

MINUTES
YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACADEMY AND THE SKILLS HUB
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING
WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER AT 11.00 AM

Members present: Isobel Callaby (IC)
Michele Gibbons (MG)
Mick Hore [Executive Principal] (MH)
Sunny Kumar (SK)
Chike Nnalue (CN)

In attendance: Kayleigh Franklin [OHCAT Management Accountant] (KF)
Laurie Cornwell [OHCAT Deputy CEO] (LC)
Susanne Wicks [Clerk].

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Noting that the Chair, Emlyn Lumley, had resigned with effect from 31 August 2019, the LGB agreed to appoint CN as chair of this meeting.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed all present.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Tom Crowe. The LGB consented to his absence.

Kathrine Everett and Tanya Oatway were not present.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no new declarations of interest made.

5. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i Governors noted that Isobel Callaby was appointed for a further three year term with effect from 25 March 2019.
- ii Governors noted that following the resignation of Joanne Mortimer, all staff were invited to apply for the vacancy and one application was submitted from Tom Crowe. The LGB agreed to recommend the appointment of Thomas Crowe by the Board in December.
- iii Governors agreed to defer their recommendation of a Chair and Vice-Chair until the next meeting when hopefully all vacancies would be filled.
- iv Governors noted the progress made on finding suitable candidates to fill the vacancies on the LGB.

6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

7. MATTERS ARISING

The clerk confirmed that she had reminded all Governors to arrange and carry out their portfolio visit.

8A. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

(i) The Skills Hub

MH presented his report which had been circulated prior to the meeting and matters discussed are detailed below.

Students

MH highlighted the high rates of attendance, noting that attendance compares well with the national average for similar provisions. He also advised that attendance at examinations was very high which is extremely positive.

MH and IC outlined changes made to staffing in the Safeguarding Team in order to maintain a focus on attendance, and explained that when a student does not attend school, staff go through a range of steps to identify where the student is, and will call the Police if their location is not established. One staff member focusses on student absence and their efforts are having a positive impact on attendance.

Governors were very pleased to note the 18/19 exam results which had improved from the previous year, and the high percentage of students who had secured a positive destination.

CN asked for further detail on the four students for whom a destination was not secured, and MH shared information on each, explaining the work that is done with a range of external agencies to try and find an appropriate next step. Governors noted the success of both schools in securing destinations and agreed that it would be very useful to have some specific examples in future which evidenced the range of challenges facing the schools and the young people.

Safeguarding

Governors noted with regret the recent death of a young person at the LB Hillingdon offices, and that PRUs had been cited in the press recently as a source of knife crime and gang membership. MH reassured Governors that neither applied here, and he and IC outlined the strategic work carried out with external agencies and stakeholders to safeguard the students, including a meeting of the Team around the Hub which had been arranged as a follow-up to the recent stabbing. IC undertook to share the details of the meeting with LC who would like to attend.

IC reported that an additional member of staff has been added to the Safeguarding Team due to the rising complexity of needs and issues arising among the cohort, which has been noticeable over the last 6 to 9 months. She reported that the MyConcern system is now in operation and staff are all

using it. Every concern raised is reviewed by IC who will decide on the appropriate action to be taken. IC undertook to provide LC with a log-in and CN undertook to look at the system as part of his safeguarding meeting.

Quality of Education

MH highlighted the positive impact of the new structure of the school day, particularly upon behaviour. He also flagged the increased focus on the enrichment curriculum and confirmed that all curriculum planning is built around the three Is in the Ofsted Framework (Intent, Implementation and Impact).

Student Progress

Governors noted the positive data, which MH advised had come from the first drop which is carried out only seven weeks into the academic year and warned that there may be a decline shown in the next two drops, but it had been a good start to the year. He confirmed that the data refers to all of the cohort, even the low attenders who will be receiving some form of education, even if not in school, but acknowledged that their progress will slow down if their attendance does not improve. It was suggested that if this were the case, it may be helpful to demonstrate to parents how their child's progress is slowing in comparison to others that do attend regularly.

Governors asked that future reports include additional detail on the progress made by students.

SK queried the progress in Photography which is lower than other subjects, and MK explained that it is a brand new course with new equipment that the students need to get used to. He expressed confidence that progress would improve, but if that were not the case by the next data drop, this will be investigated.

MH undertook to share the Pupil Premium report with all Governors, and it was agreed that information on the use of this funding would be included in future Principal's reports.

Behaviour and Attitudes

MH advised that the school continues with preventative work to education students about smoking, but it is challenging to address, particularly as some students smoke with the knowledge and consent of their parents.

Governors noted the positive impact of the consistent championing of the Pride principles across the school, which is particularly evident in the low rates of bullying and racist / homophobic incidents. MH advised that further training has been undertaken on the use of reflective and restorative action rather than punitive action in response to incidents, which can be challenging for some young people to adapt to initially, but is felt to be more beneficial than a traditional sanctions based behaviour management system.

CN asked how the reflective and restorative approach works on a practical level and IC explained that students work with staff or a skills coach to identify the trigger for their behaviour and how it can be mitigated. There is a reflection sheet for each type of incident (e.g. bullying) as well as a generic

sheet for medium level behaviours which tries to explore the catalyst for the incident and the impact of it on the perpetrator and others.

