

**MINUTES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACADEMY (YPA) / THE SKILLS HUB
(TSH) LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY
14TH JUNE 2017 at 11.00am**

Members: Mr E Lumley (Chair)
* Ms K Everett (Vice Chair)
Miss L Cornwell (Headteacher)
Mrs I Callaby
Councillor P Davis
* Ms E Horrigan
Ms T Oatway

* Denotes absence

Also Present: Ms S Challenger – Clerk
Mrs B Scott – Head of Finance (Academies)
Mrs S Tarapdar – PA to the Headteacher
Ms D Bhandal – School Office Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Everett and Ms Horrigan.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Governors welcomed Ms Oatway to the meeting and made introductions, saying they were delighted to have a parent governor on the LGB. Governors also welcomed Mrs Tarapdar and Ms Bhandal to YPA and TSH.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no new declarations of interest.

4. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

Governors **NOTED** that Mary Francis has resigned as Chair and governor, effective from 17th March 2017, and that Emlyn Lumley was appointed as Chair by the OHC&AT Board of Directors on 17th March 2017.

Governors **NOTED** that Hayley Watson has resigned as staff governor, effective from 5th June 2017. Nominations for a staff governor at YPA will be sought in due course.

Governors **NOTED** that the OHC&AT Board of Directors approved Tanya Oatway's appointment as the parent governor for YPA on 17th March 2017.

5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Governors **AGREED** and the Chair signed the minutes of the last meeting held on 15th March 2017.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Assessment for Learning

- i) Further to the discussion of the AfL presentation, Mr Lumley reported that he and Miss Cornwell have been in touch regarding moderation visits and that it will be a two-way process once finalised.
- ii) Governors **NOTED** that Ms Challenger has uploaded a copy of the presentation to the governors' portal. Mr Lumley and Mrs Callaby both requested login details for the portal to be resent.

Action: Ms Challenger to resend login details for the governors' portal to Mr Lumley and Mrs Callaby.

Pupil Premium

- iii) Further to minute 6.6, governors **NOTED** that the Pupil Premium report is available to view on the YPA website.

Portfolio visits

- iv) Further to minute 7, Miss Cornwell reported that she had successfully delegated most of the portfolio visits for this term.

Year on year data comparison

- v) Further to this item discussed in Summer 2016, Miss Cornwell said she had included year on year data comparisons in the Headteacher's report.

7. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND DASHBOARDS

YPA

7.1 Student matters

YPA now has 70 students on roll, meaning that previous concerns relating to the number of Year 11 leavers are somewhat alleviated. Numbers of prospective Year 7 students also look positive.

Miss Cornwell reported that YPA will be opening a 6th form provision in partnership with Orchard Hill College in September. This is ahead of schedule due to a well-documented lack of suitable post-16 provision in the area. Approximately 10 students will be progressing to the 6th form, and Miss Cornwell said she is excited about the

opportunity to offer them individualised learning packages including English and maths as well as work-related learning.

There is a very low instance of NEET students within YPA at present, which is extremely positive given the nature of the cohort. YPA staff continue to work extensively with those students at risk of being NEET.

7.2 Behaviour data comparison from Spring 2015/16 to Spring 2016/17

Year on year comparisons are now possible as behaviour reporting and recording methods are stable and have produced a large enough data bank. Miss Cornwell drew governors' attention to the positive messages conveyed by the comparison, saying that it suggests a vast improvement in overall student conduct and linking this to the embedding of a reflective and restorative approach. Fixed term exclusions (FTEs) are no longer deployed and staff are seeing a reduction in those behaviours that might previously have led to an FTE, confirming that FTEs are not the right approach for YPA students. The rate of physical interventions (PIs) is also very low, which reflects positively on the school. Miss Cornwell said she feels the data validates the restorative and reflective approach being taken. Governors **NOTED** the achievements of YPA staff in this regard and congratulated Miss Cornwell.

