



The Learning Partnership

**Crewe UTC LGB**

Crewe UTC

**Part 1 Minutes**



**Crewe Engineering  
& Design UTC**

**Date: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 at 4.30pm**

**Present:**

Professor N. Fowler (NF)- Meeting chair  
Mr C. Geddes (CG)  
Mr D. Jones (DJ)

**Apologies:**

Professor G. Harris (GH)  
Dr M. Marsh (MM)  
Mrs H. Tattersall (HT)

**In attendance:**

Mr W. Chitty – Principal (WC)

**Clerk:** Dr A Howells

**Governance and Administration**

1. The meeting was rescheduled following the postponement of the meeting planned for 10 Jan 2024. NF agreed to Chair the meeting. NF welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received from GH, MM and HT. The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate. No additional Declarations of Interest for items on this Agenda were offered. Papers had been provided to Governors prior to the meeting.
2. The Minute of the Crewe UTC LGB meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, was **approved**.

**Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities**

The Principal’s Report was received.

3. Ofsted Readiness: The Principal noted that since June 2023 the College was within the window where an Ofsted inspection could take place, although based on current estimates, the window could extend as far as September 2025. Whilst preparations for the inspection would be ongoing, the leadership was focussed on ensuring that the day-to-day delivery for the curriculum and support for pupil performance and achievement was the priority, since getting this right would mean a positive Ofsted inspection outcome. Part of the readiness was to utilise periodic external reviews of College performance. The College had commissioned the Baker Dearing Trust (BDT) to undertake a developmental review, which was completed in January 2024. The review was led by an experienced Ofsted Inspector. The report was awaited, although the verbal feedback provided at the end of the review was positive, particularly around behaviour and curriculum. It was anticipated that the report would provide useful advice and guidance on the next steps that could be taken around pedagogy (e.g. targeted questions for learners at different learners) and opportunities to enhance the pupil experience further.  
WC noted that the Principal’s report to the LGB was now being used as a key document to support staff (and governors) with their general Ofsted preparedness since the report contained the latest performance data for the College as well as the progress being made against the school improvement priorities. A Governor **queried** whether the delay in Ofsted inspection would have a detrimental impact on pupil or staff recruitment. WC confirmed this was not the case, since the UTC was currently graded “good”. There was further recognised through a number of recent strong teaching staff appointments plus the increase in Yr10 and Yr12 pupil applications as noted elsewhere in the agenda. WC noted that recent new staff appointments suggested that staff were actively choosing the UTC as a place to work and progress their careers.  
A governor **challenged** how to ensure that staff remain Ofsted prepared and on message. WC noted that the work done to refresh, promote and communicate the UTC’s mission, vision and values was helpful. The visibility of these around the college on posters and walls provided a daily reminder. In addition, the leadership had introduced more structures management and staff meetings, particularly for SLT and Middle

Team leaders, where the focus was placed on the school improvement priorities, and any new operational initiatives that were embarked upon were clearly linked to the SIP. WC also noted that the use of external QA provided another triangulation. This included Trust Termly Challenge meetings with the CEO and DCEO, Trust commissioned termly QA visits undertaken by a current Ofsted inspector, Trust-led thematic reviews, and the dedicated consultancy support for the leadership from an experienced CEO.

4. College Improvement Priorities (SIP): Progress against these was included in the Principals' report (pages 4-11) and noted.