Leadership and Management

MH advised that half-termly meetings will take place for the SLTs of the Skills Hub and the Young People's Academy in order to enable collaborative working and strategic and operational planning.

With regard to the Student Council, IC reported that the current Chair has been tasked with welcoming new starters to the school which has been successful. It was also noted that the School Council are consulted on a wide range of matters and their feedback is often acted upon. Their feedback on the curriculum / teaching and learning will be sought later on in the term.

(ii) Young People's Academy

MH presented his report which had been circulated prior to the meeting and matters discussed are detailed below.

Staffing

MH updated Governors on efforts to recruit therapists and advised that he would be meeting an occupational therapist later that day who might be able to offer three days per week, and whom is also a trained counsellor. LC described the challenge for schools to recruit therapists, particularly when competing with NHS and agency salaries. MH also reported that he had met with representatives from OHCAT's preferred recruitment agency 'Supply Desk' and looked forward to working with them in future.

CN asked how therapy is provided to the students, given the challenge in recruiting therapists and MH advised that pastoral staff are giving as much support as they can, using their skills and experience. He also reported on the additional CPD that has been undertaken to support increasing numbers of students with ASD. In addition, he is part of a Special School Headteachers' Forum in the area which will meet on 3 December and aims to develop greater co-operation and collaboration.

CN noted that the local authority have a role to play in the provision of therapy as set out in the EHCP, and MH advised that the Youth and Communities Team have offered the use of counselling service located in a youth centre every Tuesday afternoon.

LC pointed out that the knowledge and links of new Head of School will be very important and useful for the school, and suggested that the school and the organisation as a whole may have to consider in-house training and development of therapists.

MH flagged his concern around high rates of staff absence and outlined actions being taken by HR to support the school where formal processes are required for nine members of staff, for whom all informal routes have been exhausted. Governors noted the considerable impact upon those staff who do attend, the additional pressure on budget caused by supply costs and the impact on the students, but were reassured to hear that supply staff are not

used to cover teacher absence and that all new starters are subject to a six-month probation period which should have a positive impact in the future.

On behalf of the LGB, MG noted the full support of Governors for the school leadership in addressing staff absence.

MH undertook to update Governors at the spring meeting.

Students

MH updated the number on roll which had increased to 59, with consultation underway for some new joiners to years 7 and 8 in the next few weeks. MH noted that out of borough placements remain high, which presents challenges, particularly in developing home/school partnerships. He also pointed out that the young person's needs may have proved too complex to be managed by specialist provision within their home borough and they consequently require high levels of specialist support which is not reflected in their funding. Work continues to ensure that students are funded appropriately for the school to meet their needs.

Governors were very pleased to note that there are nine or ten students with 100% attendance so far this term, and the positive picture with regard to attendance generally, but particularly in Years 7 and 9. As previously commented, IC reiterated the importance of regular attendance and the work of the Support Team undertaken to maximise attendance, who will maintain daily communication with students or their family, even if they are not in school.

Safeguarding

MH reported that five students are currently on Child Protection Plans and confirmed that the school works closely with external agencies to support and safeguard students. He particularly noted his concern about the rising number of students at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation about which he has been liaising with the Police.

Quality of Education

MH advised that there has been joint working with teacher colleagues at The Skills Hub and unqualified teachers are being supported to achieve QTS through various routes.

With regard to progress in PE, LC sought reassurance from MH that the course was appropriate for the cohort. MH advised that it's a completely new course but there will be more certainty once the outcome of today's Year 11 exams is known. Governors acknowledged that BTECs are much more challenging than they may have been in the past.

As with the report for The Skills Hub, MH undertook to provide further detail on progress in his next report.

MH advised that this year's cohort is more academically able than last year's and described the school's attempts to explore all entry points for examinations to maximise students' chances of success. Governors noted the need for students to have appropriate language skills in order to achieve in any subject.

MH updated Governors on the progress of finding appropriate destinations for the two students who are NEET. He advised that students with an EHCP are finding it harder to secure places in FE colleges who say they cannot meet their needs. He outlined the school's considerable efforts to support young people through transition but pointed out that their local authority also has a role to play. IC described the input of LB Hillingdon officers through the Team Around the Hub, a cross borough initiative involving a range of stakeholders.

Governors were pleased to note the increase in WOWs (merits) and MH advised that the type of rewards given are being reviewed in response to student feedback. With regard to bullying, MH confirmed that almost all incidents are attributable to seven students and their behaviour is closely connected to their needs.

MH reported that he had met with Police earlier that day to discuss the increasingly significant issue of cannabis use, particularly in Year 10, which impacts on their behaviour in schools. IC and CN undertook to discuss this further at their portfolio meeting.

MH undertook to share the PPG report for the Young People's Academy after the meeting.

Governors **received** the Principal's reports.

8b. YPA SCHOOL VISIT TO PGL, MARCHANTS HILL

MH updated Governors on the successful residential trip, and advised that there were a couple of students who did not want to be away from home, and a few for whom the risks were too high for both they and the staff, but they have been told they may be able to attend the spring visit, should the risks be manageable.

