



MINUTES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING – TUESDAY 24 MAY 2016 AT 5.00 pm

Directors Attending:

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| Mrs S Wright | Mrs Baker |
| Mr R Clark? | Mrs S Harris |
| Mrs K Mitchell (Acting Chair) | Mrs S Fielden |
| Mr Moncur | |

Also Present:

- | | |
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| Mr A Davis (Principal) | Mr R Vaughan (Deputy Principal) |
| Mr R Madge (Assistant Principal) | Mr A Brooke (Assistant Principal) |
| Mrs D Hickman (Clerk) | |

Apologies:

- Mr L Wilson-Chalon
- Mr D Smith

ACTION

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received and were accepted from: Mr L Wilson-Chalon and Mr D Smith, due to other commitments. Mrs Mitchell, Vice Chair, was chairing the meeting in Mr Wilson-Chalon’s absence.

2 DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

There were no business interests to declare.

3 MINUTES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2016 AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee held on 11 February 2016 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising were noted as follows: KS3 Curriculum Assessment – This item had not been included as an agenda item, but the information would be covered elsewhere.

4 LEAD LEARNERS

Mrs Rita Peasland, had been invited to the meeting to present to Directors on her responsibility for Lead Learners. Mrs Peasland had produced a Draft Policy for Able Students (a commentary of what she does), and a chart showing numerous initiatives that were taking place within the Academy. Mrs Carne, previously an Academy Director, had produced a note of her meeting with Mrs Peasland, which outlined current projects. Key discussion points from the presentation were as follows:

- Gifted and Talented is no longer an official term, and has been replaced by Lead Learners.
- The Academy must develop Lead Learners in a way most appropriate for them, with a particular emphasis on effective teaching and learning, independence and resilience. Ofsted will focus upon the most able students.
- Recommendations contained in the latest Ofsted Report include: Develop a culture of high expectations; Consideration of transition data; Appoint staff to champion the needs of the most able; involve universities in training; Provide opportunities for staff training; Allow students to fulfil their potential.
- Important to investigate transition data immediately in order to identify students quickly.
- The skills and confidence of students is focused upon – students should not just be ‘treading’ water.
- Applications to universities need to be aspirational, concentrating on what it means

- for students to go, particularly those disadvantaged children from families where further education has never been a possibility. Students need to be given a taste of university early on, for example, a recent successful trip took place to Bournemouth University for Year 8 students.
- Stretch and Challenge in the classroom for all is vital, for the most able and less able.
 - Operating our own programme of the 'Brilliant Club' for students with potential.
 - The Academy are fortunate enough to have the expertise of a good Careers Adviser who is accessible 2 days a week to all students throughout the Academy and Huish Sixth.
 - New Year 7 Students: When primary students start at the Academy, both SATS and CATS data give us a snapshot of the level they are currently at, including specific details such as whether a child is at a high literacy level, but at a lower verbal level. Once embedded, it will be vital to focus on the mastery curriculum. Time should be invested on Pupil Premium and other disadvantaged students, who although may come in at a lower level, can often shine once at the Academy.
 - Lead Learner Register: Using the snapshot of data information, how students are doing within departments, and through SISRA, Lead Learners are identified for the Register which is updated regularly. For each Year group, a cohort of the top 30 students form an ASPIRE group, who are then participate in a range of challenging projects. These students would normally be potential Russell Group University children.
 - Year 7: Includes 25 students currently, who are undertaking an Achievement Project, comprising an independent project, evaluation work, a presentation and a written piece of work.
 - A questionnaire has been given to Year 7 students to find out if they are being challenged enough – comments to be passed to Ms Robinson, Head of Year.
 - Year 8: Diamond 9 – a unique programme for the Academy. This includes 9 topics of interest, and students must talk to an adult about these topics. For example, one student interviewed an MP who described the questioning as 'challenging'; another student produced a topic on Anxiety, which was a very emotional presentation, focusing on the worry of letting people down. (This information has since been passed to the student's tutor).
 - Bournemouth University Trip: Thirty-six Year 8 students, a mixture of Pupil Premium and high achieving students, visited Bournemouth University; this had a massive impact on them and their future aspirations.
 - Year 9/10: X Factor Group, currently researching/producing a model of the Brilliant Club. Year 9s working on a global economy project. Year 10s are working at Year 12 levels.
 - Collaborative working with 2 other groups of Academies in the South West on projects.
 - University visits to Oxford, Cambridge Residential, and others as appropriate.
 - It was questioned whether students were only guided towards the University route. Mr Madge clarified that naturally following Sixth Form, university has always been the traditional route, however, Emma Higman, Careers Adviser, is promoting apprenticeships, in particular the higher apprenticeships. Similarly, Richard Barratt, who is responsibility for Careers in the main school, is pushing the apprenticeship route. Where possible, outside speakers have come in to talk to students, for example, EDF, about what they can offer as an alternative to university.
 - Mrs Fielden requested numbers of Lead Learners across each year group, broken down into how many are disadvantaged and/or SEND. It was agreed that it would also be interesting to measure the impact, discovering what has happened to those disadvantaged students later on, and whether they achieved their aspirational goals. If possible, tracking back over the last 3-5 years, identifying achievements at GCSE and/or A Level. However, it was noted that although in Huish Sixth we kept track of how students achieved once they have left us, it was impossible to do once students left the Academy after Year 11 and went to a different Post 16 provision.
 - Differentiation for Lead Learners in the classroom was questioned. It was clarified that this would take place as part of the Stretch and Challenge within a lesson, and would be noted as part of any lesson observation. A working party of teachers has been set up to discuss the practices they use which are most effective in

