

# The Active Learning Trust

## MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST HELD ON TUESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015 AT THE LANSDOWNE CLUB, LONDON

DIRECTORS PRESENT:	Ms L. Adams (Chair) Ms M. Lloyd Ms M. Toft	Mr M. Kerr Mr G. Peile (CEO)
APOLOGIES:	Mr J. Beswick Mr C. Bush	Mr D. Bateson Mrs J. Cutchey
ALSO PRESENT:	Mr D. Hilton (Head of Standards & Curriculum) Mrs K. Jarvis (Company Secretary & Clerk to the Board)	
Present for Item 36:	Mrs H. Madsen (Head of Burrowmoor Primary School) Mrs B. Surtees (Head of Gusford Primary School)	

## MINUTES

### 35. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ms Adams opened the meeting by welcoming all present. Apologies had been received from those listed above. It was agreed that the agenda would be taken out of order to allow the headteachers to join.

### 37. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February were accepted as a true record.

### 38. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 10<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2015

*30. Exclusion Policy.* Mr Peile explained that the policy has been revised to take account of DfE recommendations and will be circulated to schools. Mr Peile added that an Admission Arrangements document has also been written which schools can personalise for their own use.

### 39. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

Members accepted the Minutes of the Audit Committee and Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

The Board also received a verbal update that the Remuneration & Personnel Committee had approved a Pay Policy for Reydon Primary School and a file of Personnel Policies for Central staff.

***Members acknowledged receipt of the reports from the three committees and noted the work undertaken.***

#### **40. BENCHMARKING REPORT**

Mr Peile referred members to the report on Benchmarking, that had been circulated with the agenda. Norwich based firm M & P Partners have produced a report benchmarking MATs and single trust academies in Norfolk and Suffolk (February 2015). Mr Peile highlighted parts of the report, stating that it excludes national data, but gives a sense of how ALT can be compared with other MATs. Members discussed the snapshot report, noting the differences between ALT and others. Of particular note are the top slice figures, which show that ALT top slices less than other MATs. It was agreed that some of the report could be usefully transcribed for governors of local governing bodies. Mr Peile agreed to circulate the full report to Board members.

***Members noted the summary report on Benchmarking and looked forward to viewing it in its entirety.***

#### **43. DELEGATION OF DIRECTORS RESPONSIBILITIES**

Mrs Jarvis explained that the Delegation of Directors Responsibilities list had been updated due to the restructure of central staffing. Responsibilities previously allocated to the Director of Operations post have been reallocated, with minor amendments made to other areas.

***The Board noted the report and approved the updated Delegation of Directors Responsibilities List.***

#### **44. GOVERNING BODY UPDATE**

Mr Peile explained that the papers provided had been produced to show the position of local governing bodies, including where vacancies are. At the time of writing there were 14 vacancies across The Trust – 10 of those being for governors to be appointed by ALT. Mr Peile reported that this is a vast improvement for last year and he felt that schools now have knowledgeable and supportive governors in place. Schools with vacancies have written to local businesses and the next stage will be to publish vacancies locally in order to attract governors of a high calibre.

Members were asked to note that local governing bodies would shortly be needed for Reydon Primary School and Suffolk New Academy.

***The Board accepted the information on Governing Body Membership and noted the improvement in numbers.***

## 36. REPORTS FORM HEADTEACHERS

Mrs Madsen and Mrs Surtees joined the meeting at this point and each gave informative presentations to support the reports circulated on their respective schools. Directors were given the opportunity to ask questions and the following areas were covered:-

### *(i) Red Oak Primary School*

- Challenging area with above national averages in SEN, PP & Mobility
- Pupils enter Red Oak with attainment scores below national average
- Current data is showing 2 levels of progress is being made
- Currently on track for floor level and hopeful for current Year 6 results
- Will have 4 x NQTs from September being mentored by an Assistant Head whose temporary appointment has been made permanent
- Red Oak now has a good reputation within the local community
- Attendance levels are high due to initiatives introduced
- Poor and inconsistent teaching has been addressed – Year 4 teacher on capability has left
- Year 2 literacy programme introduced to extend writing
- RWI introduced from Nursery
- Less progress in Maths – having to retrain in-house using ‘Maths Make Sense’
- In total, 25 intervention packages being used
- Inspection anticipated for Summer or Autumn Term
- Extensive after-school clubs teaching enrichment and life skills
- Judgements are moderated by Hub lead and local heads/deputies
- External moderators have not been used to date for whole-school, although SATS are moderated externally
- Pupil Progress Meetings are held each week where individual progress is discussed by SLT, with termly reports being sent to parents. Mr Hilton reminded Mrs Madsen that results are likely to be low this year – therefore are meetings productive? Mrs Madsen replied that data provided is only three weeks older than the last set and therefore little progress has been made.
- Positive behaviour is rewarded
- No data was available to show the impact of high mobility
- Mrs Madsen feels there is now an effective SLT in place

