

LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD OF YOUTH CHALLENGE

MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL

ON THURSDAY 8 JUNE 2023 AT 4.00PM

Present: Mr M Hilton (Chair), Miss A Sheppard, Mr A Rowan, Mrs A O'Callaghan, Mrs L Finney, Ms C Ling and Ms V Sutton (Academy Lead)

In attendance: Mrs R Leonard (Director of Academy Operations), Mr B Billington (Deputy Head: Behaviour and Attitudes), Ms M Williams (PSHE / Art Teacher) and Mrs R Worthington (Clerk)

Mr Hilton in the Chair

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Governors were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made for the benefit of new attendees.

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs C Dewse, Revd R Petch and Mr P Campbell.

2. MEMBERSHIP AND DECLARATIONS

2.1 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

2.2 Membership Issues

Mrs C Dewse's term of office was due to expire 31 August 2023 and had expressed her intention to continue.

The Clerk reported that there remained a vacancy for 1 parent governor. Ms Sutton noted that it was difficult to recruit parent governors, though that she would endeavour to do so.

Revd. Petch had also confirmed that he would be resigning from his role after the meeting, which would leave a co-opted governor vacancy. Revd. Petch was thanked for his unwavering support of Youth Challenge over many years. It was noted that he had been a great support to staff, students, the leadership team and the Governing Board. The Board expressed thanks to him for all his hard work and contributions and wished him well for the future.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Agreed: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting of the Local Governing Board on **2 February 2023**.

The Chair noted that going forwards it would be useful to have a tracker at the end of the minutes to record any matters arising for the next meeting.

A governor asked whether there had been a new clerk appointed.

It was confirmed that there had been and that they would be covering all boards within the trust.

Further to Minute Number 7, it was noted that there had been a decision to amalgamate the termly updates discussed within a single document with the SEF. The SEF overview, incorporating this data, had been circulated with the documentation for this meeting.

4. REVIEW OF GOVERNOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ms Sutton confirmed that the current governor responsibilities were as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| [REDACTED] | Mark Hilton |
| [REDACTED] | Mark Hilton |
| Safeguarding | Louise Dunne |
| Health and Safety | Tony Rowan |
| Quality of Education | Andrea O'Callaghan |
| SEND | Carolyn Dewse |
| Behaviour | Lynda Finney |
| Wellbeing | Claire Ling |
| Post 16 and Destinations | Anthea Sheppard |
| Personal Development | Rodger Petch |
| Pupil Voice | Paul Campbell |

Mrs O'Callaghan confirmed that following Revd. Petch's resignation, she would undertake a personal development visit in the Autumn term.

5. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF 'ANY OTHER BUSINESS'

No items of 'Any Other Business' were notified at this stage.

6. READING

Ms Sutton reported that the Academy had identified reading as a key priority as it had been noted that, given the profile of the children in the Academy, there were a high number who at the time of starting, have a below average reading comprehension score. The children could read, though were not necessarily able to understand what they were reading, and it was felt that this was partially as a result of gaps in their vocabulary. As reading is a key priority, there had been a 4 term TLR3 role offered, until February half term. Ms Williams was undertaking this work and the strategic action plan had been circulated. She had attended this meeting to deliver an update on this work.

Ms Williams reported that there had been an element of trial and error with the strategies and ideas. She confirmed that her background was PSHE, rather than English, and therefore this was something different, though was a role that she was incredibly excited about. Support had

been provided by Ms Sutton and Mrs Leonard in the creation of the action plan and formulation of targets for the whole school.

The first action was to review the IDL. This was an online reading initiative that was used to improve Maths and English through personalised intervention. This had started through collaboration with the SENDCO and a trial with KS3 using it weekly from November to March. After this trial it was noted that only a small number of students had improved, being those with the lower scores. Overall, it was felt that students had not engaged with this. As such, it was felt that Bedrock was more appropriate. This was another online intervention method, though was centred more around comprehension and the exposure to a wealth of vocabulary. The programme allowed specified vocabulary to be entered and it would then generate texts around the selected words.

A governor asked was this an online resource too.

It was confirmed that it was, though that the full training on this had not been received yet. This was scheduled to take place the day after the meeting. The intention was for there to be Tier 3 vocabulary, being subject specific vocabulary, to be entered into the programme. This would mean that Bedrock could be used to improve various subjects at the same time. After the training was received, Ms Williams reported that this would be disseminated to other staff members.

