

Date: Tuesday 5th October 2023 at 4:30pm.

Present:

Mrs M. Massey – Chair
Mrs H. Pate (HP)
Mr A. Middleton (MA)
Miss L. Hodgkison (LH)
Mr S. Lockett (SL)

Absent:

Mr P. Howell (PH), Mrs E. Humphries (EH),
Mr S. Lockett (SL)

In Attendance:

Mrs E. Abberley – Assistant Headteacher (EA)
Mrs J. MacKreth-Aylett – Deputy Headteacher (JMA)
Mr J. Newham – Assistant Headteacher (JN)
Mrs H. Holland – SENCo (HH)
Mrs E. Leftwick – Assistant Headteacher (EL)
Ms A. Brooks – Assistant Headteacher (AB)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Administration

- The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received from PH, EH and SL and accepted and the meeting was quorate. There were no Declarations of Interest.
Unless otherwise stated, all papers and policies were uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting.
- The Minutes of the TOA LGB meeting held on 4th July 2023 , **were approved**. Matters Arising – Paper: TOA Matters Arising Log, was **received** and updated therein.
- Membership and Effectiveness **It was reported that** Appointed Governor Mr D. Bull had resigned and there are therefore 2 Appointed Governor vacancies on the LGB. Recommendations to fill those vacancies to the Clerk/Chair/Headteacher please. There is 1 person who it is hoped can potentially fill one of the vacancies, whose appointment is in process.
- Annual Tasks MM was unanimously voted as Chair for the TOA LGB for the academic year 2023/2024 and her appointment will be Recommended to the TLA Board of Trustees (the Board).

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

- Annual Task – Vision, Values and Ethos **It was reported that** the vision, values and ethos need to be consolidated and embedded and in answer to a **Governor challenge, it was confirmed that all staff are aware of and can articulate the school vision, values and ethos**.
- Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) Paper 6 TOA SEF 2023 to 2024 was **received**. The Chair congratulated the Headteacher on a well thought-out SEF, which is very positive and reads as indicating the school could be judged Good by Ofsted. The Trust school review carried out in July provided positive and honest outcomes and the school is showing significant improvement.
Challenge: Governors asked why a review of English had not been carried out in July. It was reported that a ‘litmus’ test of the school’s strongest subjects had been carried out prior to that review, to ensure it focused on the right subjects. English was reviewed at the most recent Trust review and the report from that will be provided to the Chair shortly, which sets out clear areas for development. An action plan has already been prepared and the school can see further ways to move forward. **The Headteacher reported** feeling the school shows a tangible improvement week on week.
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) Paper 7 TOA SIP 2023-24 was **received**. **The Chair noted that** the SIP shows strong alignment with the priorities in the SEF.

Education

Paper 8 to 15 and 21 LGB Report (5 Oct 23) was received.

- Admissions and Pupil Numbers **It was reported that** as at today’s date, the school has 617 students, a significant increase year on year, which is believed to be a result of the school’s continuing improving reputation in the community. Governors were very pleased with the increasing numbers and congratulated staff on this. **The Clerk reported that** the Board, in their meeting earlier that day, had asked the Clerk to pass on their congratulations on the improving reputation and the resulting increasing figures. **The Chair noted** in particular, the community buzz and great work done with primary schools, particularly

stakeholder engagement with those primaries which might never previously have considered feeding to TOA. Positive anecdotes were shared about parents who are now keen for their children to come to TOA and about TOA students who speak very positively about the school and enjoy attending. There are also far fewer negative social media postings.

9. Attendance It was noted that attendance is above the national average but:

Challenge: The Chair noted a significant increase in persistent absence (PA) between Spring and Autumn last academic year and asked why. It was reported that at that time, pastoral leaders' numbers were fewer and the school had lost its Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-Ordinator (SENCo) and Business Manager. In-year admissions of challenging students also affected the absence figures and led to a number of suspensions.

Governors noted that SEND and Pupil Premium (PP) attendance had improved this term, indicating that the school's provisions are right, so Governors will be interested to observe whether those figures remain stable over the coming months. **The Headteacher reported that** the figures are currently fairly stable; PP is at the national average and whilst small cohorts result in a small number of absent students having a significant effect on the figures, attendance is improving.

10. Behaviour **The Chair was pleased to note that** suspensions and permanent exclusions have decreased in number **and noted that** a number of those who were permanently excluded were in-year admissions and no longer in mainstream education.

In response to the Chair challenge, asking staff what their feeling was about behaviour, there was general consensus that the school has been transformed and this term has seen the best start to the school year for many years. It is rare for students to be out of lessons, students are respectful and have positive attitudes and even the most challenging students generally have a positive mindset. Staff shared positive anecdotes of student behaviour and the Chair congratulated staff on the improvements.

