



Minutes of the Colchester Academy ARC Meeting

Date of meeting	July 11th 2017	
Venue	Colchester Academy	
Members present	Heidi Hoskin (Chair) Linda Bamford Fiona Pierson	Director of Primary Education Director of Secondary Education Principal
Apologies	No	
Absent	No	
In attendance	Jane March – PA to CEO Mary Mckeeman (observing) Sam Elms – Clerk	

The meeting met its quorum

Areas of challenge during discussions indicated in bold text.

Agenda Item 1	Welcome & apologies
Discussion	Heidi welcomed Fiona Pierson to the meeting, introduced herself as Director of Primary Education and explained that she would be chairing the meeting. She asked everyone around the table to introduce themselves. There were no apologies.

Agenda Item 2	Declaration of interests
Discussion	There were none

Agenda Item 3	Minutes of the last meeting
Discussion	Heidi explained that the Minutes of the previous meeting were not circulated with the paperwork, but she was in the process of getting them, so that they could be signed.
Decision	

Agenda Item 4	Matters arising		
Discussion	Dealt with under the Update from previous ARC meeting.		
Action	What:	Who:	By when:

Agenda Item 5	Update on actions from previous ARC meeting		
Discussion	<p>JR to meet with Principals across the Trust to agree a common approach to assessments.</p> <p>Linda explained that the four Principals met at the PiXL conference and agreed a reporting mechanism. There was a second discussion at the Principals' Workshop. Fiona flagged her concerns around securing a common approach to the collection of data and delivering what the Trust wants in terms of access to the data, because the decision at conference was different from what was discussed at the workshop. There was a discussion about a MAT level approach to assessment. Fiona asked whether the Trust was going to force all schools to use "Go for Schools"? Linda said the Trust was opting for "Go for Schools" from September 2018.</p> <p>Year 7 numbers</p> <p>Fiona reported that one of the whole school priorities at the beginning of the year was to increase student numbers. She explained that 157 students came to induction, which is excellent compared to 123 last year. There are only 112 in the outgoing Year 11. Fiona raised the issue of funding, explaining that the Academy is only funded for 654 pupils.</p> <p>Action: Katie Mason to contact the EFA to investigate drawing down additional funding.</p> <p>JR to meet with the Academy on 23 March 2017</p> <p>Fiona reported that this meeting didn't happen because of problems with the date. Mike Wilson came in to carry out observations and reported his findings, which echoed Fiona's.</p> <p>Pupil Premium and Key Stage 3 issues</p> <p>Fiona explained that she was keen to benchmark her 'flight path' and had approached two local schools to ask if they would be willing to share theirs. She said the one she received wasn't much different from her own, but she is now happy she has something that's fit for purpose. She said that it needs monitoring closely and there is a need to work together as a Trust.</p> <p>Pupil Premium will be picked up in the RIG.</p> <p>Drive Team – 2 members to be appointed</p> <p>Fiona explained that she has recruited one parent and one non-teaching member of staff. Mike Wilson has agreed to be a member of the team with a focus on safeguarding. The meetings dates are scheduled.</p>		

Action	<p>What: Make sure all schools are operating “Go for Schools” effectively and “Go for Schools” is in place at MAT level.</p> <p>Contact the EFA to investigate drawing down additional funding.</p>	<p>Who: Linda Bamford</p> <p>Katie Mason</p>	<p>By when: September 2018 at the latest.</p> <p>ASAP</p>

