

VECTOR LEARNING TRUST

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Minutes of the Axe Valley Local Governance Committee meeting Held at Axe Valley Academy 5.00pm Tuesday 25 June 2019

PRESENT: Jeremy Walden – JW (Chair), Julie Paddick - JP, Mandy Bujniewicz - AB, Christian Digby-Firth – CDF, Laura Jenkins – LJ (Headteacher Designate), Matt Brookman – MBR, Lin Walkerdine - LWa (Clerk)

In Attendance: Pav Sanghera (Head of English)

APOLOGIES: Jacquie Russell, Martin Brook, M Huskins, Jackie Lomax, School Business Manager, Ann Adams (Vector Trust Board)

ABSENT: L Wain

WELCOME

JW welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Matt Brookman as newly appointed Staff Governor.

1. CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM

It was **noted** that a quorum was present.

AA asked for a message to be read in her absence thanking Governors for their hard work and dedication to Axe Valley Academy and wishing them well for the future. AA is standing down as Trustee of the Vector Trust at the end of this academic year.

Lorraine Heath (CEO of Uffculme Trust) met with staff on 24 June 2019. The date for conversion to the UAT is now 1 September 2019 to allow time to complete due diligence. MB is staying in his secondment post until Christmas 2019. A Deputy Headteacher has been recruited for one term to support Laura Jenkins as Headteacher designate.

Presentation by Pav Sanghera, Head of English

- Department Staffing update given. One member of staff has expressed an interest in the second in department post.
- KS4 curriculum has undergone its first major change from AQA to EDUCAS which reflects the Uffculme model. This is beneficial in terms of resources and is preferred as it is geared towards rewarding students in current Year 10. Current Year 11 students finished the AQA course as planned. Early entry for Year 10 was implemented to streamline teaching and increase pace of delivery.
- Year 10 are moving to EDUCAS Language in Year 11. A week by week plan is in place and data points mapped.
- The focus for Year 11 is language and needs to be delivered with good pace as it is a one-year course. The bulk of transition is through consistent moderation, some set texts being taught across all groups, direct input from EDUCAS to aid teaching and learning, shared resourcing, intervention with Year 10 and close working with Uffculme to ensure smooth transition.
- LJ commented that there is a more positive mindset about the two-year course for students. It has also strengthened the relationship between the Year Head and the English Department.
- The course outlines for Literature and Language are given to all students at beginning of Year 10 and at Parents Evenings.

- Year 11 Progress Updates: Projections are down based on targets. Mock data reflects a weaker cohort. It is possible that the predictions are pessimistic which may be better in reality.
- Chair: AVA has also had overly optimistic predictions in the past.
- KS3 Curriculum development: consistency was an issue. All units to be implemented with a very clear curriculum map for Years 7-9. Year 8 have reacted positively to “Of Mice and Men” which has proved very popular. American literature may be beneficial regarding cultural diversity.
- “Scenes from Shakespeare” for Year 7, is based on small scenarios from various plays. It is important to keep each unit as KS3 and not a diluted Year 10 to maintain a broader curriculum. The marking model has been refined to make it more usable and one model used for the whole of KS3.
- The Department has trialled competitions in KS3 – poetry competition, narrative writing competition with vouchers as prizes. These will be a regular event at set times of the year.
- Introduction of red assessment books which stays with students throughout school life – students can follow their progression.
- Dictionaries and thesaurus provided for every classroom
- On-going changes following the teaching and learning review by LH include increasing the pace of teaching through curriculum changes but also teaching and learning styles.
- Management of data and recording in SIMS is being discussed.
- **Governor Challenge:** is the Department linking with primary schools? We need to follow up the letter to Primary Heads and develop relationships with Year 6. Awaiting response.
- **Governor Challenge/Comment:** important not to duplicate work in Year 6/7 as students get bored.
- **Governor Challenge:** links with other subjects e.g. Drama application of skills? Vocabulary displays are around the school in other subject areas. Challenges this year have been vast and it is important to prioritise. What is the base vocabulary level like? Core vocabulary is included in each unit.
- **Governor Challenge:** CDF is the English Link Governor. An advert for a Library Assistant (4 days a week break and lunchtime) has been placed. The PTA are looking to fund to extend these hours.
- **Governor Challenge:** do students work in library? Volunteer library clubs and societies are in place.