Challenge: Governors asked how praise and rewards are received and asked whether the students who just get on with their work, are recognised. It was reported that postcards of teacher praise are sent home and student feedback has shown that these are valued by all students, but in particular are valued by hard to reach students. There is a culture of positivity, praise and rewards and positive behaviour points are given out in every lesson. **The Parent Governor present confirmed that** parents and students are aware of the positivity and praise culture.

Challenge: Governors asked whether praise points and SatchelOne notifications are being used consistently by all teachers. It was reported that a staff presentation is planned, to remind staff about the SatchelOne notifications, so consistency of use will be analysed and discussed.

11. Curriculum – Progress and Attainment, Pupil Premium (PP) Paper SLT-LGB GCSE 2023 Analysis final copy **TOA was received.** The Chair congratulated staff on the results and thanked the Headteacher for the helpful analysis. **The Chair noted that** the school had correctly anticipated PP improvements and was delighted with P8, overall trends and improvements on 2019 results.

Challenge: Governors asked how the school is addressing the discrepancy between predicted and actuals. It was reported that papers will be marked externally and by TOA teachers and results compared, as well as gathering detailed feedback for each student.

Challenge: Governors asked how the school is supporting the more able students. It was reported that the school will shortly begin the process of identifying those students and CPD is focusing on ensuring all staff are teaching to the top. After school Maths club will be offered to the lower years' more able after half term. The Chair was keen for the school to make such clubs vigorous and challenging, but also fun with inspirational teaching, to encourage attendance and learning. Targets are aspirational; the school has now moved to Fischer Family Trust (FFT)20.

12. Quality of Education Teaching and Learning (T&L), Literacy, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Challenge: Governors asked when literacy data will be available and whether more literacy trained staff are needed. It was reported that data will be available next week and staff training begins in November.

Challenge: Governors were keen to encourage oracy skills' support for students with English as an Additional Language (EAL students). It was reported that all EAL students have been baseline retested and interventions have begun. Teachers are supported in developing their understanding of how to support EAL students and a new reading package has been put in place.

Challenge: Governors noted that every student has a student passport and that every teacher has a copy of those passports and asked how the school knows the teachers are utilising those passports and whether they are doing so consistently. It was reported that there is a quality assurance system which asks for confirmation of evidence of seeing it in practice. Staff are supported in their understanding of how to use the passports.

The Chair noted and praised the school on the ADHD and autism awareness sessions provided to staff and students and were pleased to note the very positive student response to those sessions.

Welfare

13. Safeguarding The Chair noted the safeguarding peaks in CPOMS but **reported that** overall, there is confidence that this is heading in the right direction. **It was confirmed that** the initiatives promoting strong female role-models will run alongside Positive Masculinity initiatives. New pastoral leads are being trained and are doing well.

14. Welfare and Wellbeing – Students **Challenge: Governors asked about the plans for canvassing student views. It was reported that** the questions asked of students in the last survey will be asked again of a control group, tomorrow.

15. Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff **It was reported that** staff do the Trust wellbeing survey twice a year and results are shared with schools, by the Trust Nov/Dec. TOA has been the highest scoring Trust school for 2 years, in terms of staff wellbeing. **The Headteacher reported that** the feeling amongst staff is one of positivity and the Chair agreed that the whole school is a positive environment. The Chair was pleased to note the many site improvements, including the student toilets and new display boards around the school.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

16. Local Policy Approval: The following Policies were **Approved:**

16a. Safeguarding Policy

16b. Admissions Policy

16c. Early Careers Teachers (ECTs) Policy

16d. Careers Policy

16e. Sex and Relationships Policy

The SEND Policy is being reviewed and the SEND Report will be put onto the school website shortly. The PP strategy template is due from the DfE shortly when the school’s strategy will be updated.

17. Stakeholder Engagement – Parents/Carers **It was reported that** there were only 17 responses to the Ofsted parent view survey, but ideas for increased interaction are being considered. The school is looking at the time of day of parents’ evenings to check they work for parents/carers and provides support if parents/carers don’t want to/cannot book parents’ evening appointments online.

18. Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community **It was reported that** the school is engaging with 4 additional local primary schools.

19. Communication – To Trust Executive, Trust Board and Education, Standards and Performance Committee (ESP) Nothing to report.

20. Communication – From Trust Executive, Trust Board and Education, Standards and Performance Committee (ESP) Nothing to report.

21. AOB The Chair congratulated the school on recent appointments and the speed at which improvements are being achieved.

Next Meeting : Thursday 14th December 2023 at 4:30pm

Meeting Closed 6:00pm

Signed.....Date.....