Governors were pleased to hear that the trip was a great success and noted the benefits to the young people of participation.

8c. DASHBOARDS

LC asked if the attendance data for The Skills Hub was accurate and IC undertook to check.

Governors noted that there had been no exclusions at YPA during the first half of the term, and learned that the policy of no exclusions can be challenging when balanced with the need to support staff in managing behaviour. MH advised that three young people had been excluded last week and outlined the circumstances, but confirmed that all efforts are made to avoid exclusion, except where the risk to the safety of other learners is unmanageable.

Governors **received** the dashboards.

9. FINANCE

Young People's Academy

KF presented her reports and matters discussed are detailed below.

Both income and expenditure for last year were slightly lower than the previous year, due to staffing changes and spending controls, with the school

thinking creatively about how to deliver a curriculum to young people with very high levels of need.

The year-end position was a surplus of £104K, £13K of which was invested in fixed assets and £91K moved into general reserves, which now total approximately £350K.

For this year, the school faces similar financial challenges, particularly with 59 students on roll, as compared to the assumed 65 in the budget. MH and his team have reviewed the out of borough funding, as 19 students are out of borough and the levels of need are not accurately reflected in their funding. MH noted that he was optimistic that there would be further intake in the lower end of school and confirmed that pupil numbers were similar at this point last year.

KF noted that period one of 19/20 ended with a deficit of £15K, with the year-end projection of a surplus of £2K. She reminded Governors that the budget in both schools can be subject to change, so would continue to support the SLT to enable them to run the schools effectively.

The Skills Hub

The year-end position was a surplus of £129K, £6K of which was invested in fixed assets and £104K moved into general reserves. The position was more favourable than expected due to continued negotiations with the local authority, which puts a lot of pressure on staff in school and on the Finance Team. LC noted that a surplus had not been budgeted but was a result of savings necessitated by the local authority's position with regard to funding.

KF advised that the year to date position is a surplus of £16K, which is attributable to staff vacancies as a result of savings made last year. She confirmed that approval has been given to fill a number of vacancies which will impact positively on the supply budget.

KF advised that agreement has been given by the local authority to fund 73 places, but warned of the risk of clawback if the numbers drop below 68. However, numbers typically rise after the January census.

Governors noted that the charges for commissioned places will be reviewed and LC suggested benchmarking the charges with other providers.

MG asked how budgets are allocated across subjects and KF explained that each subject is allocated a sum, which tends to be spent largely in the summer term, with a prudent approach normally taken at this point in the year.

Reports received.

10. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR REPORTS

SK undertook to arrange a finance portfolio meeting with KF.

CN advised that he would carry out a safeguarding portfolio visit with IC the following week.

MG presented her reports, noting that much had already been covered. She described how impressed she had been at her visit to The Skills Hub, particularly by the positive attitude of the students and the progress they had

made. She asked how best to feedback her comments to staff and it was agreed that she would write to the appropriate staff.

In addition, MG commented on the excellent behaviour she had observed recently whilst swimming at a local leisure centre.

MH reported that a group of six students had been taken to watch an international football match at Wembley during the previous week, and governors acknowledged the hard work and commitment of the staff involved who made it such a positive experience.

11. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Governors confirmed they had logged into GovernorHub and gave some positive feedback.

MH advised that he, CN, TC and another staff member had attended the Governor Conference on 11 October and had found it useful and interesting.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT

MH undertook to share this report with the clerk to be circulated to all Governors.

13. PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

MH gave a detailed verbal report of the Pay Committee meeting which took place on 15 October 2019. CN confirmed that there had been robust and thorough scrutiny of the Executive Principal's pay recommendations.

14. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A Governors noted the Family policies and procedures approved by the Board at their meeting of 28 June.

B Governors approved the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Policy, subject to the amendment suggested by LC, that the policy reflects the new Ofsted Framework with regard to cultural capital.

15. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION SEPTEMBER 2019

Governors noted that:

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' has been updated with effect from September 2019.
- All relevant OHC&AT policies have been amended to reflect the changes.
- A summary of the changes has been circulated to Safeguarding Portfolio governors.

16. REVISED PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR GUIDANCE

Governors received the updated guidance.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No matters were raised.

18. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 18 March 2020;

- 10 June 2020.

19. CONFIDENTIALITY

No items were deemed confidential.

The meeting closed at 12.50 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Summary of Actions

Minute	Action
8a	IC to share the details of the forthcoming Team around the Hub meeting with LC.
8a	IC to arrange a log-in to MyConcern for LC.
8a	CN to receive a demo of MyConcern at his safeguarding portfolio meeting.
8a	MH to provide more detailed progress data in future Principals reports.
8a	MH to share the Pupil Premium report for both schools with the clerk to circulate to all governors.
8a	MH to update governors on staff absence rates at the spring meeting.
8c	IC to check the attendance data on the Skills Hub dashboard is correct.
10	MG to write to appropriate staff at the Skills Hub to give positive feedback.
10	SK and KF to arrange a finance portfolio meeting.
12	MH to share the equality and diversity reports with the clerk to circulate to all governors.