### *(ii) Chesterton Primary School*

- Brand new school from September 2013 with 19 children – now has 50 pupils, with 30 due to start in September (and a waiting list)
- High proportion of EAL pupils
- Transient population due to foreign influx to catchment area
- Average pupil premium numbers
- Place2Be to be introduced from September to work with challenging pupils and their parents
- Three teachers employed for two classes, allowing significant intervention
- Head of School appointed for September
- Attendance an issue, parental awareness is poor and attendance below national average for EYFS. Significant work has been carried out in this area.
- Not much data available due to being a new school. Attainment is below average, but progress is good

- The Curriculum is still being developed
- Boys v girls attainment figures questioned by Ms Lloyd. Mrs Surtees explained that this could be due to movement (and PEX)
- Mrs Surtees feels that the governing body hold her to account, ask challenging questions and insist that evidence be provided
- Ms Lloyd (Chesterton's Chair of Goves) reported concern over governor attendance – will be offering teleconference as an alternative
- Recent external moderation visit showed head's judgements to be sound
- Working with Isle of Ely Primary School on 'grow your own' staff CPD

***Ms Adams thanked both Mrs Madsen and Mrs Surtees for their reports that were useful to give directors an overview of positions at Red Oak and Chesterton respectively. They left the meeting at this point.***

Ms Lloyd expressed concerned that some schools haven't been judged independently. Mr Hilton agreed, suggesting that a more general approach should be considered for moderation from outside ALT. Ms Toft reminded the Board that supply teachers seem to be judged by Ofsted now, which was not the case in the past, and schools need to ensure that supply teachers are considered a quality alternative and not "learning time lost". Ms Toft explained that effective work is already taking place within Hubs, with the next stage to be working across Hubs.

Mr Kerr asked if the demographics of the school would be taken into account during inspection. Ms Toft that this would have been the case in the past, but recent experience has shown that progress data and demographics are now not considered unless there are exam results to back it up.

#### **41. CPD REPORT – LEADING ACTIVE LEARNING**

Ms Toft referred Directors to her Report on the Continuing Professional Development 2014/15 that had been circulated prior to the meeting. She explained that there are three levels of CPD – Trust-Wide, Hub Level and in schools, all of which link to the SDP priority to build internal capacity within schools. She explained that as part of the overall CPD strategy she will be looking at the impact of Hub CPD and discussing with the Hub Leads.

Ms Toft gave a short presentation on the Leading Active Learning Programme that was introduced this year, including case studies. 33 members of staff took part on work-based activities linked to priorities within their school, that encouraged staff to facilitate learning themselves.

Mr Peile asked that thanks be recorded for the work that Ms Toft has done on CPD within schools. The work had been well received and evidences how the Trust can make a difference to schools and pupils' learning. Not all schools took part, but the success of the scheme means that those initially sceptical will be keen to join the next cohort planned for 2015/16.

Ms Lloyd suggested that something similar could be introduced for governors. Ms Toft agreed that the module could be easily adapted, and will investigate this idea further.

***The Board noted the professional development offer for all schools. Members also acknowledged future developments to be carried out, including assessment of impact and***

***the continuance of the Leading Active Learning Programme for 2015/16. The Board recognised the significant input of Ms Toft as a major factor in the success of this programme.***

#### **42. HUB REVIEW REPORT**

Mr Hilton explained that the Hub Review Report had been commissioned to evaluate the Trust working module for schools, identify key areas of impact, and recognise areas for future development alongside key challenges. The evaluation was completed by an independent assessor during Autumn 2014 and Spring 2015. Key Findings were identified as:-

- Hub CPD days considered valuable by participants
- Heads and deputies have clear roles
- Challenge by Hub Leads needs to be focused
- Schools still in local network groups find it difficult to separate to Hub groups
- Time seen as a barrier – needs to be viewed as supporting SDP
- Lowestoft Hub is strong – working well
- Cambs. Hub see locality (distance) as a problem
- Ipswich Hub have wanted to concentrate on own schools rather than Hub
- Joint work on curriculum planning positive – sharing expertise and capacity
- Hub Leads are considered significant to ensuring concept is translated into effective practice
- Need to recognise that sharing could become unchallenging
- Open and honest culture encouraged

Ms Toft stated that Hub work is a growth area that ALT should be proud of, and received positive feedback at the Head's Conference. She went on to say that heads are now supportive of working in a collaborative way, which is a huge advance from last year.

***The Directors thanked Mr Hilton for his report and stated that The Board would remain supportive of the Hub model across the Trust and its future development.***

#### **45. CHAIR'S ACTIONS**

*(i) Reydon Primary School*

Ms Adams stated that she had agreed a Chair's Action on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015 that the establishment of the Governing Body of Reydon Primary School be deferred until September 2015, for the reasons given.

*(ii) Burrowmoor Primary School*

Ms Adams stated that she had agreed a Chair's Action on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2015 that Mr Jason Wing be appointed temporary Executive Head of Burrowmoor Primary School, for the reasons given.

***Board members noted the Actions taken by Mrs Adams on their behalf in her capacity as Chair.***

#### **47. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Ms Lloyd asked The Board to consider a request from a Christian group within Ely to be partnered with Isle of Ely Primary School. Following discussion, it was decided that it was

too early to make such a decision as the school site is not ready for occupation yet. It was agreed to refer this to the new governing body once the school is open.

**48. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Confirmed as 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015.