



Minutes

The Challenge Academy Trust
Quality and Standards Committee
Tuesday 8 October 2019, 6pm

Present:

Committee Members

Paul King (PK)
Neil Pearson (NP)
Howard Platt (HP)
Claire Roper (CR)
Carolyn Williams (CW)
Sheila Yates (SY)

Central Executive Team

Vicky Briggs (VB)
John Carlin (JC)
Andrew Moorcroft (AM)
Bev Scott-Herron (BSH)
Ibrahim Syed (IS)

In attendance: Lisa Adams – Clerk to governors

Part one – non confidential business

1. Welcome

Mr. Ibrahim Syed, Vice Principal at Padgate Academy was welcomed to the meeting.

Short introductions took place.

2. Absence/Apologies

The absence of Mrs J Griffiths was noted.

3. Declaration of personal interests

There were no declarations of personal interest.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Self nominations were received from Sheila Yates for Chairperson and Howard Platt for Vice Chairperson.

Governors elected Sheila Yates and Howard Platt.

5. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

a) Membership

The Chairperson asked if someone from the Diocese has been appointed to the board.

Action: BSH to speak to Jane Griffiths and liaise with Matthew Grant on the current position

b) Numbers on roll

The Chairperson asked about the numbers on roll.

- Penketh High – 168
- Sir Thomas Boteler – 147
- Padgate academy – 140 (significant increase on last year)

c) Trustee for Safeguarding

It was felt that it would be useful to have a trustee with the responsibility for Safeguarding. Steven Whatmore was nominated as the safeguarding trustee.

Action: AM to check if SW is willing to take on this role

d) Training

The Chairperson thanked AM and VB for the training. It was noted that positive feedback has been received. It was felt that a good number of governors were represented across the trust.

The Chairperson reported that there will be a bespoke training session at Priestley from a Further Education Inspector.

Action log

Tracy Hatton will be attending these meetings to present a termly update on safeguarding. An annual report will then be presented to the trustees.

6. Review terms of reference

It was noted that there are no changes to the terms of reference.

7. Performance Review

AM reported that the overall picture is positive. This is the best set of results across all phases. A number of reviews have been carried out at the academies.

VB reported that the primary school outcomes are strong. The EYFS data at Penketh South is above national. Phonics is down on last year but is still above national. The KS1 data is above national and Local Authority average at both schools. The KS2 targets were met and in some areas exceeded. There has been a focus on writing and there is evidence of the impact is in the results. **PK asked** what the key features of achieving these results were. It is about knowing the children, quality teaching and having a holistic curriculum. **PK asked** if the leadership is shared across the hubs. He was informed that the lead practitioners are paid and get a day a week to lead a hub. It was noted that staff at Broomfields Junior and Meadowside have been attending the CPD events.

PK asked if this way of working is a model to be used in the future. AM informed him that Dallam are working with the MAT in the same way that Broomfields Junior and Meadowside did before they joined. VB stated that in terms of the primary hubs there is a focus on English, Maths and EYFS due to capacity, however as more primary schools join this will be extended. SY noted that at the recent training staff from Broomfields Junior and Meadowside had commented on how useful the hubs are.

AM reported that all hubs have an action plan and there is an expectation that the leaders will complete the plan.

AM reported on the secondary performance data. A copy of the revised data was circulated to the group

A zero progress 8 score shows that the students are making average progress and a positive score they are making more than average progress. It was reported that there has been improvement in terms of Penketh High School progress which is now in line with national average. Padgate Academy progress 8 score was -0.99 last year and is now -0.25 which is a significant improvement. Sir Thomas Boteler has stayed the same however there may be some further changes if the disapplication requests are approved. The trust has a positive progress 8 residual which is up by 0.25. This gives a good indication that in general TCAT students are making slightly more progress than their peers nationally.

In terms of English grade 4 outcomes have risen at every academy and aggregated outcomes are now significantly above the national average. The priorities going forward are maths and EBAC qualifications.

It was reported that the government have set a target of 90% of students being entered for EBAC qualifications. HP noted that this would mean some

subjects would have to be made compulsory. AM stated that schools are required to have a strategy in place to grow the figures over time. **VB asked** if the secondary schools are moving towards this. AM informed them that a plan needs to be put in place and schools need to work out how best to equip the students. A discussion took place about the EBAC quota. **CR asked** if universities recognise the qualification. It was noted that they didn't and neither do employers. AM noted that the qualification is appropriate for some students. JC reported that research from Sutton Trust has been released which suggests it is positive to expose students to a more rigorous curriculum.

The Chairperson noted that it is about the curriculum intent and encouraging the schools to have a strategy in place.

NP asked if there is a logic behind students choosing easier subjects. The Chairperson felt that this isn't the case. It was felt that some students will flourish in subjects like PE and drama. The Chairperson noted that it is about finding a balance and enjoyment.

Post 16

It was reported that the outcomes for the last cohort of Bridgewater 6th form were positive.

Priestley College have had their best set of results at level 3. However the AS level outcomes are down on previous years.

