



MINUTES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING – THURSDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 5.00 pm

Directors Attending:

Mrs S Wright
Ms C Mortimer-Ford

Mrs S Harris
Ms L Robson

Also Present:

Mr A Davis (Principal)
Mr R Madge (Assistant Principal)
Mr A Woodward (Assistant Principal)
Miss V Stoffell (Head of Music)
Mrs D Hickman (Clerk)

Mr R Vaughan (Deputy Principal)
Mr A Brooke (Assistant Principal)
Ms E Robinson (Head of Year 7/8)

Apologies:

Mrs S Baker, Mr D Smith, Mr A Brooke

ACTION

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received and were accepted from: Mr D Smith, Mr A Brooke, and Mrs S Baker, due to other commitments. Mrs Harris was chairing the meeting in Mrs Baker's absence.

2 TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE

Miss Verity Stoffell, Head of Music and Leader of Pedagogy, presented the Teaching and Learning Update paper in the absence of Mr Brooke. The following key discussion points were noted:

- A key aim is to simplify the training provision. Whereas in the past items were not covered in depth, the 'Five Pillars' are now used, focusing on key areas which are embedded by repeating them over and over again. Staff feedback overall is that this is a more successful training strategy.
- This year the whole staff training focus has been on differentiation, with five sessions spread throughout the year, targeting key groups of students including dyslexic, autistic, boys, 'the invisible middle', PP and lead learners.
- In order to measure the impact of the whole staff CPD training and to identify next training steps, Survey Monkey, an online survey software, has been purchased. This will also capture the impact of student voice and after half term it will be used initially with Year 7 students before being rolled out to other year groups.
- Lesson observation feedback is recorded on the Teacher Tracker database in the form of a colour-coded spreadsheet, which allows Heads of Department to work with their team to ensure all the necessary action points are addressed. This information is also discussed at SLT meetings and members of SLT all carry out paired lesson observations.
- The school support programme continues with 2 staff on the full support protocol; 2 NQTs to develop key areas; and 3 staff on a watching brief and requiring some intervention. Discussions are also taking place about a pattern of staff needing support in one department - therefore identifying one specific training need may result in an overall improvement within that department.
- The support service is 'confidential' and accessible to all staff. Some ask for support voluntarily, and sometimes the team are directed to work with an individual.
- It is positive to report that we currently have 4 trainees in Maths, Science, PE and IT – the most of any school in the Mid Somerset Consortium.

- Department+ is being undertaken in those departments where results haven't been produced as expected; History and Sociology are currently undertaking a pilot. Heads of Department meet with the Principal to produce and formalise an Action Plan, and actions are monitored by the Principal and the Line Manager.
- In order to meet the Ofsted Leadership and Management grading criteria, it is important that British Values and SMSC are embedded within the curriculum.
- The Psychology and Learning Group is a voluntary group focusing on differentiated and innovative provision, for staff who have a particular passion for teaching and learning. Fifteen staff attended the initial meeting and 15 more expressed an interest. Mrs Heather Grace has attended the Growth Mindfulness training and Mr Brooke is today attending a Neuroscience and Learning Conference. Both will feed back to the group at their meeting next term.
- The Teaching and Learning Team comprises:
 - o Mr Andrew Brooke, Team Leader
 - o Miss Verity Stoffell, Miss Lisa Bacon – Leaders of Pedagogy
 - o Mr Mark Pembrey (Behaviour Management), Ms Michelle Oldershaw (Active Learning) – Advanced Skills Teachers
 - o Mrs Judy Hills – SENCO
 - o Mrs Rita Peasland – Lead Learners
 - o Mrs Sharon Baldwyn – Literacy Coordinator
 It is important to maintain a high priority for this group because it is a powerful and great resource for staff to draw upon.

3 **DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

There were no business interests to declare.

4 **MINUTES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2016 AND MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee held on 18 October 2016 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising were noted as follows:

1. Lead Learners – Numbers across year groups, to be broken down into specific categories, and impact to be measured – Mrs Peasland continuing to work on this area.
8. Directors' Ofsted – Directors to be circulated with a copy of the Dashboard and 4 page document of key points to be up to speed with.
12. Pupil Premium – Mr Woodward had met with Mrs Eastwood to discuss the Pupil Premium budget. It was agreed that the Teaching and Learning Committee were more concerned with the impact of spending, and that this item should therefore be put forward for the agenda of the next Finance and Premises Committee.

