

**MINUTES OF THE 130<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
HELD AT ASHCROFT TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY ON  
WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2018 AT 17.30**

**Present:** Dick Whitcutt (DW) - Chair, Angela Entwistle (AEE), Richard Perry (RJP), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Cristina Carli Nonnato (CCN), Mike Smith (MSM), Matt Gallagher (MGA), Steven Nash (SNA), Patricia Edmondson (PED), Kevin Chamberlain (KC).

**Absent:** Tony Bothwell (TBO), Stewart Harris (SH), Rachel Branagan (RB).

**In Attendance:** Conor Hewitt (COH) (Minutes)

**Start Time:** 17:30

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were passed on from TBO, SH and RB.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2018 were agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed.

**3. POLICY APPROVAL – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

DMI and RJP had reviewed the complaints procedure in order to fine tune its stages and structure. They felt that the time frames were tight and did not allow for a full investigation to take place, so these have been extended. SNA highlighted an extra bullet point in the document, COH agreed to correct this. SNA asked if the Academy kept data on the number of complaints received. DMI said that this was the case and that he could provide this data on an annual basis.

**4. MATTERS ARISING & MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

DW welcomed Kevin Chamberlain to the Executive Board. Kevin is an employee of Young and Co.'s Brewery, a company which has held a long-standing association with the Academy. Kevin introduced himself to the Board

**5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

DMI asked the Board for its approval for a Humanities trip to Berlin. The trip has been run three times in the past and has been a resounding success. The board confirmed that they were happy for the trip to proceed.

DMI informed the board that the Academy had 15 students interviewing at Oxbridge. This number is higher than in previous years.

DMI updated the Board on staffing. DMI and RJP explained that they had been told by a member of staff in each of the English and Science departments of their plans to work abroad next year. This long notice period gives the Academy time to recruit suitable replacements.

The teaching apprentice in the English department has been performing very well. This is the first time the Academy has used the apprenticeship scheme as a recruitment method and it has been a positive experience so far. The Academy is looking to recruit other apprentices in the future. The Academy has also recruited a Design and Technology (D and T) teacher. He will work to develop the D and T programme over the academic year whilst also teaching Mathematics.

DMI notified the Board in July that the reporting procedures would change. Parents will now receive email bulletins as well as the data sheets they already receive at the end of each term. Years 7 and 8 receive a general overview of their effort and attainment whilst the older year groups receive subject specific information including enrichment opportunities and revision materials. SNA noted that the email bulletin he

received did not contain the name of the child and therefore parents who have more than one child at the Academy may struggle to differentiate them. SNA also questioned if the bulletins had to be sent out for each subject and asked if they could be consolidated into one email. DMI noted that the Academy is still working out the best way to provide the information and that improvements will happen.

DMI noted that the organisation of the Academy's trips and visits has happened on an old system. The Academy is set to launch its new SIMS package 'Activities' in January which will automate the process and make it far easier.

DMI notified the Board that the expansion plans for an additional form of entry were continuing to progress well and that a project team had been selected by Wandsworth for the building conversion of physical space which they are funding with a small ATA contribution. The team had visited the Academy, prior to being selected, to assess the work. The final plans should be available after Easter.

## **6. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **a. DATA UPDATE (MIKE SMITH)**

In the previous meeting DMI had highlighted the importance of regularly updating the board on the progress students make in the Academy. MSM showed the board the projected Year 11 progress data based on the Summer 2018 public examinations. The progress 8 measure is predicted to reduce to +0.62 from +1.00 previously. When compared to the local and national projections the results are still set to be significantly above average.

MSM noted that all data from Year 7 through to Year 11 is kept by the Academy. This allows the Academy to understand the abilities of the year group in comparison to previous cohorts. The current cohort is generally less able when compared to last year's. MSM noted that this data helps to inform conversations in the Academy, which lead to interventions and changes in practice which benefit the students.

MSM had spoken to Mike Collins, Head of Sixth Form, about the Year 13 A2 projections. This year's Year 12 projections are generally very positive and look to be similar to last year. SNA asked what grades Russell group universities require. DMI said it varied considerably and depended on the subject and the overall impression of the student. He and AEE noted that a large number of universities are changing the way they offer places with a higher number of universities giving unconditional offers.

### **b. ATA DISCIPLINE POLICY (MATT GALLAGHER)**

DMI explained that there had been a degree of interest taken in the use of isolation, inclusion or removal rooms by school leaders when they tackle poor behaviour. The Academy's approach to behaviour management means that there is a calm atmosphere in which students learn and staff are attracted to this because they are able to teach in a disruption-free environment. MGA added that the Academy has a wide range of students from a number of different backgrounds, with 45% of students registered as receiving pupil premium.