Mrs Peasland

challenging the more able students.

- It was recognised that the Academy had already done some good work in developing teacher skills in questioning and in ensuring more purposeful homework. However, it was vital to remember that there was no ceiling to learning, therefore 'Learning Without Limits'.
- Mrs Carne's report was noted as valuable information for Directors. Furthermore, as Mrs Carne was no longer a Director, it was necessary for a new Link Director for Lead Learning to be appointed.

5 TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE

Mr Brooke presented on his Teaching and Learning Update paper (circulated at the meeting) to Directors, and the following key points were noted:

Triads:

- Key purpose is to watch practice and learn from it.
- Triads are an extremely useful method of getting teachers to work in other departments.
- Feedback from the Triad Inset Day was shared and was extremely positive.

Support Programmes:

- The compulsory programme is for those staff who are real concerns
- It was questioned whether there is a resistance to being put on the programme. It was confirmed that initially, yes, but once it is up and running, staff realise the benefits and build up good mentor relationships. Staff can be in denial of the issue and it may take some time to accept and reap the benefit of what is being provided for them. A huge amount of resource and support is being invested in their staff professional development. Interestingly, it is often the good teachers who attend all the training on offer, whereas those who would benefit, "close the door".
- The support programme is an extremely confidential process, with staff being unaware if their colleagues are on the programme.

Staff Training:

- 'Active Learning' was explained as questioning in groups so that all students are involved. 90% of classes now contain an element of Active Learning, and it is something that is included within NQT training.
- 'Extended Writing' was explained as a proper piece of writing, not a bulleted sheet of statements. As a support to students, literacy materials being used contained connective starters and words.
- To embed the Literacy focus even further, an external adviser, funded by Somerset Challenge, was coming to present to staff.
- Training for next year will focus on Differentiation.
- Four GTP students were starting at the Academy in September.

Marking Survey:

- Review on use of the Pink pens has shown how well this initiative has embedded across the Academy.
- Barriers to the marking policy had been identified as being difficult for teachers who only saw their class once a fortnight, and also at times when there were other priorities such as marking of mock exams. Staff had been reassured that there will be obvious 'pinch points', and therefore there is some flexibility in expectations. However, it is still important that books are marked regularly.
- It was questioned how much marking students did themselves. In response, it was clarified that A level students did more of their own marking and the mark schemes themselves were particularly good. It was felt that there wasn't a problem with students doing their own marking, and as long as the process was well structured and managed, it was successful.

6 FEEDBACK FROM INCYTE VISIT

Mr Davis reported back to Directors on the last Incyte visit, and the following key discussion points were noted:

- The focus of the visit was working with triads, providing training and doing joint

lesson observations. At the end of each lesson, teachers were challenged about the grading of a lesson.

