

Minutes of meeting

SIS-Committee Meeting

Date:	12 November 2020	Time:	11:00
Location:	Teams Meeting	Clerk:	Emma Pemberton

Attendees:

Trustees

Jan Renou - Member of Board of Trustees and Chair of meeting)

Paul Hann - Chairman of Board of Trustees

Ian Brookman - Member of the Board of Trustees

Peter Murray - Founding Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Karen Bramwell - Member of the Board of Trustees

In attendance:

Rob Pritchard - National Director of Education

Tuesday Humby - National Director of Teaching and Training

Nick Hudson - Chief Executive Officer

Diane Murray - Ormiston Trust

	Item	Action	Initials
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and acknowledged no apologies had been received.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Karen Bramwell as new member of the SIS-Committee.</p>		
2.	<p>Review of August 2020 Minutes</p> <p>August 2020 minutes reviewed and acknowledged as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>Actions carried forward have been completed and closed.</p>		
3.	<p>September Opening</p> <p>The National Director of Education provided an overview of OATs activities since schools reopened in September.</p> <p>The geographic spread of OATs academies has resulted in a diverse experience of challenges faced by Covid-19. The initial outbreak in September was mainly experienced in the West Midlands and North West but since half-term we have seen cases increase</p>		

<p>in the East and South. Some academies have been hard hit by the virus, whereas others are only just feeling the effects of the virus.</p> <p>OAT is working hard to maintain a balance between business as usual; working on development activities, and looking forward to the future, but this is difficult due to the challenging times we all find ourselves whilst dealing with Covid-19.</p> <p>Structure</p> <p>The National Director for Education overviewed the roles of both School Improvement, and Teaching and Training, and how both elements work collaboratively to support academies across the Trust to address school improvement, curriculum, and training.</p> <p>During 2019 Lead Practitioners in academies reported directly to Regional Directors but this has since changed, and the role now reports directly to the National Director of Teaching and Training to maximise effectiveness and reach.</p> <p>Regional Directors can identify and request support for academies and monitor the effectiveness and quality of support delivered, helping to providing a multi-discipline approach to school improvement.</p> <p>This process is working well as there are checks and feedback obtained across both elements of School Improvement and Teaching and Learning to ensure the support provided works effectively to address the needs of academies.</p> <p>The Trustees asked for clarification on intensive support?</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that the deployment of Lead Practitioners and Executive Principals help provide intense support to academies. Their effectiveness is monitored by Regional Directors, which can then be reviewed by both the National Director for Education and National Director for Teaching and Training.</p> <p>Covid</p> <p>Following the return to school in September OAT has seen a rapid increase in cases. Just prior to half-term 1775 students had been affected either through testing positive or self-isolation. Since half-term OAT has seen a significant increase in cases resulting in a total of 4627 isolations experienced since September.</p> <p>The South and East regions have seen an increase in numbers, which correlates to the national experience of Covid-19 moving across the country.</p> <p>An overview was provided for areas experiencing a higher rate of covid, and what actions are taking place to help mitigate the impact of the virus, including deep cleaning, self-isolating of staff and/or students, closure of year groups or schools where necessary. OAT is working closely with local authorities and Public Health England to ensure that any concerns are thoroughly addressed and to ensure that local protocols are being adhered to and risk assessments followed.</p> <p>The Trustees asked if best practice is being shared where academies experience cases.</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that experts are investigating any localised outbreaks and will provide a summary of recommendations. These will be sent out to other academies.</p> <p>A discussion took place overviewing the impact of Covid across the Trust and for the need for schools to remain vigilant to maintaining protocols to mitigate the risk of transmission as much as possible.</p> <p>Attendance</p>		
---	--	--