Agenda Item 6	Issues raised at RIG meetings
Discussion	<p>SLT Restructuring</p> <p>What is the impact?</p> <p>Fiona explained that it wasn’t the restructured SLT that was causing her concern, but losing the two cover supervisors and having no one to cover lessons from September. She explained that she has a cover budget of £25,000, other than that, she will have to rely on staff goodwill to cover lessons, tighten up on planned absence and reduce the number of staff out on CPD or attending conferences. Fiona made the comment that it was just a case of getting through next year and reviewing it in April for the following year.</p> <p>Linda praised Fiona for eradicating the deficit budget and delivering a balanced budget. Fiona added that it is a <u>realistic</u>, balanced budget. Linda explained that Katie will be monitoring it more regularly, so that money can be moved around.</p> <p>Teaching and Learning issues, following on from the DfE visit and visits to other schools.</p> <p>Why have you included it as an indicator of success?</p> <p>Fiona explained that the two areas of focus were to increase student numbers and improve student outcomes. She explained that they had taken their ‘eye off the ball’ in terms of teaching and learning and the Working Party had created a model full of unrealistic expectations. She explained that they have adopted Moor Valley’s model as it simple and makes more sense.</p> <p>Linda explained that during the visit the DfE had picked up on the inconsistency in marking and variation in understanding levels. Fiona explained that this was identified in Year 10 Science, but it is something that needs to be addressed across the board. She went on to say that there is no systematic approach to Assessment for Learning and teachers are using “their best guess”. She went on to explain that they are planning to join local moderation groups.</p> <p>Linda said that with only 4 secondary schools in the Trust it was more difficult to moderate across the country. She reiterated the DFE’s recommendation that the Academy become part of local networks and recognised that Fiona</p>

already works closely with the local secondary schools. Fiona commented that the staff need to be trained, which is why two members of the English Department attended the AQA Moderator's Course.

Marking

What impact is teacher feedback having to progress children's learning forward? This is about marking children's work in detail once every half term.

What feedback do children get in between?

Fiona explained that it was just the acknowledgement marking in the lesson as per Moor Valley's approach.

Cassandra commented that she thought it wasn't enough. Heidi was concerned that it would be difficult to demonstrate progress if you had to wait six weeks to see it. Linda explained that for Mike at Moor Valley it seems to work very well.

A discussion took place about the importance of being able to demonstrate the impact of learning in books over that time.

Homework is not working well. Talk about that.

Fiona explained that she had no confidence that the homework set supports the end product. This is being addressed.

Staffing

Staff absences are high. Is there a narrative around it?

Fiona explained that a member of staff had been off for two periods of long-term sickness and in May and June when the cover supervisors were made redundant there had been a lot of stress-related sickness.

What is your procedure for reporting illness?

Fiona explained that staff have to telephone and speak to someone, not send an SMS message. From September staff who are sick will have to telephone the admin office.

Have you got insurance in place to cover sickness?

Fiona explained that this had been explored but was not financially viable.

Linda explained that the reason staff have been asked to cover absence is that the Academy is still slightly overstaffed. She explained that Fiona had managed a very difficult situation with Union involvement.

Student Overview

Where have the 13 students that have joined the Academy since January come from?

Fiona explained that they were coming from a combination of local schools and out-of-area schools, but that 13 was unusually high. She went on to explain that normally the peaks coincide with the start of the University term

and the influx of AOL students who come to England with their parents who study at the university for two or three years and then leave again.

Where are you with the creation of an all-through school?

Fiona explained that the Nursery is waiting for the 'legals' to be completed and nothing can be done about adding a primary, until Mary McKeeman meets with the new Regional Schools Commissioner. Note Tim Coulson has resigned and will be replaced in September by a new RSC.

Linda explained that Essex, who need to create extra primary places, were looking to build a new primary school down the road with another Trust, but Fiona offered a cheaper alternative at half the price, which they are duty bound to consider. She said that originally Essex were keen to meet the RSC with the Trust, but have stepped back. She believed this was out of concern for showing a preference for one Trust over another.

Is there anything we can do to move it forward?

Linda explained that the RSC has to support it in order for the Academy to go out to consultation, so the first step is for Mary to secure the RSC's approval.

Fiona explained that the original plan was to be an all-through academy by September 2018, but she was concerned about losing the opportunity to another Trust whilst they dragged their heels.

Action: Linda to follow up with Mary and the RSC.

There was a conversation about developing the school and increasing the roll and whether it would detract from the key focus of ensuring the school achieves a good Ofsted. Linda explained the importance of having a USP to compete against other schools in the area.

Attendance

Fiona explained that end of term 2 figures show attendance to be 95.1%, which is the best in the area. The attendance of Pupil Premium students is improving year on year and is 1% above National average.

Pupil Premium was flagged for the next ARC. Linda asked for Fiona to send the detail around the Pupil Premium plan in advance of the ARC and report on the highlights following student outcomes.

