPR – the CEO confirmed that all schools had their own policy for this but that a ULT policy was also being developed. It would be presented for formal approval at a future meeting.
- Other policies were also currently being reviewed in accordance with the review schedule and would be submitted for approval at the next meeting of the Education committee.

d) Richard Clarke First School (Minute 215(a) refers)

As previously reported, the CEO was pleased to confirm that Richard Clarke First School was to join the ULT and work continued with a view to completing the necessary joining process with effect from April 2021.

**220. CEO Presentation – School Improvement:**

The CEO informed trustees that this item had been included on the agenda to enable her to give a formal 10-minute presentation on a theme undertaken as part of the NPQEL. It was also a requirement for the presentation to be recorded and trustees gave their approval for this.

The CEO took trustees through her presentation which had been prepared to show the school improvement project being undertaken. Its focus was to support schools in implementing Covid-19 recovery plans to narrow the gap in learning and place pupil progress in Mathematics in Y6 in line with the top 20% of schools, taking account of adjustments to national benchmarks as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Trustees noted that support with this particular theme was being given by headteachers of other schools also studying for the qualification.

Following completion of the presentation, the CEO invited questions from trustees who welcomed the work that was being undertaken. Discussion followed and trustees focused in particular on the remote learning programmes currently in place and the importance of ensuring that a consistent approach was being taken by schools to narrow the gaps where necessary. Support for parents with remote learning was also recognised as being important and the CEO confirmed that consideration was being given to how this could be improved, particularly with regard to the teaching of Mathematics.

The CEO thanked trustees for allowing her to give the presentation and that she would take on board their views and work with headteachers in taking the necessary actions.

It was resolved –

That trustees congratulate the CEO for her presentation and the work being undertaken to bring about school improvement. They wished her well with completion of the qualification.

**221. CEO Update – Quality of Education and Covid-19:**

The CEO had previously circulated a report giving an update on the impact on schools due to Covid-19, with particular reference to data summaries and catch-up plans for all schools. The CEO went through the detail of the report and trustees noted the following work being done by schools:

- Remote learning – all schools understood their expectations around remote learning for pupils and continued to follow DfE guidance for the delivery of live lessons. As required, schools were shortly to publish their remote learning plans

on school websites and were using the DfE template made available for this purpose.

- Assessment – the Government had recently confirmed that external examinations would no longer go ahead in the summer term for GCSEs, A Levels, and vocational qualifications, in addition to statutory assessments at Key Stage 1 and 2. Ofqual was currently consulting on alternative assessment arrangements and the outcome of this was awaited.
- Lateral Flow testing – significant work had been done by schools to implement this and the CEO was pleased to confirm that Thomas Alleyne’s High School and the three middle schools had set up successful testing facilities. Primary schools had received testing kits to enable staff to be tested at home.
- Performance Management – the CEO reported that it would again be necessary for trustees to determine performance management and appraisal arrangements to take account of current circumstances. This was also to be discussed at the next meeting of the Headteacher Professional Board.
- School Data Summaries – copies of current school performance data had been previously circulated and the CEO reported that the data identified a number of issues that would need to be addressed. This included in particular the gaps between groups of pupils.
- School Catch-up Plans – copies of the catch-up plans had been previously circulated and gave details of how the Covid-19 catch-up premium grant would be spent. The plans remained under review by the local governing bodies and continued to be revised to take account of changing national guidance.
- Parental feedback – copies of reports to show feedback from parents in response to school arrangements due to the recent lockdown had been previously circulated and trustees were pleased to note the positive support given by parents. The CEO reported that a Trust-wide questionnaire was to be developed to seek views of parents on a range of issues and was to be developed further at the next meeting of the Headteacher Professional Board.

Full discussion followed, with a particular focus on school data reports and catch-up plans. Trustees welcomed the work being done by schools to narrow the gap between different groups of pupils but were also concerned that the data and catch-up plans did not always match, particularly in relation to SEND pupils. The CEO reported that ongoing support for pupils through remote learning programmes remained a key priority for schools and particularly for those groups of children that were under-performing. Appropriate intervention strategies, including external support, were being put in place.

It was resolved –

- i) That the school data reports and catch-plans be received with thanks to the headteachers.
- ii) That the CEO be requested to work with the headteachers to develop the catch-up plans further to ensure a focus on the under-performing areas and intervention strategies put in place to support pupils as appropriate.
- iii) That trustees approve the development of a Trust-wide questionnaire to help get the views of parents and the wider community regarding school/trust board response to the impact of Covid-19.

## **222. Safeguarding:**

The CEO reported that safeguarding implications had been identified due to the live recording of remote lessons. This was to be discussed further by headteachers at the next meeting of the Headteacher Professional Board and trustees would be kept updated.

The CEO was pleased to further report that there were no specific safeguarding matters to bring to the attention of trustees.

It was resolved –

That the Safeguarding update be received and noted.

## **223. Policy Review:**

The following two policies had been previously made available to trustees and the CEO confirmed that both, recently approved by trustees, had been updated to reflect national guidance:

### a) Safer Recruitment

The CEO reported that the policy had been amended to reflect necessary changes following the completion of Brexit. Full discussion followed and trustees also identified other parts of the policy that required amendment. These included:

- Delegation of all appointments to headteachers. The role of governors should be made clear.
- Selection panel. At least one member of the panel should have completed safer recruitment training within the previous 3 years.
- Supervision of visitors. Any visitor to a school, without DBS clearance, should be accompanied at all times.

It was resolved –

That the revised Safer Recruitment policy be approved, subject also to changes as outlined above.

### b) Safeguarding Policy (including Covid-19 addendum)

The CEO reported that the Safeguarding policy had been updated to include a Covid-19 addendum and that this reflected, in its entirety, local and national guidance.

It was resolved –

That the Safeguarding policy, to include the Covid-19 addendum, be received and approved as presented.

## **224. Risk Register:**

A copy of the updated risk register had been previously circulated and the CEO outlined the changes that had been made. Reference was made to the risks associated with Ryecroft Middle School, particularly with regard to school performance and leadership, and the level of risk would be kept under review.

Discussion followed and trustees agreed to monitor the risks due to absence of pupils from school due to Covid-19 and also the risks due to the absence of external assessments and use of catch-up funding to identify gaps in learning.

It was resolved –

- i) That the updated risk register be received and noted.
- ii) That the CEO be requested to continue to monitor and update the risk register as necessary to reflect the impact of Covid-19.

**225. Date of Next Meeting:**

As previously agreed, the next meeting of the Education Committee was to be held on Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 5.30pm. The meeting would again be held through Microsoft Teams.

T. Sutcliffe  
**Signed**.....

16 March 2021  
**Date**.....