The second target within the action plan was for staff to better understand KBIT and WRAT4. Ms Sutton had provided some introductory training to staff members the afternoon of the meeting, though this would then be followed up with a session delivered by the SENDCO on **16 June 2023**. This training would detail different sections of the data gathered and ensure that staff understand what data is gathered, standardised scores and how this can be used to inform teaching practice. Ms Williams confirmed she had already received this training and had found it incredibly useful.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that the intention was to raise the profile of reading across the Trust. It was important for it to be understood that this is not just the responsibility of the English teachers and is instead a whole school responsibility. This was the rationale behind appointing someone who is not an English teacher for the role. Staff are more used to this with the curriculum plans and the Tier 3 vocabulary identified from these will be uploaded to Bedrock. It is then hoped that the use of Bedrock would enable the students to become more familiar with the vocabulary in a different context.

Another of the identified targets was to increase the staff's knowledge on how to prioritise reading. This would be completed through the use of Bedrock, though also through questionnaires.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that there was reference within the action plan to the Trust reading charter. She confirmed this would be shared with everyone after the meeting. Governors could then see what is done as a Trust and how this filters down throughout the Trust in relation to reading commitments.

Action: That Mrs Leonard share the Trust reading charter with governors.

Mrs Finney confirmed that she had a number of recently published books about working with children who have severe reading difficulties that she would share with Mrs Williams.

A governor asked was any specific time set aside in the timetable for reading.

Ms Williams confirmed that the new timetable was being finalised, though there would be a lesson a week for Bedrock. Additionally, reading was to be made a priority in lessons and also in form time. It was noted that students arrive at different times and therefore it was not possible to catch everyone in form time.

Ms Ling reported that in addition to other methods, some students would be identified for further intervention. The personalised nature of Bedrock meant that the intervention could allow students to continue their individual programme of learning to bridge the gap and develop their skills.

A governor noted that it was important that everyone recognised that reading did not stand alone and was a discipline in every area. It was important for this to be normalised and the training of staff underpins this and ensures there are no assumptions about texts being accessible.

Ms Ling confirmed that generally staff were very good at understanding students' ability to comprehend, though there was additional training to be delivered.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that there is a gap in the Trust, and this is why there is a commitment within the Charter to provide a carefully curated reading collection that is accessible to all. It was noted that the Academies are limited in relation to library space, though Bedrock would partially address this. It was however noted to be important to acknowledge that Bedrock would not be the answer to all questions. It does however provide a virtual library with a large number of resources and books, used to pinpoint vocabulary for lessons. The role of the staff was noted to be important in bridging the gap.

Ms Williams reiterated that the approach taken was research led and would focus on upskilling teachers. Historically, it had been thought that reading was an English issue, though Bedrock reiterates that it is not isolated. Further training will be delivered to all staff on **23 June 2023** in relation to Bedrock, with a view to having everything in place for September.

A governor noted the ability to include specified vocabulary in Bedrock. It was noted that within BTEC there are reading requirements that include vocabulary. The governor asked could these be established within Bedrock.

It was confirmed that they can. Ms Williams reported that reports can also be generated to demonstrate the progress made. These reports are received on a monthly basis and demonstrate the progress made.

Ms Leonard suggested that there could be a demonstration next February, at which time the LGB could also receive an update on the data.

Ms Williams was thanked for attending and providing the update.

Ms Williams left at this juncture of the meeting (4.30pm).

7. NEW KEY STAGE 3 CURRICULUM

Ms Sutton confirmed that the curriculum was a significant focus for the Academy and also the wider Trust. There had been a lot of work undertaken in relation to KS3 over the previous summer, even before this became a Trust priority. This work had stemmed from the last Ofsted inspection, which had asked that there be a broadening of the curriculum at KS3.

It was reported that there had been significant broadening, with the curriculum now including English, Maths, Art, Music, Sport, Careers, PSHE, Reading, ECM curriculum and the wider world curriculum. All of these had now been planned through the curriculum maps, which had been formulated with intelligence about why, when, how and in what order subjects are covered. It was noted that this was all now in place in a way that it previously was not. It was felt that this had come together well.

Ms Sutton reported that the Academy did not have enough time to teach every subject that is taught in mainstream secondary schools. This was because there was not enough time, and the Academy did not have enough specialists to do so. Behaviour modification is a key focus before teaching of traditional subjects can be started.

As it was not possible to teach everything, a traditional curriculum had to be streamlined, with the most important aspects being selected. Ms Sutton explained it had been recognised that Geography, History, RE and Science were not taught within the Academy. Some texts were selected to be covered in English to ensure that children were well informed and had a well-rounded knowledge about these areas, however it was felt that was not enough. Therefore, the wider world curriculum had been put together, based on the national curriculum for these 4 subjects, with a view to enabling students to access mainstream education if they are to return there, which is always the goal.

In the creation of this subject, Ms Sutton outlined that there had been consideration of the core knowledge for Geography, History, RE and Science. The subject is heavily linked to English and also to Art. In the current academic year, there had been 1 lesson a week timetabled for wider world, however this was felt not to be enough and therefore there would be 2 a week, plus the art lesson, in the new academic year.

Ms Sutton confirmed that the lessons timetabled early in the day had worked well, though those in the afternoon had not been as successful as the students had not engaged as well. This was known across all academic subjects delivered in the afternoon. It was noted to be necessary to have some academic lessons in the afternoon, as happens in mainstream schools. It was however recognised that it is not always possible to get the best from the children in the afternoon.

8. CURRICULUM AND STAFFING UPDATE

It was reported that progress had been made with the curriculum and that Mrs O'Callaghan, in her capacity as the Quality of Education governor, had considered the curriculum maps. It was noted that across the Trust there was data gathering and moderation taking place.

Mrs Leonard reported that there was a focus on CPD as it was recognised that the departments were small and therefore staff do not always have the benefit of learning from others. It was confirmed that a member of staff had recently completed a placement at Thornleigh for development and there was ongoing work to improve collaboration across the Trust.

A governor noted that this was a valid point and suggested attendance at the subject hubs across the LA. These subject hubs offered capacity and scope for network support as there was often discussion regarding SEND and the subject generally. The agenda points are not specific to mainstream, and it was felt they would benefit the Academy staff also. It was further noted that attendance at the hubs would help develop essential knowledge about how to interweave and sequence topics throughout the year for different key stages. There would also be development in relation to assessment which could have impact. It was felt that the Academy was missing out by not accessing this available resource.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that there are some hubs accessed, such as safeguarding and careers, however there needed to be a co-ordinated approach to them taken. It was suggested that the wider world teachers could rotate attendance at the different subject hubs. Ms Sutton agreed and confirmed that this would be reviewed.

A governor noted that there is no RE hub, however a group has been established by around 5 schools. Many of the church schools use a different curriculum, though the collaborative work with the established group was felt would be especially useful when there is no specialist in school. It was confirmed that the History and Geography hubs are particularly proactive, and it was suggested the teachers could consider the agenda in advance, then attend if it was felt to be useful.

Ms Sutton confirmed that she was happy with the History and Geography aspects of wider world, though there needed to be further consideration for RE and Science. It was noted that Science was difficult given the specialised nature and the lack of specialised equipment. It was reported that the Academy would love a science teacher, and this would be considered further, however it was recognised that it was difficult to teach science at the Academy. Furthermore, it was noted that there was difficulty nationally in mainstream schools recruiting science teachers.

Ms Ling confirmed that, where appropriate, aspects of science are delivered in other subjects, such as cooking and sport.

A governor recognised the need to access a laboratory and the appropriate equipment for the delivery of science.

Mrs Leonard confirmed there had been a number of trials in relation to Science over the years. The Trust works with a similar school in Chester where they deliver Science as part of the curriculum. The teacher in that school is doing a masters and the focus is on why children attending alternative provision disengage with science as it was noted to be a national issue.

A governor noted that Science can be overwhelming as there is a wealth of subject specific vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the majority of students.

Mrs Leonard agreed and noted that students were often far behind because of this lack of vocabulary.

Ms Sutton reported that should the right teacher be found then there would be investment in the facilities to create a lab, which was the intention long-term. However, for the moment it was important to revisit science to ensure that there is a science rich curriculum being offered.

A governor asked about a Science SLE.