There was mention of Cassandra's involvement, working with Andrew to ensure that the Plan is fit for purpose, particularly with 55% of students eligible for Pupil Premium.

Fiona explained that there is an external Pupil Premium Review taking place during the third week in September.

Quality of Teaching

What is the percentage of good teaching? And the evidence to support it.

Fiona explained that the Quality Assurance around Teaching and Learning is the focus of the first half of the Autumn term and the Challenge Partner Review, which is also focussed on Teaching and Learning is booked for 21 February. She went on to say that she isn't convinced by the data that is generated, but with the newly developed Q&A Framework in place she will be able to monitor and track more efficiently.

Fiona said that currently, she didn't know where her weak teachers were and consequently what the key priorities were for Teaching and Learning or where the gaps were. She went on to say that this impacts on CPD

Action for the next ARC – How the tracking system is evolving and the evidence base that secures it and how it fits with CPD and Performance Management.

How confident are your middle leaders in carrying out observations?

Fiona explained that they have all been trained in lesson observations this year, but she had concerns about the validity of the data as a result of bias and this was something she needed to address.

Heidi referred Fiona to the questions on Teaching and Learning in Section 9 of the Agenda, explaining that they might help her, particularly with staffing.

Safeguarding

How confident are you that this school is secure on Safeguarding?

Fiona explained that she looks at the Single Central Record, looks at Child Protection files on a regular basis and the chronology.

How do you keep them?

Fiona replied that she was keeping them online, password protected and it was effective.

Is the training up-to-date?

Fiona explained that attendance registers are kept for all training, including PREVENT and Safer Recruitment. She explained that an external theatre company came into school to run a series of workshops on topics like FGM.

When was the last Safeguarding audit?

Fiona explained that it was happening now. Linda suggested that Fiona organise an external review of Safeguarding.

When is the Local Authority's Section 175/157 Annual Statutory Return?

Fiona replied that she didn't think that they did one. Linda asked Fiona to check.

There was a discussion about whether Sarah, the Designated Safeguarding Lead already dealt with it. Linda asked Fiona to discuss it with her. She explained the importance of the audit, an action plan associated with it and being able to evidence progress made. It was suggested that Fiona looks at Essex and Suffolk's Statutory returns to gauge the quality.

	It was noted that Nigel Shadow from the Trust is delivering safeguarding training with staff on the last day of term.		
Action	<p>What: Follow up with Mary McKeeman and the RSC about adding a primary.</p> <p>How the tracking system is evolving and the evidence base that secures it and how it fits with CPD and Performance Management.</p> <p>Speak to Sarah about the Local Authority's Section 175/157</p> <p>Send Cornwall's Audit to Fiona.</p>	<p>Who: Linda Bamford</p> <p>Fiona Pierson</p> <p>Fiona Pierson</p> <p>Heidi Hoskin</p>	<p>By when: Before the next ARC</p> <p>Next ARC</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>

Agenda Item 7	Key actions from any recent monitoring visits		
Discussion	<p>DfE Visit</p> <p>Are there any other key issues you would like to raise that haven't been covered?</p> <p>Fiona explained that it was "food for thought" to drive improvements that need to be made. Ofsted are due in December 2017.</p>		
Action	What:	Who:	By when:

Agenda Item 8	Drive Teams		
Discussion	<p>Heidi referred Fiona to the key questions to address with the Drive Team. She explained that it is important that processes are in place, that each member has a key role and responsibility and that a monitoring timetable is in place to enable them to carry out their job, which is to hold the Principal to account.</p> <p>Are there any questions linked to that?</p> <p>Fiona explained that she was struggling to find a Chair and asked for clarification about who can be Chair. Heidi explained that it can't be a member of staff. There was a conversation about whether Mike Wilson could be Chair as he is employed by the Trust. Heidi explained that the Chair must be independent.</p>		

Action	What:	Who:	By when:
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Agenda Item 9	Quality of teaching and Learning		
Discussion	Heidi referred to the key questions under Section 9 of the Agenda, explaining that they are meant to be an aide-mémoire for Fiona to consider when drafting the development plan.		
Action	What:	Who:	By when: