

Governor Lines – April 2018

I trust that you have had a good Easter Break. Since the last edition we have had three meetings of the Full Governing Board. It is worth pointing out that in addition to these meetings we have committees who meet to cover Finance and Premises, Staffing, Data and Discipline in greater depth.

1. Membership

Fiona Hardcastle has rejoined the Governors following her retirement from the staff. She now sits on the Board as a Community Governor.

2. Presentations by Heads of Faculties

The Heads of the Mathematics, English and Science Faculties have appeared before the Board to give account of the work of their areas.

These sessions have proved to be invaluable opportunities for the Governors to hear of the actions that are being taken to drive up standards. Each Head of Faculty was questioned rigorously on the actions being taken. There was particular focus on examination performance and the foundations being laid in the lower part of the academy.

3. Curriculum 2018 – 19

The Governors have approved the curriculum for the coming year. This decision was made following detailed questioning of Mr Morgans (Assistant Head Curriculum) on the rationale behind the academy proposals. The Board acknowledged the constraints that are facing Academies in providing a broad and balanced curriculum for each student that meets their needs.

The issue of Triple Science highlighted for Governors the fact that any curriculum has to be affordable and in the best interests of the students.

4. External Evaluation of the Academy

The academy has been visited both by the representative of the Regional Schools Commissioner and by an Ofsted Inspector.

Both reports were very encouraging recognising the significant progress being made by the Academy. The work of the Senior Leadership Team was praised. The Governors noted the tremendous amount of work that the staff have put into achieving these positive reports.

The Governors were really pleased that they received very positive endorsements for their work in both reports. This was especially encouraging, as in the previous Ofsted Report it had been identified as a significant area of weakness.

5. MAT Update

The date to join Excalibur has still not been agreed, however Excalibur staff have been continuing to support the Academy in its development. The main reason for the delay is that we are still awaiting news of the outcomes of various grants that we have applied for to upgrade our buildings.

6. Safeguarding

Governors were pleased to note the excellent Safeguarding report presented to them. This is a major strength within the Academy. Again the Governors noted the tremendous work put in by staff to ensure our students are well cared for.

7. Attendance

The Governors receive regular reports on the attendance rate of the Academy. They noted that there has been a fall in the attendance rate this year. Governors agreed to money being spent on employing a member of staff to focus on daily phone calls to parents and carers to chase up absence.

In addition it was agreed that the Governors would meet with parents / carers and students whose attendance was well below target, to discuss with them the reason for the poor attendance and agree an action plan to bring about significant improvement.

The Academy expects a minimum attendance rate of 95%, which is in line with National averages.

8. Rewards

At the time of the implementation of the new Behaviour Policy, the Governors had requested that the academy produce a new Rewards Policy in order that students who behave and achieve well can be recognised.

Governors have noted the positive results from the new Behaviour Policy.

The new comprehensive Rewards Policy has been discussed with Governors and has now been approved by them.

9. Staffing

The Governors have reluctantly agreed for there to be a reduction in the number of staff from 1st September. This is due to a fall in the number of the students on roll and the National underfunding of education.

These decisions have had to be made in order for the Academy to remain solvent. Sadly we are not the only academy in this position. Many hundreds of schools and academies are in this position across the rest of the country.

Once again I would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support. It is only when we all work together that our students can receive the best possible support.

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.