Mr Vaughan

Mr Davis

Mr Davis

5 **RISK REGISTER**

Mr Vaughan ran through relevant items on the Risk Register to be considered at this meeting and the following points were noted:

4. Exam results fall below National levels - retain risk as 'Treat'. Ensuring coursework in all areas is on track and regular work scrutiny taking place.
15. Impact of a small number of students on teaching efficiency - keep as 'Tolerate'. There are fewer issues in this Year 11, though more problems with boys than girls compared with last year. These parents are being kept informed and are generally supportive. Those students who are behind in various subject areas are attending for additional support on Inset Day. One student in Year 10 has a particular medical condition which severely affects his attendance. It is pleasing to note that our school have very few exclusions in comparison to others in the county.
17. Students accessing inappropriate materials through IT - impact is a 3 and risk

remains the same. Numerous steps have taken place to safeguard students, with more firewalls in place and removable devices no longer allowed to be used.

21. JCQ Compliance for examination. Statutory Elements of the National Curriculum not complied with - no change.

Directors to ensure they bring their copies of the Risk Register to all forthcoming meetings. Mr Vaughan to liaise with Mrs Eastwood re amendments required and to request incorporation of a Version No. on the Register so everyone is considering the most up-to-date information.

6 **KS3 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Mr Woodward and Ms Robinson ran through the KS3 Curriculum Overview paper and the key points to note were as follows:

Mastery:

- Information about the Mastery curriculum had been made available to parents, setting out the support they can give their children.
- Generally, student feedback has been positive, although concerns have been raised about what children perceive as 'big leaps', and there needs to be more clarity about the little steps that need to be taken to move them forward.
- The first set of data has been very positive but, as it isn't yet fully embedded, we are still slightly sceptical.
- Every first half term, Mr Woodward and Mrs Sharon Baldwyn, Literacy Coordinator, undertake a literacy assessment. All students should have produced an Extended Learning Task. A learning walk takes place and an assessment takes place against expectations.
- Some departments, such as Maths, are still uncertain about why literacy is relevant to them, so there is a cultural shift to overcome. Improvements however are already starting to show.
- There is reference to mastery at the Parents' Evening; teachers look at their children's books with the parent so they are made aware of which skills the child needs to master. A protocol of Parents' Evenings has been published, and the child is always encouraged to attend with their parent.

Transition:

- Regular meetings are taking place with Primary Heads to discuss how they are managing the breakdown of the small steps in mastery. The next meeting is to take place in March.
- Year 6 teacher visits started again last week, with a specific focus on mastery. These visits have taken place now for the last 4 years, and have proved an extremely effective way of working together as a community.

7 **YEAR 11 PREDICTED AND CURRENT PROGRESS**

Mr Vaughan presented his papers to Directors, focusing on the main issues for the current Year 11. Key points raised were as follows:

- The overall picture shows the girls are achieving better than the boys at this stage compared with last year.
- Maths and English continue to be a concern, affecting the confidence of both staff and students. Current predictions should be disregarded at this stage, although these are being interrogated fully. Both departments are continuing to engage with PIXI and EDExcel pilots and are working closely with colleague schools. However, there is still uncertainty regarding the grade boundaries. After half-term, some Year 11 students will need to come off timetable to have specific support on key skills in both English and Maths.
- Coursework is on track across the board, which then allows teachers to see exactly how each student is progressing towards their final exam grades.
- After half-term, the focus will be on controlled assessments, both to ensure all students are on course to achieve their best grades and also to have sufficient time for moderation so there are no last minute surprises.
- History has in the past been an area of concern in terms of incorrect predictions, although the recent Team Review will hopefully have supported them to improve in this area.

- Product Design is holding a drop-down day today. This subject can attract some the more difficult students, but with the combination of a new Head of Department and the deadline for completing practical work being brought forward, it is hoped that this subject will also show improved results.
- In the past, Child Development has struggled due to some difficult students and compounded last year by the teacher leaving. However, Mrs Forbes, the RE teacher, has taken on the class and improvements are being shown.
- There is continual monitoring of individual students, particularly the more vulnerable, in order to identify exactly why they are not achieving and where more support can be targeted.
- 130 students will be coming in tomorrow, Inset Day, to catch up and/or receive additional support across a range of subjects.

