



MINUTES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING – TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 5.00 pm

Directors Attending:

Mr L Wilson-Chalon (Chair)
Mr R Clark
Mrs K Mitchell

Mrs S Wright
Mrs S Harris
Mrs S Fielden

Also Present:

Mr A Davis (Principal)
Mr R Madge (Assistant Principal)
Mr A Brooke (Assistant Principal)

Mr R Vaughan (Deputy Principal)
Mr A Woodward (Assistant Principal)
Mrs D Hickman (Clerk)

Apologies:

Mr J Moncur
Mrs S Baker
Mr D Smith

ACTION

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received and were accepted from: Mrs S Baker and Mr D Smith due to attending other meetings taking place at the same time; Mr Moncur, due to family commitments.

2 DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

There were no business interests to declare.

3 MINUTES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2016 AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee held on 13 October 2015 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, with the exception of:

- Directors Attending: Mrs S Fielden did not attend and had sent her apologies.
- Apologies: Mr D Smith had attended, therefore did not send his apologies.

7. Detailed Exams Analysis: Post 16: First bullet point: Reword sentence to read "Last year's Year 13 had achieved better in their A2 exams ..."

Third bullet point: Rather than "Due to the popularity of students taking Maths ..." reword to "Due to the **number** of students taking Maths ..."

8. Action Plans: SEND Action Plans: Seventh bullet point: It was noted that the further review of the SEN policy was part of Mr Woodward and Mrs Fielden's ongoing discussions.

Matters were noted as follows:

Incyte visit, October 2015 – Mr Davis reported back to Directors on this visit, explaining that trainers had come in and observed staff, and would be doing the same for the SLT.

Pupil Premium Action Plan – Ongoing discussions with Mrs Fielden and Mr Woodward – would be looked at further the next day during inset. Mr Woodward reported that the Academy had joined the SEND Leaders Programme, and someone would be visiting to undertake a first audit.

Risk Register – Mr Wilson-Chalon reported that he had drawn up a proposal and met with Mr Smith and Mrs Eastwood to discuss this, but currently there were too many other priorities to move this forward. Therefore, it would be considered further at a later date. It was felt that the Risk Register should be scrutinised when setting the agenda or there should be an item at the end of the meeting to ensure everything had been covered or needed to be added.

4 **TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE**

This item had been moved nearer to the top of the agenda as Mr Brooke was presenting the Fashion Show which was taking place that evening.

Mr Brooke presented his Teaching and Learning Update paper to Directors and the following key points were noted:

- Sharon Baldwin, Literacy Across the Curriculum Coordinator, had joined the Teaching and Learning Group (TLG) this week. Mr Brooke to report back next time any risks the group has considered and identified, to be included on the Risk Register, and subsequently managed by this Committee.
- Support programmes were being provided to those staff whose students showed a pattern of under achievement over a period of time. A set of guidelines had been draw up whereby for a period of 6 weeks, struggling staff were mentored and observed. Mostly, this support is welcome, and the mentor and member of staff develop a good professional relationship.
- Mr Brooke described the 'Light' programme as a positive support programme which staff could choose to take up voluntarily.
- In some cases, the support programme may demonstrate that the solution is for the member of staff to leave their position.
- It was agreed that any specific personnel issues associated with this programme should be directed to the Pay and Personnel Committee.
- NQT support is vital as these staff are literally thrown in at the deep end and there is huge pressure put on them to perform. The TLG support not only the teaching of an NQT but also the wider responsibilities associated with their post.
- The Confidential Advice Service has not really taken off yet. Those staff who are currently asking for help, are those who really do not need it. The service is there to try and point staff in the right direction of where to access the relevant support.
- The weekly CPD programme has gone back to basics and concentrates on themes. For example, focusing on lesson planning, marking etc.
- Whole school CPD training is based on school priorities. The Active Learning training was very successful, and student voice is a useful mechanism to confirm whether or not staff are using these techniques.
- The TLG is currently conducting a survey on marking, looking at what works well, what doesn't and why, results of which will be fed back to the SLT. Through liaison with Subject Leaders, the differences in procedure are recognised, with some departments marking regularly and others every 3/4 weeks when project work is involved.
- The consistency of marking ranks high up in the Risk Register and Departmental Heads are having to become more accountable for how their staff undertake this task.
- The point was raised that in some countries abroad, students use a large number of ICT programmes to support and assess their progress, which tell them immediately whether they are right or wrong. It was noted that our students do use technology to support their learning, with 'My Maths' being a very good example.
- Within the Observation Programmes, PP and SEND student progress are key areas to be considered.
- With regard to the Lesson Observation Proforma, it was suggested that signatures of all staff involved in the process should sign, therefore confirming their full support of the findings.
- The new Action Point of an observation, will become the key focus of the next observation.
- By conducting formal half-termly departmental observations, confirms to the Head of Department exactly how their team is progressing, and identifies where further support is required. Continuous feedback and conversation between the team is vital.
- At times, staff can be too generous with their lesson observations, but this can be recognised through comparing departments.
- Each member of staff should have 6 observations a year, and then trends are considered.

Mr Brooke

- Triads tend to work well, with staff offering positive feedback to colleagues, and then being more open about recognising their own weaknesses.

5 POST 16 PREDICTED AND CURRENT PROGRESS

This item had been moved nearer to the top of the agenda as Mr Madge was supporting the Fashion Show which was taking place that evening.

Mr Madge presented his papers and the key discussion points were noted as follows:

- Sistra Subject Page: It was suggested that to make the information more meaningful, in future, the number of students in each cohort should be included.
- A number of key departments are shown to be under-performing, including Maths, English, Music BTEC, History, MFL, and History. Support is being given to Heads of Department and subsequent action plans are being produced, setting out how they can improve.
- Also under the spotlight is Chemistry and Physics. In the latter, there is a 'struggling' band of students, which make it a difficult group to teach. Retention of students in this subject particularly is weak, with quite a number dropping out before they have even taken the AS exam.
- A number of Year 12 students now only take 3 subjects as opposed to 4. This however limits their options after AS exams are taken, particularly if they do not do well in a particular subject. Furthermore, it is important that students are undertaking the correct number of study hours in order that the Sixth Form receive the relevant funding. Currently, it is being considered that where a student chooses to take only 3 subjects or drops from 4 to 3, that compulsorily they must undertake an EPQ to both keep them occupied and build up their study hours.
- In Year 12, students are expected to undertake Work Experience for a week after AS exam completion. This year, unfortunately, the week (13-17 June 2016) clashes with Maths AS exams, which have been scheduled at the end of the exam period. It is anticipated that next year the Year 12 work experience should take place at the same time as Year 10, which is the last week of term. It was noted however that scheduling the week after the AS exams worked well with Sixth Form teachers, because it gave them a weeks breathing space before students started on their A2 courses.
- It was questioned how valuable Year 12 work experience was, particularly just for a week. Mr Madge felt that it was a good opportunity and a 'first step' for students, and something which they could include on a personal statement. He also commented that the more motivated students would find themselves valuable one week placements, and most would look further afield than the work experience database offering local options, which is available to all of them. In the future, it would be good to build up a bank of high quality placements, country wide, with top companies in a wide variety of occupations.
- Headlines Summary View Year 13 Predicated Grades Sheet: Targets are based on KS4 grades. It was pleasing to note that we are currently only 5 points away from the overall target grades.
- Generally, the able students in Year 13 continue to perform well. The area which requires more work is improving those B, C, and D grade students.
- Level 3 Value Added Data Sheet: Generally the data is positive. Key subjects which are performing above average are Art, Psychology, English Literature, and Drama, and ultimately, this is the target for the others.
- An additional sheet was circulated to Directors, comparing Year 13 Predictions January 2015 with January 2016. 2015 predictions were 10 points away from the target, whereas this year they are only 5 points away, which appears positive. However, accuracy of staff predictions continues to be of vital importance.
- Generally, Huish Sixth is now competing with other colleges on a level playing field and is gaining a strong reputation for its results. This year the applications thus far show that many of the Academics brightest students are wanting to come here.
- It was also noted that Huish Sixth is currently quite unique in retaining AS levels in its subject offer as some other colleges are purely offering a 2 year A level course. This in turn could be attracting more students.

6 **YEAR 11 AND PREDICTED AND CURRENT PROGRESS**

Mr Vaughan updated Directors on the current progress of Year 11 students, and the key discussion points were as follows:

- Mock results had been given out to Year 11 students today, and it was encouraging to see that 200 students went to collect their results. The results were mixed, but generally it is expected that the vast majority of students will turn these around.
- This particular cohort includes some very challenging students, about 20 in total, with whom there is definitely still substantial work to do.
- As this has always been a difficult group, it confirms the importance of working with these students a lot earlier on. Currently, Mr Woodward is supporting a group of Year 8 students who could easily become these same challenging children further down the line if intervention does not take place now.
- The disengaged boys are generally displaying bad behaviour, however, there are a number of problem girls who have a host of contributing factors, such as various medical conditions, child protection issues, and ongoing conflicts with friendships.
- A comprehensive after-school revision programme is in place, and those students who are not attending are chased with parents being contacted.
- A number of drop down days are taking place, with students being taken off timetable for key subjects in order to improve their grades. During the last week before Christmas, 100 children were involved in an English drop down day.
- An exam preparation evening is taking place in March, and also another set of mock exams. Directors suggested it would be helpful and a key to motivate students to work for their exams, if the actual exam timetable was published. It was appreciated that this information would still be in draft form due to some students having exam clashes, but a generic timetable would be a good starting point so students could actually see in print when they needed to be fully prepared. Mr Vaughan to liaise with Mr Short and the Exams Officer.
- During the Easter break, there would be a number of revision workshops. Again, it was suggested that students were provided with a timetable of these now, because then parents could ensure any holiday plans were arranged around these. Mr Vaughan to liaise with Mr Short.
- Furthermore, Directors said it would be helpful if a complete timetable of all the after-school revision sessions was produced, because it was confusing for both parents and students to know what and when they should be attending, particularly if some subjects had sessions taking place on the same evening. Mr Vaughan to liaise with Mr Short.

Mr Vaughan

Mr Vaughan

Mr Vaughan

Mr Woodward reported to Directors about his work with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of students. The key points to note were as follows:

- Gaps for vulnerable groups are similar to those of non-vulnerable groups. Based on Autumn A predictions from staff all vulnerable groups looked like they had improved marginally compared to last year.
- Currently liaising with teachers of all these students, to find out what specific support they require and what intervention strategies are most successful.
- Parents continue to be difficult to engage. As a support, transport is being provided for students to take them home following attendance at after school revision sessions – normally, these students would just not attend as parents would be unable or unwilling to come and collect them at a different time.
- Mrs Beech, Student Support Worker for KS4, is doing a marvellous job and building some very positive relationships with both difficult and anxious students, supporting them in finding the best techniques to get them through stressful periods.

7 **KS3 CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT**

Unfortunately, there was insufficient time for Mr Woodward to present this item, therefore, the agenda item would be included at the next meeting.

Mrs Hickman to include on future agenda.

8 TEAM REVIEW OF MFL

Mr Vaughan presented his paper on the MFL Team Review which Directors commented as being very comprehensive. Due to lack of time, there was only a short discussion and a number of people had had to leave the meeting. The key points were raised as follows:

- Mr Gardner, Head of Department, was generally doing a good job, leading a difficult and sensitive team.
- Mr Vaughan had worked alongside Mr Gardner, in order to give him some 'bullets' and the support he needed to improve the teaching and learning within his department. The impact of this is that 2 members of staff are now participating in Mr Brooke's support programme; one is willing to engage; one is not so keen.
- Inconsistency in working practices had been highlighted, but staff have been encouraged and are now more willing to share and support one another.
- For students, it depends on the teacher as to whether they like the language. KS4 students who had opted to study a language were very positive about their subject, but many KS3 students who were currently studying a language compulsorily, were disengaged.
- Post 16, particularly French, is a cause for concern due to the differing approach of the 2 teachers

9 PARENTAL FEEDBACK

Mr Davis reported on this item which had been carried over from several months' ago. Key issues to parents surrounded the area of communication, which it was felt had substantially improved, and continued to do so as increasing information was published on the website. The new website is soon to be launched, the benefits of which will be seen by both staff and parents alike.

10 POLICIES

Complaints Policy:

Due to the lack of time available, it was not possible to cover this item. It was agreed that Mr Davis would review the document for accuracy and content, then take the item to the next appropriate board/committee meeting in time for when it is required.

Mr Davis

11 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business.

Mr Wilson-Chalon said that he would like to invite Rita Peasland to the next meeting, to update Directors on her valuable work with Lead Learners.

Mrs Hickman to include on future agenda.

12 HOW DID WE DO?

It was agreed that there was too much content on the agenda to be covered in the time available, resulting in items not being discussed. For the next meeting, it was agreed important to pick up items which were missed and keep more focused and aware of the allotted time slot.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 24 May 2016.

The meeting finished at 7.35 pm.



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