The Academy has a traditional approach to behaviour, aiming to develop a safe environment in which students can learn without distraction or interruption. MGA noted that visitors often comment on the calm throughout the Academy. With senior staff back-up, the staff deal with small issues quickly and robustly to stop them turning into bigger issues. The Academy wants students to leave as good citizens who contribute to society and appreciate orderly structures.

SNA asked if some of the Academy's 'at risk' students ever refuse to go home due to the challenges they are experiencing outside of the Academy. DMI acknowledged that there are students who do this and who see school as their safe place. The ICAS mentors work hard to make sure the students are cared for emotionally.

PED asked how a student's pupil premium status is determined. DMI explained. The Academy uses the extra funds provided through pupil premium to help students who lack the advantages non-pupil premium students

receive from their parents. MGA noted that under the auspices of the behaviour policy and in terms of ambition, the Academy treats all students equally.

Ashcroft staff feel they are supported when it comes to behaviour management and this allows them to focus on teaching, which leads to better engagement and better results. MGA noted that these routines also help SEN and ARC students to succeed.

MGA noted that the approach is, by default, a positive one. The discipline log system means that all members of the Leadership Group can see each behaviour log and therefore can build a bigger picture of a student's behaviour throughout the Academy. However, the majority of conversations that take place are positive in nature.

As previously stated, the support that staff receive is a major attraction to working at the Academy. The recruitment landscape is very challenging and the Academy's approach helps significantly. MGA added that ICAS is somewhere that the majority of students will never visit. ICAS has 9 mentors who help with discipline but also have positive interactions and support students who experience difficulties or challenges which act as barriers to their learning.

ICAS is inherently a removal of privileges. DMI noted that the amount of time spent there varies but it is usually half a day, 1, 2 or a maximum of 3 days. SNA asked what happens with repeat offenders, DMI noted that repeat visits to ICAS will often lead to exclusion.

RJP noted that ICAS is largely supported through pupil premium funds. Aside from its use to fund the cost of mentors, the pupil premium money provides benefits such as the opening of the library before school and catch up and study hall sessions which help students who don't have the facilities at home. MSM added that the ICAS mentors have very strong relationships with the students and the mentors provide support for all students who need help in the Academy.

MGA explained that when students are placed in ICAS this benefits the students who are part of the class they have been removed from and allows the teachers to focus and teach effectively. DMI noted that having a system such as ICAS allows the Academy to reduce the number of exclusions. MSM added that the strong behaviour management at the Academy means that developing teachers can teach quality lessons and achieve great results. CCN asked what the exclusion shorthand of 'Bringing the Academy into disrepute' means. DMI explained that this is anything that happens outside of the Academy in the local community which damages the Academy's reputation.

The board assessed the injury reports and did not find any particularly repetitive or concerning issues.

## **7. VICE-PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

RJP updated the Board on capital developments.

He was asked if the CCTV cameras are used both for security and for identifying student incidents of poor behaviour. RJP noted that they were dual purpose and contributed to the calm environment and that they act as a deterrent.

On the proposed expansion in student numbers, RJP stated that the refurbishment works were estimated at around half a million pounds and represented the smallest cost of the four schools in Wandsworth where such expansion is planned to meet the Borough's shortage of future school places. ATA is not a local authority school but had volunteered to provide extra places if Wandsworth would cover most of the costs of adaption. He added there was no extra building needed just re-design of existing areas with some subjects moving location. The Academy had been asked to make a 5% contribution to the works which had been agreed.

He also outlined the planned works within the Library and Learning Resources Centre to enable this to facilitate catch up and study hall requirements better than it is able to at present and to provide seated space for up to 80 students as well with laptop provision for up to 60 of these. PED asked if books are as widely used in the

Academy now that the computer provides so much information. RJP noted that the students do use them well and that it is an area it seeks to continue to encourage.

RJP stated that the year-end accounts had been in line with predictions throughout the year, with a small surplus when taking account of factors such as a reduction in pension liabilities. The Academy still maintains healthy reserves for both restricted and unrestricted funds, although the latest 3 year forecast indicates that much of the restricted funding reserve will be used up by that point.

He also added that the Trading Company had again made a useful surplus and was able to gift aid a further £90,000 at the year-end back to the Academy, boosting its unrestricted reserves.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business to report.

Signed:   
Richard Whitcutt  
Chair of Executive Board

Date: 13 / Feb / 2019