Financial Report.

A paper entitled **Management Accounts Report, Axe Valley March 2019** was tabled by JLx and **noted**.

LJ gave a verbal update. Predictions for this academic year are accurate. It has been a challenging year. JLx has presented 3-year and 5-year projections which have been the main focus. A new Finance Director is in place and JLx has been working alongside. CDF has expertise in marketing and is willing to help with site branding etc. AVA’s profile needs to be increased amongst local primary schools. Once pupil numbers increase, marketing staff can be appointed.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2019 were **agreed** as a **true record** and signed by the Chair (amendment to Leach and sentence on last page).

4. TRUST UPDATE

No resistance from staff regarding the move to UAT.

Governor Challenge: have parents raised objections? None to date.

Governor Comment: it is important to have focus on teaching and learning rather than the structure of the Trust. Student behaviour in the community is generally very good. Parents in primary schools get an impression of the school from this. Uniform is being updated. In hot weather moving to PE kit and more relaxed clothing for staff.

5. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was **noted**.

- i) Staff absence is at reasonably low levels and there has been a settled exam period for Years 10 and 11. Crash programmes were provided until 17th June and there was a 100% attendance for the Physics crash session. One fire alarm was accidentally set off in the exam period. Strict examination specific protocols were followed so that the school could provide evidence that no communication took place. The school has applied for 1% uplift this year. Pupil and parent surveys have been sent out via Parent Mail and a link is also available on the website.
- ii) Staff survey re Brian Hooper's visit and the Ofsted staff survey have been very positive and has been particularly useful for Middle Leaders.
- iii) Ready to Learn remains a pivotal part of improving student attitudes to learning and improving behaviour for learning in the classroom. Across all year groups RTL isolations remain low and continue to reduce term on term. Year 7 isolations increased across the last half term however remain low and are indicative of the stage in the year where Year 7 begins to get tired and test boundaries. RTL warnings have reduced across all year groups. This is due to improved consistency, higher expectations and students being given the clear opportunities to make changes to their behaviour.
- iv) FTEs remain lower than last academic year, but they have fluctuated across this academic year. Repeat FTEs are the main area we are focusing on moving forward where a minority of individuals are not yet able to follow our behaviour policy with reasonable adjustment and support. For all repeat FTEs, students are having reintegration meetings with senior staff and in some cases Governors and external agency support is being suggested and implemented where possible in all cases.
- v) Attendance is currently 94.8% which falls slightly below our target and slightly below last academic year. There are concerns around persistent absentees and the attendance of our disadvantaged students. For the Summer term we will be focusing on telephone conversations and meetings with parents of students currently causing us concern to build relationships and appropriate points of contact for 2019-2020. Additionally, the inclusion officer post, currently advertised, will be in place to support improving attendance and working with more complex cases.
- vi) Admissions for September 2019 are 115.

6. AIP

AIP has been RAG rated for information, and the SLT will be producing a new AIP using the format provided by Uffculme. The major differences, aside from format, include a 3-year planning cycle and more specific actions that can span academic years. **The full AIP will be circulated to the LGC in the new academic year after the external examinations results are available.**

For 2018- 2019 we have tackled most of the aspects that lie within the AIP. Although for some aspects in outcomes, T&L and PD, B & W we have remained amber we hope to convert some of these to green as we believe that we have made progress in these areas but do not feel we yet have the evidence to support our decisions. As a result, the report from the external visit commissioned by Vector, a staff survey, a pupil survey and a parent survey have been put in place to evidence some of the SLT findings.

LJ suggested a reduction of the PAN to 120 (with LA approval) to manage recruitment of students. **Governor Challenge:** it does not sell the school if pupils are “resource hungry”. This would also be a Trust decision as financials are a factor.

There is a planning meeting on 10 July 2019 to look at a draft SEF for Governors and roles and responsibilities for 2019/2020. **Governor Challenge:** it is also important to maintain a good work-life balance for SLT and HT as SLT have also been used for lesson cover. LJ: this has been a tough year with JS and MB out. However, it is a cohesive team who work well together. **Governor Challenge:** some staff do not understand why some decisions are taken – both departmental and whole school. LJ commented that there will be more capacity next year, but the school is still running smoothly.