#### Education

5. Behaviour: The Principal's report provided latest statistical data on behaviour, bullying and exclusions. Governors noted that the data showed a significant drop in the number of recorded negative incidents compared with the previous year, and **challenged** whether this was accurate. WC confirmed that there was marked improvement in pupil behaviour within the College. This was a consequence of staff working hard with pupils to outline expectations and implement the behaviour policy in a consistent manner. WC noted that the internal inclusion unit was operating well and that over the past three weeks there had been a further noticeable drop in the demand or need to use it.  
The Principal noted that one permanent exclusion had been made. This was the first PEx administered in the last 4 years, which again reflected the College's commitment to supporting its pupils and seeking to ensure that pupils leave with positive outcomes that can improve life chances, even where these outcomes are associated with skills rather than academic qualifications. WC noted that there were six students (3x Yr10 and 3x Yr11) where additional interventions were taking place to mitigate the risk of suspension or exclusion.  
Governors **challenged** what had been done to secure this overall improvement. WC noted a combination of interventions that included enhanced and effective pastoral support, multiple pupil-meetings, occasional use of temporarily-reduced timetables, counselling support and regular pupil check in meetings for higher-risk pupils. WC highlighted that a more strategic issue was ensuring that there was fair admission applied to the UTC. The Trust CEO was working with WC and others to secure this, part of which also included the work done to consult on a revision to the PAN. Governors noted and thanked the CEO for support provided to WC.
6. Attendance & Punctuality: The Principal's report provided the latest attendance figures with data provided by year group and also by pupil characteristics (PP, SEN, EHCP) with comparison also available for 21/22 and 22/23. The report also included mean and median values to reflect that the UTC had a relatively small cohort so individual pupils could have disproportionate impact on statistical values. The year-to-date headline rate of 86.8% was below the national average of 92.3%. Governors **challenged** and **explored** why this was the case and what action was being taken to improve attendance rates. New process had been introduced for medical-related absences, which would require evidence of illness and a pastoral interview upon return to school. The arrangements had resulted in 44 pupils receiving attendance and punctuality letters, the impact of which was now starting to show an improved attendance pattern across these pupils. Punctuality was proving more difficult to improve. WC noted that parental support to address this appeared to be lacking. A governor noted that poor punctuality did not reflect the "industry ready" ethos of the school. **Governors requested** that an impact report on the actions taken be provided at the next meeting.  
**[Action WC 27/03/24]**
7. Safeguarding: Governors noted the latest data on safeguarding. There had been no referrals to the LADO. Additional capacity in the safeguarding team resulting from another member of pastoral team completing DSL training was noted. The feedback from student survey where 88% of students felt safe most of the time was also noted.
8. Progress and Attainment: The Principal's report contained a detailed breakdown of student progress and attainment for KS4 and KS5. The tabular breakdown provided performance by cohort and pupil

characteristics. It was confirmed that baseline projections are undertaken on all pupils upon entry at KS4 to enable individual pupil progress to be monitored. The progress data for Yr 11 was based on baseline projections taken from Sept 2022. The current data suggested that Yr 11 pupils were performing above their projected grade, however, these projections were below sector averages. Whilst the mean SAS for science was 96.9 there was further lag with Maths (90.4) and English (85.0). Staff were seeking to address these lags with a range of interventions. This included small group interventions led by members of SLT during tutor time. Responses from pupils were positive. Whilst Engineering Manufacturing outcomes were showing improvements on the previous year outcomes [currently 11 percentage points higher], at 36% these still needed to improve further. It was anticipated that a 50% P2+ pass-rate could be achieved by the cohort. Governors **noted** the pupil performance projects for 4+, 5+ and 7+ outcomes, although **challenged** the Principal and asked for further detail on the pupil projections for grades below 4. The Principal confirmed that whilst this data was not available in the papers, the SLT and staff were using this data operationally to identify and tailor interventions to individual pupils. It was also noted that, due to the cohort size, the performance of an individual pupil could result in a marked percentage change. Governors also **challenged** how reliable the "Working at Grade" (WAG) were and how their accuracy was validated. The Principal confirmed that WAGs were derived from (more rigorous) mock assessment examination outcomes plus summative assessment outcomes. The SLT also worked closely with curriculum leaders to challenge and validate the projections.

KS5 outcomes were projecting a positive set of outcomes for the three pathways within the cohort. It was **noted** that the T-level cohort was only 7 pupils, so was liable to large percentage point swings. However, the focus was to continue to increase the number of pupils able to secure an outcome of at least "Merit".

