

Governor Lines 3 – October 2017

Once again thank you to those parents/carers who have taken the trouble to respond to items in the previous Governor Lines. Since the last edition, there have been two meetings of the Full Governing Body.

The main issues considered include:

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

The Governors voted Phil Baker to continue as Chair of the Governors and Lisa Garrett as Vice Chair.

2. Review of Examination Results

This year the analysis was complicated as a result of the introduction of the new grading system in a few subjects and also the introduction of new syllabi in some subjects.

The Governors were delighted that our English results this year rose by 12% on 2016 and are now above the national average in terms of 9-4 (the equivalent A*-C). Our Maths results also rose by 4%. In fact, we exceeded in every headline measure from 2016.

It is fair to say, however, that there are still areas of the Academy that need continued work. The Governors were pleased to note that in those areas, Action Plans were already in place to bring about significant improvement.

The Governors noted the amazing amount of work that staff put in before and after school to support our students through the intervention programme. Governors would encourage parents/carers to do everything that they can to encourage their children to attend these sessions.

It was pleasing to note that both Pupil Premium and SEND students improved their performance.

Governors also noted that many of our results were above academies in the Swindon area with similar intakes and, in terms of Progress 8, which again has improved from 2016, we found ourselves roughly in the middle of Swindon schools – certainly not at the bottom.

Governors were pleased to note that a number of students achieved very high grades across the board.

3. Behaviour Policy – “Ready to learn”

Since the implementation of this policy in June and “tweaks” to the system in September, there has been a significant reduction in low-level disruption in lessons. This in turn improves the quality of learning of our students.

Many students have expressed to Governors their appreciation of the improved learning environment. Numbers being excluded from lessons have fallen. Governors were pleased to

note that students who are finding it difficult to conform to expectations are being offered help in this area.

4. Middle Leader Programme

As part of the role of the Governors in monitoring the implementation of the School Development Plan, they have started a programme of inviting Middle Leaders to attend a meeting of the Full Governing Board to give them an opportunity to celebrate their successes along with issues which need resolving to ensure continued progress in their departmental area.

At our last meeting, the Head of Science gave a very in depth analysis of the work of his department. This gave Governors the opportunity to question him on the work of his department.

5. Governor visits to lessons

Governors are required to visit lessons during the course of the year. Each visit will have a particular focus. The next round of visits will be looking at the “Culture for Learning”.

The role of Governors is not to assess the performance of teachers but to assess how well the agreed policies of the Academy are being carried out.

6. Open Evening

Governors thanked the staff for their efforts to improve the quality of our Open Evening. This resulted not only in increased numbers of parents/carers and prospective students attending but in many positive comments being received about what was on offer at The Dorcan Academy.

7. Coaching Model

The Academy seeks to develop the quality of teaching to the highest possible level. To this end, it was reported to Governors that each member of the Senior Leadership team (SLT) has been allocated a number of teachers to coach and it is their role to work with them to improve their performance.

Each member of staff is visited fortnightly by the allocated SLT member and it is assessed how well they have implemented the agreed areas previously identified.

It was reported to Governors that already there have been signs of real improvement.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to encourage all parents/carers to play their part in supporting the work of the Academy and in particular their children. It is by working together that we can provide the best possible opportunities for each student to achieve their potential. We welcome the opportunity to meet with parents/carers. Sometimes it is at formal events such as Parent Forums and Parent Surgeries. Other times it is at school events or even at the gate.

In addition, parents/carers can play a key role in encouraging students with their homework and revision. Also parents/carers can make a real difference by fully supporting the implementation of the policies of the academy.

If there are any areas of concern, please do contact the Academy. If you have followed through the Academy Complaints Policy and are still not satisfied, please do contact me via the Academy. (governors@dorcan.co.uk).

I look forward to meeting you at one of the school events coming up in the near future.

Phil Baker
Chair of Governors
October 2017