It was confirmed that there had been one previously who the children had enjoyed working with. Mrs Leonard reported that there had been a focus on KS4 previously and the ability for students to access science elsewhere if they expressed an interest in it. These options included Park school and mainstream. The focus now needed to be on KS3 to ensure that the Science offering was not limited at a time when students may not know that they have a talent in Science.

A governor asked could the science teacher from Park school come to the Academy to teach.

It was confirmed that this could be considered, and the Science teacher had already helped to review the curriculum. He had stipulated that there were several things not needed. It was felt that the issue was largely in relation to Chemistry and Physics as they did not link easily to other aspects. There needed to be careful consideration about this.

A governor asked about the use of facilities at a mainstream school.

It was reported that a local head was open to this, though when this had previously been trialled for swimming, the lesson had ended quickly. It was noted that the attitude of the students had immediately changed upon entering the mainstream site. It was felt this was due to the students being uncomfortable there.

A governor noted that there had been similar situations in relation to post 16.

A governor noted that there was a functioning laboratory at Rumworth. It was suggested this be explored as an option. As it was not a mainstream school, it was felt that the environment may be less threatening to students.

A governor asked about exploring the use of a mobile lab.

It was noted that these tended to focus on 'fun science' rather than being curriculum based.

A governor noted the need to be realistic about what was achievable and remarked that the progress made this year meant that the curriculum was unrecognisable.

Mrs Leonard agreed and confirmed that Science was always problematic. The important point to recognise was that everyone is clear and confident about the rationale for the curriculum. It is known by the Trust why this does not work, and everything done is intelligence led and can be explained if necessary. There had been careful selection about aspects of the national curriculum that will help students succeed in life and also to access mainstream education if they return there. It was reiterated that the focus for KS3 was to have students return to mainstream education and with this in mind, there was a considerable amount more included within the curriculum.

Ms Sutton confirmed that she will send an email in relation to aspects of the curriculum that the Academy is struggling to deliver. In the event any governors had any creative ideas to assist, these would be welcomed.

Action: Ms Sutton send an email to seek ideas in relation to aspects of the curriculum the Academy is struggling to deliver.

9. UPDATE ON LEARNER PROGRESS TO TARGETS

Learner progress had been detailed in the report circulated with the documentation for this meeting.

It was confirmed that the main strengths included BTEC areas, such as land-based, catering, hospitality and tourism. There had been 2 staff promoted to grade 7 to have official responsibility for these areas. These were subjects that the children loved.

It was reported that some children had left and had started a catering course, though had reported back that they had knowledge that others on the course did not. This was always

positive to hear and the 2 students who had gone on to study catering at college were both still attending and doing well.

Ms Sutton reported that the downside to the subject being so popular was the space. The kitchen area was only suitable for a maximum of 4 children at present, therefore there was a desire to expand this in the future. The area had a big cooker, individual hobs and a sink, though it was noted that the ideal would be for each student to have their own workspace and equipment in order to promote increased responsibility and life skills.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that the new finance director was keen to understand what each academy lead wanted long term so that this could be budgeted for in the future.

Ms Sutton confirmed that one of the other key areas for development was to get a salon set up as the current facilities needed improvement.

Ms Sutton reported that BTEC sport does not have a great retention. In the afternoon, a boxing gym is used, though there are students who do not like boxing. It was therefore felt that the subject would benefit from use of a different venue each term. This would enable more variety to avoid students losing interest.

Mrs Leonard reported that the curriculum plan was focused on development so that this was more similar to the offering in a mainstream setting. This forced teachers to be more creative about the delivery, in particular for the girls as the options were currently limited.

Ms Sutton reported that the Art and Design BTEC was a new subject. This had fallen behind due to staff absence, though this was catching up now.

10. TEACHING CONSISTENCY ACROSS THE ACADEMY

With regards to consistency, it was reported that Maths was a particular strength in the Academy as these teachers were the most specialised and experienced in both their subject and behaviour management.

English was noted as an area to develop, albeit Ms Sutton reported she was happy with the intent for the subject. This was not as a result of staff subject knowledge, though was as a result of experience, with there being an ECT delivering English. It was confirmed that the teacher had ill health and had therefore been off sick, unavoidably, which had impacted on pupil progress. As a result of this, a learning mentor who is a qualified teacher, works in the class with the teacher. This acts as a contingency measure so the learning mentor can pick up and continue the lessons should there be absence. Another of the English teachers was noted to be new to the Academy, though it was reported they had settled well, after some initial time to adapt. Ms Ling reported that both of these teachers were working well with her.

11. DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SEF

The development plan and SEF had been circulated with the documentation for this meeting. These were up to date as of May and Ms Sutton confirmed that the updated documents would be circulated every half term.

There were no questions on the documents.

12. NOMINATED GOVERNOR REPORTS

12.1 Chairs' Briefing

The Chair reported that he had attended the summer term Chairs' Briefing held **on 9 May 2023** where the following matters had been highlighted:

- Summer Term Meeting Updates
- Meeting Procedures - Consent to Absence
- Development segment: Succession Planning

The Chair noted that the vice-chair had now resigned, and this role would need to be filled going forwards. It was suggested that there be a session focused on succession planning in October, with there being consideration needed about what this may look like.

12.2 Training and Development Lead Governors Report

Mrs Leonard reported that there had been no briefing this term.

The Trust were running an updated equality training session on **13 July 2023** at 3.00 – 5.00pm. This would be delivered via Zoom by One Education.

Another upcoming training session was the SEF session, being delivered on **16 June 2023**. This was open to governors and trustees and was focused on how the SEF is completed.

Governors were also reminded about Bolton Governance Services training programme and the NGA learning links.

Action: That Mrs Leonard circulate the details of the Trust's upcoming training sessions to governors.

12.2.1 Governance Training Programme 2023/24

The Clerk reported that the 2023/24 Governance Training Programme would be available on the Bolton Governance Services website ready for the new school year and notification would be made via the e-brief service.

12.2.2 Training and Development Governor Briefing Sessions

The Clerk reported that the next Training and Development briefing session would be held on **Monday 18 September 2023 at 6.00 pm** at the Bolton Science and Technology Centre. The session would introduce the new Governance Training and Development Programme 2023/24 and revised Service Level Agreement.

12.3 Partnership Forum Report

The nominated Partnership Governor had been unable to attend the Partnership Meeting held on **22 May 2023**. The Clerk therefore reported that the following matters were discussed:

- SEND Review Consultation Response and Update - *Sue Cornwell, Head of Service for Children with SEN*
- Governance Role in Exclusion and Suspension Panels - *Paula Andrews, Education Access Officer*

The Clerk advised that a recording of the session was available.

Action: That the Clerk upload the recording of the session to all governor's gateway.

12.4 Link Governor Visit Reports

Safeguarding

It was reported that the LA safeguarding audit had taken place and the report was received over half term. This was very positive. Mrs Leonard reported that the auditor had confirmed that they could not believe how calm, polite and well-behaved the children had been. The report had not found any issues, though there were a lot of recommendations included. The majority of these were centred around Early Help.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that all academies had been subject to audits and that the recommendations from all reports were being compiled into a single document, along with the strengths. This document can then be used by all academies for development.

A governor asked were the recommendations genuinely useful or was it felt that it was something included on all reports.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that all the recommendations were valuable. However, there may not be implementation of everything. These were purely recommendations and governors should not be alarmed at the long list.

A governor noted that the Academy was fully compliant with all requirements and the children were safe. It was however recognised that safeguarding is an area where there is always more that could be done.

Mrs Leonard agreed. By way of example, it was noted that displays in the Academy were a strength to the point that it had received a mention in the safeguarding newsletter. There were however recommendations that 2 further posters that could be added.

A governor recognised that the audit was very thorough, with the dates of any safeguarding courses being requested.

Ms Sutton confirmed the report would be shared with governors and confirmed that the audit was useful and provided reassurance to the team that they were doing well.

Post 16

Miss Sheppard confirmed she had met with the SENDCO to look at progress and how Year 11s transition to college. The report from this meeting had been circulated with the documentation for this meeting. There were a high number of children in Year 11 with an EHCP. It was recognised that there was difficulty with this funding in college and it was discussed how to cope with this.

Ms Ling confirmed that she had received requests from colleges for a lot of information about each individual child. Miss Sheppard then supported students with interviews,

which were around an hour long. This support included attending the interview with some students and there were a lot of questions asked. One of these had been in relation to when the last time the student had eaten fruit or vegetables. It was felt that the college were not on the same page as the Academy, though everything that was asked of the students was done. A transition document had been developed to help, though it was felt that there needed to be discussion with the college. Miss Sheppard confirmed she had attended a meeting with Mrs Leonard earlier in the day in relation to this.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that there had historically been difficulty with the college, though there was concern about the figures this year and therefore attempts were being made to meet with the new personnel at the college to build relationships.

It was noted that there was concern about the provision generally in Bolton and where the students could go if they were refused places at Bolton College.

Ms Ling reported that there were 150 EHCP places at the college and it was requested that the applications be submitted by October. In the event a child was excluded from mainstream education in September or October then this was impossible as it did not provide sufficient time to put measures in place and address behavioural needs. It was reported that there had been information being sought about reasons for a child's exclusion, even where they had been at the Academy for over 2 years without issue. The child in question had been excluded for a 1 off incident. It was not felt that this was relevant to the offer of a place, this had been reiterated though this had been disclosed as required. The college had maintained the offer of a place for that student; however it was noted to be difficult and there was a need for the students not to be judged forever for what has led to them coming to the Academy.

Miss Sheppard confirmed that there had been another student who had been doing well at the Academy. She had supported the student at interview, though they had not been offered a place for sport and had instead been offered foundation learning. This was not suitable and would have meant the child not achieving a qualification. Miss Sheppard had approached the Sport organiser directly and the child had since been offered a place for Level 2 Sport.

A governor noted that there were similar issues in mainstream settings, with the college requesting a host of safeguarding data before the offer of a place.

It was noted that there had been students who had been required to attend a 90 minutes Maths lesson as part of the application for a place on a vocational course. This was extremely difficult where the students admitted struggling with Maths. They had however done this lesson, though it was felt to be unnecessary in the circumstances and therefore the intention was to speak with the college about all of these issues.

Behaviour

Mrs Finney had undertaken a monitoring visit and the report had been circulated. It was noted that there was a new project which focused on making the students more aware of their language and audience. This empowered staff with how to address these issues.

Mr Billington explained the aim was to focus on the low-level behaviour and ensure consistency. Staff were required to deal with issues in the same way, which created the stability needed by the students.

Ms Sutton confirmed that since the introduction of this, there was less bad language around the Academy, and it was noticeable that students self-correct.

Mrs Leonard recognised that there was difficulty in circumstances where the children are never without an adult. Inevitably, this level of monitoring meant that the staff were going to hear more things, though it was becoming habit that students were correcting themselves.

Wellbeing

Ms Ling confirmed she had undertaken monitoring in relation to wellbeing and the report had been circulated with the documentation for this meeting. There had been significant improvement noted, with the headline report being green. There had been strategic briefings, which were being well received and it was noted that less people were approaching Ms Ling as staff voice. This meant that instead of requiring Ms Ling to present issues confidentially to SLT, people were happy to approach SLT directly.

It was reported that there had been a meeting of SLT to address some of the points highlighted previously. This had included being open with staff that everyone worked on different timetables and therefore would arrive later or leave earlier. The reiteration of this to all staff had reduced the background chatter about these matters.

Overall, the responses to the survey demonstrated that staff were happy and satisfied. It was reported that one response had been a concern. There had been attempts to address this concern about harassment and unkind words. As the responses are confidential it is difficult to address this, though it had been explained that this question had been in relation to treatment by other staff. Staff were reminded about the confidential staff voice box in reception and offered the option to speak with Mrs Leonard or Mr Hodgkinson at Trust level. None of these options had been taken and the response had not been repeated subsequently.

It was noted that there was no area that received less than 80% as 'absolutely satisfied'. This was positive given the number of responses received.

Student wellbeing had also been considered, with it being noted that transition for Year 11s caused stress and concern. This had been discussed above, though was something that had been escalated to the college and also Trust leadership. It was being treated as a whole trust initiative going forwards.

Other visits

Ms Sutton confirmed that initial visits had also been completed by Mrs Dunne and Mr Rowan. Both had tours and there were discussions in relation to safeguarding and health and safety. Future monitoring visits had also been planned for these governors.

13. CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION

Mrs Leonard confirmed that there was no finance report. The previous finance director, David Smith had retired due to ill health. As it had not been possible to recruit a replacement, he had continued to support with compliance after retirement. He had however then been hospitalised at around the time a new finance director, Kate Connolly, was recruited and therefore a handover had not been possible. Mr Smith was now back home, though was still recovering.

Governors sent their thoughts and best wishes to Mr Smith for a speedy recovery. It was noted that Mr Smith had done sterling work for the Trust and navigated through turbulent financial times. His experience would be greatly missed.

Ms Connerley had been focused on Year End and the new financial year. The finance meeting had been delayed and was scheduled to take place later in the month. The finance report would be shared at that meeting and would be shared with governors also.

It was confirmed that there was nothing of concern in relation to the budget and there were plans being considered for investment moving forward. It was recognised that there had been some complexities, such as the pandemic, that had impacted the budget recently, though this was looking more positive.

14. ACADEMY LEAD'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

Ms Sutton presented her termly report which had been circulated with the documentation for this meeting.

It was highlighted that there had been a high number of referrals received within a short period of time in the Autumn term. The high number of students starting at once had been unsettling for existing students and also the staff. There had therefore been negotiations, with it being agreed that the Academy now manage the flow of students and operate a waiting list so that students are only brought to site when the conditions are right.

14.1 Report on Pupil Premium Grant

Governors had previously received a report on the Pupil Premium funding and its use to overcome barriers to learning.

Attendance for PPG children was detailed within the report.

Agreed: That the Academy Lead's termly report on the Pupil Premium be received.

14.2 Termly Report on Children Looked After

The Academy Lead reported on the school's provision for Children Looked After, in particular that there was 1 Child Looked After on roll at the School and that the necessary support strategies were in place for this child including Personal Education Plans.

Agreed: That the Academy Lead's termly report on the school's provision for Children Looked After be received.

14.3 Evacuation / invacuation

Both an evacuation and invacuation had taken place since the last meeting. Reports from these were included within the Academy Lead's report, which had been circulated within the documentation for this meeting.

14.4 School Website Compliance

An update in relation to the new intent statements, which would be added to the website, had been included within the circulated report.

14.5 Risk Register

It was reported that this was a new item, which would be included on the agenda for every meeting going forwards. Mrs Leonard explained that historically the Trust had operated a single risk register, which was discussed at the risk and audit meeting.

Given the discussions about the gates at the last LGB, this had been included on the Trust risk register. A trustee had then queried this and asked where localised risks sit and are reported. This led to the conclusion that the academy leads should operate a localised risk register and could put mitigation in place to limit the risk.

It was reiterated that the risk register is a live document, and all governors were able to contribute to this. An initial draft of the document had been circulated, though governors were reminded that this was an evolving document that would be added to and have items removed from it.

One entry in the risk register was the specialised nature of staffing for the vocational subjects meant it could be very difficult to provide cover if staff members were off. It was felt that this was difficult to fix, though there was an effort to ensure that there were consistent support staff who then know the safety requirements. In the absence of the teacher, they could then ensure that an element of practical work continues. Another measure to address this was the preparation of packs that could be used in the event of staff absence.

Another key entry was security because of the gates, discussed previously. Ms Sutton reported that the quote had been accepted and an installation date was awaited. These would be installed by September.

Ms Sutton confirmed that the spike in new starters last Autumn had been included. There had been discussions with the LA, and it was agreed that places would be allocated, though the Academy would decide when to bring students on site. This was important to ensure success and that the appropriate measures are in place before students attend.

Mrs Leonard confirmed that there had been difficulties last Autumn as a result of the influx. This had placed strain on the staff and there were safety concerns. It was important to ensure this would not happen again.

Ms Sutton reiterated that as Year 11 had now left for study leave there would usually be an increase in new starters, though this was now gradual so as not to be overwhelming for anyone involved. It was noted that the building of relationships was key to the students success at the Academy and therefore it was important to ensure there was enough time and attention to promote this.

Another entry was in relation to safeguarding. It was reported that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is fantastic, though there was concern about what would happen if she was suddenly unable to work. Ms Sutton confirmed that she had level 3 training and others were booked to attend this, however there would be a benefit to having a Deputy to work alongside the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

It was confirmed that safeguarding is huge, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead is extremely diligent. Ms Sutton wanted to ensure that the Academy remains very alive to this and considers additional recruitment and upskilling of staff to support. The same was true of the SENDCO role, though it was confirmed that there was a plan in place for this.

Mrs Leonard reiterated that, moving forwards, governors could raise anything they wish to be added to the register at this meeting.

Agreed: That the termly report be accepted with thanks.

15. SEND AND ALTERNATIVE PROVISION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In response to the SEND Review Green Paper Consultation, the Government had published its SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan: Right support, right place, right time.

The SEND and AP Improvement Plan outlined the first steps that the government would take in addressing issues raised. The plan set out a roadmap to transform the SEND and AP system which had been detailed on the accompanying agenda note and uploaded to Gateway.

Several of the proposed changes would be trialled initially, with nine regional partnerships, covering around 30 LA areas piloting the changes and potentially it would be 2025 before legislation was introduced.

The Clerk noted that Sue Cornwell, Head of Service for Children with SEN would be providing an update on the plan at the Summer Term Partnership forum held on **22 May 2023**.

Agreed: That the Board note the report.

Collection and publication of board diversity data

The Clerk reported that the DfE (Department for Education) has updated guidance on what maintained schools and academy trusts must or should publish online.

The Clerk reported that in order to help boards be reflective of the communities they serve, the DfE was encouraging schools and trusts to publish diversity data on their website.

Boards must ensure that individuals cannot be identified through the publication of data, particularly when numbers on the Board are low, in this instance the Governance Services Team can assist with the wording for your website.

Collecting diversity data from volunteers needed to be done on a voluntary basis. Board members can opt out of sharing their information, including protected characteristics, at any given time including after publication.

Bolton Governance Services are working with the NCOGS (National Co-ordinators of Governance Services) network to provide a model form that boards may wish to adopt.

The guidance can be downloaded directly from the www.gov.uk website.

Mrs Leonard reported that this may be done across the Trust to enable a larger sample and prevent identification of governors. It had been decided by the Trust that the information would be gathered, though this was voluntary and would likely take place in the new academic year.

Agreed: That Boards give consideration to the collection and sharing of diversity data on their website, ensuring that individuals cannot be identified.

Governance Services Staffing 2023/24

An update had been provided on the accompanying agenda note which had been uploaded to Gateway. Details of the current staff vacancies and recruitment process had been provided.

The Team had said farewell to Marie Ahmad, Governance Development Officer and Amy Appleyard, Governance Support Officer; both of whom have secured new roles outside the Authority. Interim support for boards had been established and communicated to those boards affected. Recruitment had been successful and the Board would have a new Clerk allocated shortly.

16. POLICY REVIEWS

The Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy had been circulated with the documentation for this meeting.

Agreed: That the policy be approved for adoption and use.

17. STRATEGIC OVERVIEW FOR 2023/24 MEETINGS

The strategic overview for the meetings in the next academic year. These had been aligned with the SDP. The Chair noted the addition of a reading update in February, in line with the TLR and had also added the risk register to each meeting.

18. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed: That the Local Governing Board meetings for the 2023/24 academic year be held as follows:

Autumn Term: Wednesday 11 October 2023 at 4.00pm
Spring Term: Thursday 1 February 2024 at 4.00pm
Summer Term: Tuesday 11 May 2024 at 4.00pm

19. CONSENT TO ABSENCE

Agreed: To consent to the absence from this meeting of Mrs C Dewse, Revd R Petch and Mr P Campbell.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of 'Any Other Business' reported.

21. CONFIDENTIALITY

Agreed: That none of the matters discussed at this meeting be designated as confidential under Regulation 15(3) of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013.

The meeting closed at 5.45 pm

Signed as a correct record:

(Chair/Vice-Chair of Governors)

Date: _____

Matters arising

| Minute Number | Summary | Governor Responsible |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 6 | That the Trust reading charter be shared with governors. | Mrs Leonard |
| 8 | Ms Sutton send an email to seek ideas in relation to aspects of the curriculum the Academy is struggling to deliver. | Ms Sutton |
| 12.1 | Appointment of Vice Chair | All |
| 12.2 | That Mrs Leonard circulate the details of the Trust's upcoming training sessions to governors | Mrs Leonard |
| 12.3 | To upload the Partnership Forum recording to all governors' gateway | Clerk |