	<p>Figures for attendance confirm that actual attendance falls short of current targets for both attendance and persistent absence, with an increase in absenteeism for students who are well.</p> <p>Exclusions</p> <p>Figures suggest a mixed picture, but OAT is working hard to keep exclusions to a minimum. Behaviour has improved across the Trust mainly due to protocols and social distancing requirements since the start of September.</p> <p>Unseen Children & Strategies to encourage attendance</p> <p>OAT has been working to identify students who failed to return to school in September; the reasons for absence and what steps are being taken to resolve these instances.</p> <p>Academies working proactively to address this using a vast variety of methods to encourage and support children in a return to school. Numbers of students absent from school are decreasing as a result and is continuing to improve as the term progresses.</p> <p>The Trustees asked if OAT is evidencing actions that are supported by external audit.</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed activities are recorded. OAT is also ensuring that correct absence code is recorded.</p> <p>The Trustees queried 'elective home education' and whether the high rates for this category are reflective of a national trend or something else?</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that this is a trend across the country. As a Trust we are noting that absence in this area is declining and OAT are hopeful that this will continue to improve.</p> <p>GL Assessment</p> <p>An overview was provided on GL Assessment, employed to overcome the lack of KS3 assessments to provide a baseline for student population within OAT. The scope of testing was explained, including how assessments can help sculpt teaching strategies to bridge gaps in learning.</p> <p>Although GL Assessment does not cater for primary students, OAT is using PiXL to identify learning requirements and to help implement therapies to fill gaps in learning.</p> <p>The Trustees asked if this new method is better</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that this method is working well as it allows OAT to collect data centrally to assess. OAT can then formulate how to apply learning from a national, regional, and school level.</p>		
<p>4.</p>	<p>Re-alignment of Strategy Targets / 2021 Targets</p> <p>The 5-year strategy targets were set in 2018 and contained the option to review targets at a later date. The revised paper has since been placed before the Board, but a request was received to table this at the SIS-Committee meeting before proceeding.</p> <p>The National Director for Education provided context to support the recommendations within the paper, which also took on board feedback from the Board around Primary/Key Stage 1 targets, and addressed Post-16 provision to enable the Trust to provide a more holistic approach for students.</p>		

	<p>2021 Targets</p> <p>The National Director for Education also provided an overview of the 2021 target process explaining that targets have been set, taking into consideration a number of unknown parameters potentially facing academies within the current Covid-19 environment.</p> <p>The Trustees asked what advice is being given to academies on tests and exams, across core subjects, next summer?</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that some Key Stage 4 and 5 testing is taking place as normal although the timing of these may be delayed in order to allow academies time to cover gaps in learning.</p> <p>The Trustees support the work being undertaken to realign the 5-year strategy and 2021 targets.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>Deployment of Lead Practitioners</p> <p>The National Director of Teaching and Training confirmed that Lead Practitioners, formerly known as Regional Lead Practitioners, are an integral part of the school improvement strategy moving forward and provided a presentation to Trustees to explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Lead Practitioners are deployed across the Trust; • How their work is set and evaluated; and • OATs strategy for the future. <p>At present there are 11 Lead Practitioners working in both full-time / part-time roles across the Trust where need is greatest; Working to strict assignment briefs to ensure that the expectations of work are managed, activities completed can be tracked, and outcomes monitored closely via Progress Boards. Any concerns can then be highlighted and remedial actions overseen, by the National Director for Teaching and Training.</p> <p>In addition to academy assignments, Lead Practitioners will also be involved in supporting a National Assignment brief one day per week to help support the wider OAT community. The subject for these will be determined via discussions in regional forums, and through collaboration with Regional Directors and the National Director of Education. These will focus on the subjects of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and curriculum. Materials will be accessible centrally and support can be booked with Lead Practitioners.</p> <p>An example of this is the Bridging Curriculum that was developed earlier this year. The work was well received and the reaction from the teaching staff was positive.</p> <p>The Trustees acknowledged that the strategy provides a good basis but are there other structures beneath this?</p> <p>The National Director for Teaching and Training confirmed that OAT currently has 14 subject network development meetings taking place across the OAT community that support and help educate subject leads within academies. This provides a platform to share best practice, share concerns and help improve quality of teaching moving forward.</p> <p>The Chief Executive Offer confirmed that the relationship between the Lead Practitioners and national subject leads has developed well since its inception.</p> <p>Internal recruitment opportunities and succession for Lead Practitioners was discussed, including the Aspiring Leaders programme, which currently has 100 members.</p>		