- Important that teachers have a folder of pertinent information available to give an observer at the beginning of the lesson, including data, seating plans, records of disadvantaged students etc.
- Strengths were identified as high quality PAR, particularly in Geography and English, with good verbal responses and questioning.
- Sixth Form was given positive feedback, noting the range of lessons and the work experience opportunities.
- Areas for improvement included inconsistency and frequency of marking. An updated marking policy is now in place to support teachers, which clearly sets out reasonable expectations. It is important for staff to realise that when they mark a piece of work, this has a more positive effect on a student, than if it's never looked at. Students should stick marked tests in their books.
- Regular book scrutinies are carried out throughout the Academy, which flags up those staff who are not marking as required, and they are then monitored. There was also a suggestion of disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged student book scrutinies.
- It had been raised whether verbal feedback, it was recorded, counted towards the marking policy.
- There was a definite expectation around Middle Leaders becoming more involved in book scrutinies rather than just the SLT. The main reason for this was that they were in a position where they were more likely to find a problem more quickly than SLT. Therefore training for Middle Leaders in this area is key, plus any other areas which have been identified.
- Most importantly, teachers need to try and strike a balance between marking and planning.
- Directors had been criticised for not asking the right questions about specific areas. Therefore, it was suggested that when a lengthy report was produced, particularly one containing vast quantities of data, that a summary highlighting key areas which Directors should be aware of, should be attached as a cover sheet.

SLT

7 SCIENCE REVIEW

Mr Madge presented his report and accompanying papers on the Science Review to Directors, and the following key discussion points were noted:

- Twenty-one lesson observations were carried out across all Key stages, and in the majority of cases, teaching was good, in some cases outstanding, and most staff were keen to show their best. Important now to get the whole team singing from the same hymn sheet.
- Four key members of the Department require improvement. Need to look at developing self-assessment and generally for staff to become more 'data savy'.
- Areas of Development: **Plenary** – Important to embed the learning to check exactly what students have understood. It is also important to maintain focus on the second part of the lesson as well as the first. **Marking/Testing** – Need to ensure students are regularly tested, and to ensure regular and good quality marking. **Consistent Good Lessons** – There are clear variations on teaching, so need to look at buddying staff up in order to develop good practice.
- It is appreciated that the Science Team is a large and diverse team to manage. It is important therefore that good practice is shared and an improved peer monitoring programme is put in place.
- The completed Leadership Questionnaire confirmed that the teaching team are very loyal to their Head of Department. The Head of Department himself is finally coming round to admitting that he needs support and he needs to challenge staff in order to make the required changes. There are issues around making better use of data available, holding people to account more formally, and utilising staff more effectively. Staff themselves are also realising that some colleagues who teach the same classes, are not pulling their weight as much as they are.
- Science coursework is one of the strongest in subjects across the Academy, so it is apparent that staff can successful achieve as a team. This now success now needs to be translated into the day-to-day teaching within the Department.
- One concern raised was about the breadth of the curriculum and completing the work in plenty of time before the exams. It was admitted that this could be a

challenge and there was some inconsistency within the different Sciences, with some finishing earlier than others. In the new GCSEs, pace would definitely be a challenge.

- Post 16 – A level performance has generally remained satisfactory, falling somewhere in the middle, over the last 4 years, but this does need to improve.
- KS4 – Slight concerns raised with regard to Biology and Physics, with attainment data below the national average. Students no longer being able to take the BTEC Science and having to sit the more challenging exams, may cause some changes in the attainment data for Core and Additional Science.
- Student Voice: Mr Madge noted and stated that the papers would be destroyed following the meeting to maintain confidentiality. In the Sixth Form, issues were generally around subject confidence, varied style of delivery and ensuring students are fully engaged in the lessons. Teachers themselves should review their effectiveness, in regard to feedback and planning.
- Feedback from Year 10 students was less developed, therefore there is an intention to gain more information from them following their exams.
- KS3: The more challenging curriculum will definitely focus on more depth in understanding. Mrs Fiona Sullivan has been a successful appointment, and is driving things forward.