9. Quality of Education: The Principal's report on this item was received. Governors note the impact statements contained within the report. Governors also noted the positive feedback provided by pupils via the student voice panels.
10. SEND & PP: Governors noted the number and distribution by cohort of SEND and Pupil Premium (PP) across the College. The Principal's report also highlighted the range of support that was being provided to both pupils and staff. The impact arising from the Trust SEND lead working with the SENDCO was summarised in the report. Learning walks had provided an opportunity to verify the ongoing impact. Governors were also updated on the deployment of PP premium funding, which had included financial support provided for uniform, trips and revisions guides. The College was also continuing to utilise the National Tutoring Programme to support pupil learning, and whilst the funding available from the programme was declining from 80% to 50% funding, the College planned to continue on supporting the activities to ensure that the impact from these activities (especially in relation to reading, literacy and oracy) continued.
11. Literacy & Reading: The Principal's report on this item was received. Governors **noted** earlier the improvement in reading and literacy remained a significant challenge. A tiered approach was currently being taken with pupils. A universal support package was provided to all pupils whose reading was below their chronological age and this was supplemented with targeted interventions based on whether a pupil had a reading age between 3-5 years below or more than 5 years below chronological age. Governors were provided with a number of examples where there was positive impact on the individual pupil arising from the interventions. In one case a pupil had progressed their reading age from 12-17 and another from 12 to 16 years during the autumn term, whilst others had progressed 7 months in the 12 week term.
12. Employer Engagement (EE): A summary table was provided in the Principal's report. EE continued to go from strength to strength. Mr Ferguson was continuing to engage local employers to develop existing links and create new ones that will provide work-based learning opportunities, and curriculum projects, particularly to respond to the expected increase in T-level students. Feedback suggested that the profile and reputation of the UTC was continuing to be enhanced.

**13. Admissions, PAN and Pupil Numbers:** The Principal confirmed that the consultation on the PAN (for 2025 entry onwards) had been undertaken. The results (a copy of which was provided to governors via governorhub) were overwhelmingly supportive (91%) of the proposed change to reduce the PAN from 2025. The Board **formally adopted** the proposal to revise the PAN for Yr10 intake to reduce from 200 to 125 and Yr12 from 200 to 75. **[Action WC. To work with the Trust to implement the revisions to PAN 2025 entry]**

The Principal reported that an emergency reduction to PAN for 2024 entry was also being sought. The Trust CEO was supporting WC with this work, and the consultation response would be used as evidence to support the application for this immediate change.

The Board **confirmed** that admission policy and procedures (previous considered in November 2023) should reflect the changes to PAN.

As noted earlier, The Trust CEO was supporting the Principal to ensure that admission, and in particular in-year admissions to the UTC was fair. Governors **requested** to receive a progress update at a future meeting.

Applications received for 2024 entry were higher than in previous years. For Yr10, 68 applications had been received (cf 30 in 2023) whilst there had been 78 for Yr12 entry, with more still expected to be received. Demand for T-level places was driving this increase. The SLT was seeking to convert these to around 75 Yr12 starters, studying either T-levels or BTEC programmes.

#### Welfare

**14. Staffing Update -Welfare and Wellbeing:** WC provided a confidential update on the latest round of staff requirement. The UTC had now developed a positive reputation as a place to work with evidence of staff making proactive choice to apply and select the UTC as their destination to teach. Nevertheless, there still remain some subject areas including maths and English where recruitment remained challenging, although this was consistent with the national pattern. The Principal also reported no current concerns with staff welfare or absenteeism.

#### Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

**15. Stakeholder Engagement – Parents/Carers:** Nothing further to note.

**16. Stakeholder Engagement- Wider Community:** Engagement with local employers continued to provide opportunities to support pupil education and offer places for T-level students. This would continue further as pupil demand for T-level places increases. The Principal’s report included a detailed breakdown of the employers who were now delivering work-based learning opportunities, project opportunities, career guidance and aspirational insights through the weekly assemblies and occasional workshops.

**17. Communication– To Trust:** Governors noted the ongoing work to promote the UTC (and Trust) with local employers, the increased profile of the Trust and UTC with the Baker Dearing Trust that has been associated with positive engagement from government officials and politicians.

**18. Communication – From Trust:** AH reported that an additional Staffordshire-based primary school had joined the Trust on 01 Jan 2024.

**19. AOB:** None

**Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 27 March 2024 at 4:30pm**

**Meeting Closed at 18:00**

Minutes approved: .....

Date:.....