	<p>The Trustees asked is there is data available to validate how effective this role is.</p> <p>The National Director for Teaching and Training confirmed that there is no data available as yet due these being relatively new roles.</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that Lead Practitioners are one element of OATs approach to improve the quality of teaching staff. OAT is using the SKIIT to recruit the best teachers; providing CPD training to improve the knowledge to existing staff, and support from Lead Practitioners in providing coaching, mentoring and intervention work.</p> <p>The geographic deployment of Lead Practitioners and the strategic development of the role was discussed with the National Director for Education confirming that plans are to expand provision from 11 Lead Practitioners to 36 so that OAT can support more schools across the Trust and ensure that provision is more in line with other MATs nationally.</p> <p>The Trustees asked if there was provision for primary?</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that there are two SEND Lead Practitioners and a PiXL Primary Lead.</p> <p>The Trustees asked for more information on how the increase numbers of Lead Practitioners would be managed if going from 11 to 36.</p> <p>The National Director for Teaching and Training confirmed that Senior Lead Practitioners would be engaged to provide support.</p> <p>The Trustees thanked The National Director for Teaching and Training for the update and look forward to hearing further developments.</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p>Update on Alternative Provision</p> <p>The National Director for Education provided an update on plans to address alternative provision across the Trust. Outlining that the provision is needed to develop support to students requiring short term intensive support therapy to resolve behavioral issues whilst continuing to be taught the full curriculum. The hope is to support children back into the school environment and avoid the need for permanent exclusion.</p> <p>By providing short-term intensive therapy to students it is hoped that the number of children moving to permanent exclusion will reduce over time. The quality of provision will be the differentiator and OAT will draw on staff specialising in challenging behaviour to help coordinate activities and deliver the curriculum.</p> <p>The National Director for Teaching and Training confirmed that additional training will also be available to staff via internal resources.</p> <p>Trustees suggested working with parents to help maximise the impact of the support being provided to students.</p> <p>The geographical challenges faced in identifying suitable premises was overviewed and updated recommendations outlined to move the initiative forward in Stoke where the Estates Team will work in partnership with the Local Authority to identify premises to serve three local academies.</p> <p>Staffing, safeguarding, costs and security were discussed in greater detail.</p>		

	<p>The Trustees asked for more information on how the initiative would impact on budgets.</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that a business plan will be developed to support the initiative but confirmed that provision will be funded internally without the need for external support from the Local Authority.</p> <p>The Trustees thanked the National Director for Education for providing the update and would welcome a further update once more information is available for provision, staffing, costs, and security.</p>		
<p>7.</p>	<p>Post-16</p> <p>The National Director for Education provided historical context for any members not present at previous meetings to discuss post-16 provision within OAT. The subject was initially raised in Spring 2020 and has since been open to further investigation to establish viability and engage with academies to provide business plans to support continued provision.</p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that paper has been tabled at this committee in order to address the educational impact of suggested recommendations. The paper will also be presented to the Finance and Capital Committee for review.</p> <p>The findings from investigations into current provision along with sixth form business plans have been shared with Trustees. The meeting considered the benefits and possible risks involved in a range of scenarios. In depth discussion and analysis of the issues brought agreement on a way forward.</p> <p>The Trustees agreed with the recommendation to continue sixth form provision at two centres after reviewing the evidence and business plans submitted, including any conditions applied.</p> <p>On the matter of the third OAT sixth form centre, the Trustees were unable to find evidence to support the continuation of provision either from data supplied from OAT or from the business case submitted by the centre. Arguments for and against the closure were discussed at length but Trustees acknowledged that, although the business case was strong in terms of vision, it failed to provide any evidence or data to illustrate how provision could be improved or account for the additional number of students that would be required to make the offering viable. Trustees understand the passion of the academy for its sixth form but it is essential to ensure that the options available, and quality of provision, meets the best interest of students, who should be first and foremost in decision making.</p> <p>The Trustees therefore recommend that the centre cease accepting students whilst it works over the next two to three years to re-evaluate its sixth form provision and improve its curriculum offering; working with the local authority and education providers to build effective partnerships in order to enhance provision and encourage student take-up.</p> <p>In addition, the centre will be subject to a partial or full rebuild. It is suggested that focus be placed on completing any necessary work before reopening, and also to focus on KS3 and KS4 provision to help improve curriculum delivery, which in turn may help improve number of students wishing to engage at sixth-form level.</p> <p>By taking this step the academy can then work closely with OAT to build an effective plan to revitalise sixth form provision. Once areas of concern have been addressed and a proper plan in place the sixth form could look to reopen.</p>		

	<p>The Trustees agreed with the recommendation to maintain sixth form provision in two academies.</p> <p>The Trustees would like to amend the third recommendation. They would like to reject the request to close the centre and would like this recommendation altered so that the centre is ‘mothballed’. This will mean the centre does not accept any future cohort whilst building work is completed and the sixth-form provision is reviewed, revitalised and relaunched in two to three years’ time.</p>		
<p>8.</p>	<p>Risk Sheets</p> <p>IB sent apologies as unable to rejoin the meeting for the final section of the meeting.</p> <p>The National Director for Education provided an overview of academies identified as being of high risk, which contained feedback obtained from Regional Directors. An overview of each academy was relayed and discussed at length with Trustees.</p> <p>Questions</p> <p>The Trustees asked what support could be provided across all academies to help support schools who are at risk to help improve performance.</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that resources have improved over the past 12 months and leadership provision is robust. In addition to Regional Directors, a Director of Primary and SEND was engaged in 2019 who has been proactive in driving forward best practice, aligning curriculum, and providing commonality across the board.</p> <p>The role of Lead Practitioners (formerly Lead Practitioners) was also discussed in helping to improve quality of teaching.</p> <p>The Director for Teaching and Training confirmed that support from OAT has shifted significantly over the past two years. The School Improvement strategy has been updated and these changes will start to see positive results in coming years. OATs training capability has also improved significantly and there are a number of training options available for teachers, principals, and those in leadership roles. An example of this is ‘Into leadership’ which has been in place for a year.</p> <p>The Chief Executive Offer confirmed that the strength of our leadership has evolved and is far more robust as a result.</p> <p>The Trustees asked if OAT has all the resources it needs?</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that OAT needs more resources in order to cater for the needs across the Trust. At present time there are 11 Lead Practitioners and two Executive Principals. However, there is a plan to create more roles in this area and it is hoped that when budgets are repurposed, OAT will receive the support of Trustees to help drive forward these changes.</p> <p>The Trustees questioned what support is available to principals who have finished their induction year support with OAT?</p> <p>The National Director for Education confirmed that resource goes where it is needed the most which includes new leadership support. Support needs to be catered to the needs to the whole principal population as some experienced principals will experience times of</p>		

	challenge and these can be supported through structured line management processes in place.		
9.	<p>A.O.B.</p> <p>SIS-Committee Meeting - August 2021 The August 2021 meeting is currently scheduled to take place 19 August 2020 – All agreed to move the date to 27 August 2020 to be in line with the updated GCSE results date.</p> <p>EP to amend the date of the meeting to 27 August 2020.</p> <p>SIS-Committee Meeting – Timings The Trustees suggested amending the timings of the meeting from 11am to 9.30am. All agreed to amend.</p> <p>EP to amend the timings of future meetings from 11:30am to 9:30am start.</p>		<p>EP</p> <p>EP</p>
10.	The next School Improvement Sub-committee meeting will be held 11 February 2021 via Teams.		