Governor Challenge: Governors have role to look at health and wellbeing of staff.

7. SEF

The school has graded itself as Good and should Ofsted come into school, there would be a coherent rationale for this grade. AVA still has gaps to close with High Attainers and Disadvantaged pupils.

8. NEW OFSTED FRAMEWORK

A paper providing suitable questions for Governors was circulated prior to the meeting for discussion.

Template documents for Governor Skills Audit, Governor Self-Evaluation and Governor Development Plan also circulated. It was **agreed** to hold a separate meeting for discussion. **The skills audit should be completed by all Governors by 19th July** and once collated will provide useful information on the skills gap for recruitment purposes. **Governors were also asked to respond to the self-evaluation questions by RAG rating them. The Governor development plan will be discussed at the start of next academic year.**

The curriculum is to encompass more information and experience for students as Global citizens. Cultural visits have been a success in the past. **Governor Challenge:** more trips/external visitors? This is being considered from a Careers point of view. **Governor Comment:** exciting to teach. All students to be given experience in diversity and culture.

9. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

10. SAFEGUARDING

On-going. Nothing further to report.

11. SEN(D) POLICY

A revised policy was circulated prior to the meeting for approval. **The policy was approved and will be uploaded onto the website.** The SEND section on website has been updated.

12. MOBILE PHONE POLICY

A checklist (reference The Key for Governors) was circulated prior to the meeting. This type of checklist is very useful for Governors to carry out their role in monitoring the effectiveness of the policy. **The current policy does not mention use by staff and parents so may need to be updated.** As this is not a statutory policy each school within the Trust may have their own version.

13. COMPLAINTS POLICY GUIDELINES

Required for 2020 and requires parent consultation. The policy will be developed in school by staff. The guidelines circulated in advance of the meeting were **noted**.

13 CLERK'S BUSINESS

- Meeting dates for the LGC 2019-2020 have been proposed as:
w/c 16 September
w/c 18 November
w/c 10 February
w/c 20 April
w/c 15 June
Confirmed dates will be circulated.
- Governor Attendance 2018/2019 to be published following this meeting
- Pupil Disciplinary Governor Training – attendees to submit a summary report for the next meeting.
- Policies need to be reviewed. Statutory policies to remain on the website whilst other policies to be removed temporarily and a note added to the website “under review”.
- Publication of minutes was discussed, and it was **agreed** to continue to publish minutes (with the exception of Part II) on the website

MEETING CLOSED AT 6.40pm

CHAIR:

Approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting;

..... Signed

..... Date

Item no:	Action	By Whom	By When
6	The full AIP will be circulated to the LGC in the new academic year after the external examinations results are available.	LJ	September 2019
8	Template documents for Governor Skills Audit, Governor Self-Evaluation and Governor Development Plan also circulated. It was agreed to hold a separate meeting for discussion. The skills audit should be completed by all Governors by 19 th July and once collated will provide useful information on the skills gap for recruitment purposes. Governors were also asked to respond to the self-evaluation questions by RAG rating them. The Governor development plan will be discussed at the start of next academic year.	All Governors	19 July 2019 September 2019
11	SEN(D) policy was approved and will be uploaded onto the website.	LJ/LW	June 2019
12	Mobile Phone policy does not mention use by staff and parents so may need to be updated.	LJ/LGC	September 2019
13	Meeting dates for the LGC 2019-2020 have been proposed as: w/c 16 September	UAT	July 2019

	w/c 18 November w/c 10 February w/c 20 April w/c 15 June Confirmed dates will be circulated.		
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor Attendance 2018/2019 to be published following this meeting 	LW	July 2019
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil Disciplinary Governor Training – attendees to submit a summary report for the next meeting. 	LGC	September 2019
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies need to be reviewed. Statutory policies to remain on the website whilst other policies to be removed temporarily and a note added to the website “under review”. 	LJ	July 2019

Date of Next Meeting: **tbc**

DRAFT