8 YEAR 11 UPDATE

Mr Vaughan presented his reports, Headlines Summary View Year 11 Progress (May 2016), and Year 11 Subjects Progress (May 2016), and the key discussion points were as follows:

- Still some work to be done, but predictions as expected considering this is a difficult cohort.
- Disadvantaged students appear to be making good progress, whereas SEN students are not doing so well. Directors did not have a report showing these figures, therefore it was agreed that it would be helpful if Mr Vaughan would produce an additional report for circulation, with accompanying bullet points
- Mr Davis, Mr Woodward, and Mrs Hills, SENCO, had met to draw up plans for SEND K students, and how we can improve performance of these students.
- Subject Progress: DT: not so good, but confident that this will improve with the appointment of the new Head of DT. MFL: As no longer compulsory, languages have suddenly become more popular. Performance has definitely improved over the last year, however, we should still be cautious about the results. Child Development: Very difficult cohort of students. IT Computing: Too high predictions? Sciences: Slight concern about end results. English: Possible over optimistic predictions? Maths: Tend to predict accurately.
- Coursework issues: Music coursework now completed following an enormous amount of work by a number of staff. Coursework being left to the last minute results in students being unable to spend valuable time on revision, and ultimately the coursework quality can deteriorate as students have to rush it. Vital to do more work with Middle Leaders to ensure they are on top of this, and prevent a reoccurrence of the recent Music coursework shock.
- Lots of additional support and interventions taking place for Year 11 students. Students using PE lessons to undertake additional English. Mrs Hills running a group specifically for dyslexic students. Mindfulness sessions taking place run by Mr Brooke.
- Comprehensive timetable of revision sessions given to every student. A huge amount of resources available to support students, one of the most popular being the podcasts. Warm-up sessions being provided for Science just before the exams. Additional sessions taking place for English, Maths and Science, during the half-term holiday.
- Briefings to parents about how they can support their children during exams.
- Telephone calls home to parents who did not attend Parents' Evening.
- The myth of 'study leave' has been dispelled, with students expected to work right up until the end of the exam period. Hoodies will be handed out at the Leavers' Assembly at the end June.
- Attendance of students has remained high at 94.48%. With some of the more disengaged students, they will be collected from home if necessary, to ensure they sit their exams.

Mr Vaughan

9 **POST 16 UPDATE**

Mr Madge updated Directors on Post 16. Unfortunately, there was no current data available as the next data collection would be at the end of May. The key discussion points were as follows:

- AS exams underway, A2 exams will start in June.
- To aid with revision, tutor periods are being used more effectively as subject intervention times. All students are urged to attend these, but particularly those who are clearly struggling.
- With regard to disadvantaged students, there are no Pupil Premium students in Sixth Form, but instead, those students from lower income families can claim the Learner Support Fund at varying levels, dependent on their financial situation. There are 8 students (previously Ever 6) who receive the highest level of Learner Support, with 26 other students receiving the lower levels.
- DFE indications are that performance measures for Post 16 are changing. New data shows more significant positive data.
Maths/English Retakes are also an indicator of performance: English 0.43, Maths 0.05.

10 **POLICIES**

SEND

Mrs Fielden had met with Mrs Hills, SEN Coordinator, and presented her report to the Committee. The key discussion points were as follows:

- It was important that the correct information was accessible to everyone on the website, and that there was proper parental engagement before publishing it.
- The Policy Document had been reviewed by Mrs Fielden and Mrs Hills, both of whom were happy with the content. Once the Committee were happy, it was necessary for parents to be consulted and asked for feedback, before it was agreed.
- In addition, there was a requirement for an SEN Information Report, which could be produced by 'tweaking' the Local Offer.
- It was suggested that a clear heading is set up on the website, with various links, in order that these documents can easily be located.

Mr Woodward

BEHAVIOUR PRINCIPLES

Mr Davis confirmed that the SLT had considered this document, and Mr Merrick-Wren had also gone through it comprehensively. It had been discussed whether the rewards and sanctions point should favour disadvantaged students in any way, but a decision had been made to leave the wording as currently. It was noted that the word 'pupil' should be replaced as 'student'. Directors agreed with the content of the document.

11 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no other urgent business.

12 **HOW DID WE DO?**

The meeting ran to perfect time and all items were discussed comprehensively.

13 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed.

The meeting finished at 7.30 pm



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