It was reported that the ALPS grade is around 5. The target is to be at 2 or 3. CW asked if Priestley are still offering AS levels. It was noted that they are however this is reviewed regularly as it is a costly model.

8. Score Cards Autumn 2019

AM briefed members on the score cards. The initial page has the contextual information along with the self evaluation grade. Each school is rag rated in terms of scrutiny. Each school has a page on:

- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Governance
- Financial benchmarking
- KPI
- Outcomes
- Strengths and areas of development

The score cards are more comprehensive with all information in one document. This will make it easier during inspections. It has been decided that rather than go through all the score cards at this meeting there will be a focus on where the biggest risks are. The Heads of these schools will be invited to present an update. **The Chairperson asked** if this was a lot more work for the Headteachers. It was noted that all the information was

available it was about putting it all in one place. AM felt that it was a large piece of work at the offset but the maintenance will be less time consuming.

9. Target setting

AM reported that the schools use FFT data to set the targets, based on FFT 20. The schools set their own targets and AM meets with the Headteachers to provide challenge. Following this the targets are agreed.

10. School Improvement Plans 2019/2020

Penketh High

JC reported that he is pleased with what the school has achieved so far. It was noted that the second year was always going to be the hardest with a number of strategies introduced. The main focus was the climate for learning and getting the CPD right. The entire curriculum has been re-mapped and re-planned. Peer to peer reviews have been carried out in maths and English. Staff have attended the middle leadership course.

There are 59 enrichment clubs available for the students to attend. The enrichment is targeted to ensure that they are inspiring. A further education lecture programme is in place to get the students thinking about their future. A library has been built.

In terms of the CPD programme, staff have attended subject mastery sessions and staff are enrolled on the transforming teacher programme.

It was reported that the approach to Year 11 has moved away from re-active intervention. A member of staff has been appointed as lead for improving teaching and learning. 97 meetings have been held with pupils to ensure that the correct plans are in place. The focus has shifted to ensure that the right offer is in place from Year 7 so that they are better prepared for when they are in Year 11.

He reported that it is a testament to staff that they have an appetite for improvement. There is also a sense of ownership from the staff.

HP asked if the action plan is manageable. He felt that it was and that the plan is similar to last year. The staff are settled and are responsible for specific areas in the School Development Plan. Regular meetings take place with senior staff. He stated that he has never worked in an SLT like it. SY noted that she feels that the school has been on a positive journey.

PK asked in terms of a long term strategy consideration needs to be made earlier to prevent the re-action in year 11. JC informed them that in the first year the school was at floor and failing so the focus had to be on year 11. It was felt that the students are now benefiting across the year groups.

The Chairperson asked if there are any groups or subjects that are causing concern. He reported that there are some concerns with the low ability pupils, middle ability pupils and high ability pupils. **The Chairperson asked** if recent improvements will be sustained. It was noted that in terms of the approach it will be but the work with this current cohort will be different. He reported that in terms of subjects, Modern Foreign Language is a key area particularly Spanish and French. There has been an improvement in Geography and History.

CW noted that the talk in the community is positive which demonstrates the journey that the school has been on.

Sir Thomas Boteler

BSH reported that there has been a massive shift in the progress 8 scores. However it was noted that the attainment scores were disappointing. It was noted that the Year 11 was a small cohort and two students didn't attend school during KS4. The school have applied for a number of students to be disapplied. The outcome of two will not be known until January. If these are approved the progress 8 scores will be better. The students in the designated provision have thrived and excelled.

The Chairperson asked if these students were removed from the data did she feel that overall performance was good. She felt that the students had performed well however there were some subject areas which under performed. The school has worked hard on the pedagogy and heads of departments have been working on the intent of their curriculum area. AM has carried out a review of the curriculum and spoken to individual heads of departments.

The progress of the disadvantaged overtime was poor. The group were assured that the school did everything they could to engage these students.

All staff have been enrolled on the transforming teacher programme. The current focus groups are the middle ability and boys.

It was reported that the attendance has improved. Persistent absence has reduced but more work needs to be done to improve this further.

HP asked about the standard of the current Year 11. He was informed that they are broadly in line with national.

She reported that the strength of the SLT has made a huge difference with the middle leaders being strong. The focus will now be on the problem areas.

Padgate Academy

IS reported on the action plan for Padgate Academy. He circulated a copy of the 'Improving the quality of education at Padgate Academy (2019-2020)'. The document details the risks and how these will be mitigated against.

In January 2019 he was appointed to work in improving the outcomes and leadership in the Science department. There was a significant uplift in the outcomes for science with progress at +0.15. Since then he has been appointed as Vice Principal. The other EBAC subjects didn't perform as well. The progress scores in 2018 were -0.95 which increased to -0.25 in 2019. Padgate Academy firmly remains an RI school even though there has been an uplift in the outcomes. It was noted there is no time for complacency. The school is fundamentally strong but the limiting factor is the quality of teaching and learning judgement.

There are some issues with the outcome for boys and disadvantaged students. They were assured that there are strategies in place and that by improving teaching it is hoped that the outcomes will improve.

The following areas have been identified as a risk:

- Leadership
- Outcomes
- Ofsted
- Financial deficit

The school are mitigating against these areas by providing strong leadership within the SLT and creating an ambitious team. He informed them that he is carrying out the reviews of all teachers practices himself. He felt that ultimately it comes down to having an ambitious culture throughout the school. It is important to recalibrate and re-think about who it seeks to serve. The school is in an area with an impressive landscape and a rich history and heritage. The aim is not only to be top in Warrington but also to be top in the country. In the past leaders have not had the opportunity to think about finding solutions for themselves so the school is promoting a culture of thinking.

In terms of a strategy to improve the school has implemented a double edge approach with CPD by drawing on the hubs and the challenge partners. The culture of monitoring and evaluating has moved away from quality assurance. The focus is on a continuing cycle of reviewing and evaluating. The aim is to make sure that strategies are simple. To establish highly effective departments the school must outline the key priorities from which all actions stem. These priorities are:

- Improve GCSE outcomes
- Pedagogy
- Curriculum Development
- Assessment
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

In 2018/2019 the school built a prototype in the science to model to other departments. Access to the hubs has been useful for all departments. The

maths department have links with the University of Chester in terms of maths mastery.

NP asked what the uptake from staff has been and if there has been a high turnover of staff. It was reported that it has been well received. Lesson observations are carried out during a specific window which was an anxiety for some staff. During briefings staff who have been through the process have fed back on the experience. The purpose of the observations is to invest some time in to understanding the practices and point out the strengths and positives. AM reported that there has been some turnover and that there is likely to be some more.

It was reported that Misia Barclay is due to go on maternity leave next week. Ibrahim Syed will be acting Principal. **The Chairperson asked** about the rest of the leadership team. There are 3 Assistants Principals, 2 were internal and 1 was an external appointment. The Head of Creative Arts will be part of the SLT. AM will be providing support to IS during this period.

Thanks were expressed to the heads for their open and honest report.

11. Safeguarding

Tracy Hatton reported that all the schools are fulfilling their statutory duties. All staff have received appropriate training through Hayes online and the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) renew their training every two years. All the DSLs work closely together and the safeguarding hub provides support to schools. Emma Coupe has been commissioned to complete an audit at all the schools over the year.

It was reported that attendance at all schools is good since the start of September. Priestley's attendance is currently at 91.4% however 6th form attendance targets are different.

It was reported that the number of exclusions is low. There were no exclusions at the primary schools last year.

The key local concerns across the MAT are:

- Mental health and anxiety
- Risky behaviours placing pupils at risk of CSE
- Children being safe on-line

It was reported that there are 25 child protection cases, 94 children in need and 63 children in care. It was felt that the number in care was quiet high. The number of referrals made is documented which is evidence that the schools have the systems in place to support the children. It was noted that all school improvement plans should reference safeguarding.

The Chairperson felt that the trust is now in a position that the balance is right. This provides clear evidence of what is going on in the schools and evidence

of good practice. **HP asked** if this report would be presented to trustees. The Chairperson stated that it would be presented once a year. HP noted that the report needs to be presented at a logical time.

12. Pupil Premium

VB presented a report on pupil premium. The TCAT disadvantaged hub continues to review the impact of pupil premium across the trust. Since the last report, further work carried out across the group has included:

- A presentation to the CET regarding EEF research and the direction of the group
- Development of a remit for the disadvantaged hub
- Identification of objectives linked to outcomes and impact of work carried out from 2018-2019
- Implementation of common reporting frames and strategies
- First draft of the Trust Disadvantaged Implementation Strategy for 2019-2020
- Agreement of all academies to undergo a pupil premium review across the academic year

Overall the data shows a positive picture but these children are still below their peers. The performance in terms of Penketh South and Great Sankey is positive but there will be some changes to the data with the introduction of Broomfields Junior and Meadowside.

The Chairperson noted that the data shows that the gap at Bridgewater High hasn't narrowed. She was assured that there are strategies in place to ensure improvements are made. It was felt that it is about making sure that what is identified in the strategy is appropriate for the pupils.

13. SEND

AM reported on the SEND across the trust. It was noted that the work of the SEN hub will be more focused.

The key points to highlight are:

- Committed to inclusion award – every academy has achieved the quality mark
- CPD – identified issues around training for Teaching Assistants and work around EAL

The Chairperson noted that the work carried out at the SEN hub is very pleasing and colleagues are clearly seeing the benefits of working together.

AM reported that the SEN hub meets every half term however they are constantly phoning and e-mailing one another for support.

14. Member Training

It was reported that AM has already provided one training session at Bridgewater High with two more sessions to be held this term. The sessions will cover safeguarding and effective governance.

The group were asked if specific training needs are identified bespoke training will be provided. HP felt that there is quite a lot of training available for all.

15. Any other business

AM informed the committee that he has produced a document around TCATs educational principles.

Action: Educational Principles to be added to the agenda for the next meeting

16. Proposed future meeting dates

Spring 2020 – Tuesday 12 February 2020, 6pm

Summer 2020 – Tuesday 9 June 2020, 6pm