8 POST 16 PREDICTED AND CURRENT PROGRESS

Mr Madge presented to Directors on the progress and predicted grades of Huish Sixth. The key points to note were as follows:

- Staff this year are predicting lower results which hopefully will mean there are no surprises. However, in the past there has been a tendency to over-predict, so it is hoped that this is not going to be the case this year.
- Maths – currently focusing on A2 modules. Working with Mrs Evans and Mrs Roberts to implement greater tracking of students' progress so we know exactly how students are progressing and who needs additional support.
- Sociology and History – under the spotlight given a concern that students are not achieving as expected. Mr Madge and Mr Davis working with these departments to produce action plans in order to improve the performance of these subjects. History coursework has been a problem in the past but the deadline for submission has been brought forward, allowing more achievable timelines for teaching the remainder of the course. Mr Eastwood, Head of Sociology, is retiring in the summer, and interviews for his replacement are taking place after half term.
- English Language – a slight concern with regard to grade predictions since the students have not sat any external exams as there was no AS last year.
- Media Studies – only a small group of 5 students but 2 are a concern. Teachers offering additional support to both these students and parents.
- Geography – students are being given additional lessons to ensure they are on track.
- Physics – students have always achieved well at exams. The issue here is more about retaining students until the end of the course as some can drop out due to the level of difficulty.
- ICT/Computing/Further Maths – very strong subjects, which tend to attract very positive and highly motivated students.
- Health and Social Care – a small group of 4 students but positive outcomes across the board anticipated.
- Business Studies – a few issues with the teacher but support programmes are now in place.
- Music – only 4 students in the group, of which 2 are girls who are achieving extremely well and 2 are boys who are weaker. There is a particular issue with one boy whose parent is insistent he play a specific piece for the exam, despite the Head of Music's view that he does not have the ability to perform it.
- Drama/Theatre Studies – practical exams are currently going well.
- DT Product Design - under the new Head of Department, positive results have been identified.
- French – only 5 students in the group, but a strong cohort showing positive results.
- A list of 15 students who are currently 'off the pace' have been referred to Mrs Grace in order to produce appropriate support programmes.
- More of our students are keen to progress to university. However, where there are unconditional offers, this can cause motivational issues with students.

9 TEAM REVIEW FEEDBACK

Mr Vaughan presented to Directors on the format of the Team Review process focusing on the recent History Team Review report. The key points to note were as follows:

- Team reviews are planned in advance and are undertaken over a week.
- A discussion takes place with the Head of Department and all the data is considered, following which a hypothesis is formed.
- Teaching of all staff within the department is observed twice. Feedback is given after the first observation and it is hoped the teacher will then improve on the second observation.
- The team are then invited to a work scrutiny activity, giving an opportunity to share good practice and take on board advice from colleagues.
- Student voice conversations take place with groups of students, across the ability range and from vulnerable groups, in order to gain feedback on their learning and progress.
- A confidential Leadership Questionnaire is completed by all teachers within the department.

History Team Review:

- Following this review, Mr Vaughan has met with the department to discuss the action plan.
- There are some issues with coursework, which should be completed earlier.
- Teachers need to teach 'exam success stories'. It is acknowledged that History is extremely 'content heavy', however, it is important that students learn the key skills required to achieve the necessary grades. Mrs Grace, Head of Psychology, is extremely successful in this area and is supporting the team.
- Some lessons need more pace and challenge to differentiate, depending on student needs.
- Many resources used are too 'busy' and 'confusing' and for some students difficult to access. The amount of text should be reduced, and presentations and handouts should themselves model good literacy.

10 EXTERNAL VISITS

Mr Davis presented to Directors the 2 visit reports undertaken by Caroline McKee from INCYTE, our Somerset Education Partner, on 17 October 2016 (please note: date of visit should read October not March) and 17 January 2017. Key points noted were as follows:

- INCYTE conduct 3 visits a year and are an organisation part-funded by Somerset County Council; they will also receive a copy of the reports so will be aware of the performance of the Academy.
- The visits are conducted like a mini-Ofsted; they are extremely thorough and tough, thus giving a realistic picture of how the school is progressing.
- The format of the visit will be governed by looking at the previous action plan but the INCYTE representative will also come with her own agenda and focus.

11 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no additional urgent business.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 23 May 2017.

The meeting finished at 7.15 pm.