7.3 Budget

Mrs Scott said she would update governors fully during item 8. Miss Cornwell said budget setting has been particularly difficult due to ongoing issues around funding and the continued dilapidation of the building, and thanked Mrs Scott for her hard work on finding a reasonable solution. Miss Cornwell noted that YPA has become an effective school and that this inevitably will cost more; she and Mrs Scott have worked closely with the LA to help them understand SEMH and the kind of support YPA students require in order to flourish. The LA is on board and has suggested reinstating a Small School Weighting factor; however, until this is confirmed at Schools Forum on 28th June there is a need to remain cautious and budget accordingly.

Cllr Davis offered to attend Schools Forum with Miss Cornwell, in order to support YPA's case. Miss Cornwell thanked Cllr Davis for his support.

7.4 Staff and personnel

The LSA reorganisation is coming to an end and Miss Cornwell noted that, far from being a cost-cutting exercise, the new LSA structure will actually cost more and should improve the understanding of YPA as a special school. Funds have been secured to run some training for new LSAs over the summer holidays, which should help to ensure that the school is effectively staffed ready for September 17.

Teacher recruitment is ongoing and YPA continues to work with agencies in order to engage high quality candidates. The recent appointment of a Senior Deputy Head working across both sites is a real coup and Miss Cornwell said that having that strategic overview as well as increased operational capacity will be crucial in driving both schools forward, particularly with the free school on the horizon.

7.5 School improvement (action planning and self-evaluation)

YPA is still in the Ofsted 'window'. Miss Cornwell continues to work closely with John Prior (OHC&AT Executive Head, Quality & Development/Deputy CEO) to monitor and improve the quality of provision. Miss Cornwell drew governors' attention to the positive headlines contained in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF), including typically good teaching across the school and robust safeguarding procedures. Governors **AGREED** that while a later visit from Ofsted would be ideal, to give improvements further time to bed in, the school looks to be in a strong position.

Cllr Davis said that there is a lack of understanding of special schools among Ofsted inspectors and that, while an Ofsted judgement will of course have implications for the school, Miss Cornwell could in some respects take any comments under advisement – the school's first duty is to its students and their families, and Cllr Davis said he felt it is meeting this duty well. Miss Cornwell agreed that inspectors can sometimes fail to grasp the important details of a special school and that case studies are particularly important in this respect, to convey the real progress and achievements that cannot be seen in quantifiable data. Mr Lumley said that YPA is a different school now from what it was immediately post-conversion, and said it was hard to imagine a Requires Improvement grading at this point, although he and Miss Cornwell agreed that Chantry should have been graded as Inadequate rather than RI prior to conversion. Miss Cornwell said it was helpful that Mr Lumley had been on the Interim Board prior to conversion, as he is familiar with the whole story of the school.

Mrs Callaby asked whether out of borough placements for those with SEMH have decreased since YPA has improved. Miss Cornwell said she believed this was so. Mrs Callaby said it was important to show that improving the school's quality of provision represents value for money as well as being intrinsically important. Miss Cornwell said that the LA is aware of that; after she and Mrs Scott notified them of a predicted £200k shortfall under current conditions, they asked Mrs Scott to cost up each child's individual provision and the results have been extremely informative for LA staff.

Cllr Davis offered to speak with fellow councillors as necessary and appropriate, in order to support the school. Miss Cornwell thanked him for the support, adding that participating in Schools Forum meetings is important in order to remain aware not just of YPA's own situation but that of all special schools within the borough.

7.6 CPD

Miss Cornwell drew governors' attention to the programme of CPD that has been completed this term, including safeguarding refreshers and training focused on speech and language, and said that planning is underway for CPD in 17/18.

7.7 Update on additional funding streams (Pupil Premium and Yr 7 catch up)

Governors **NOTED** that Pupil Premium statements for 15/16 and 16/17 are now available to view on the YPA website.

7.8 Health and safety

Miss Cornwell drew governors' attention to Louise Milton's comprehensive health and safety report, saying that extensive work continues on both sites to maintain the increasingly dilapidated buildings. Issues are still coming to light at YPA nearly two years on from conversion, which speaks to the level of neglect in previous years. OHC&AT continues to support the redecoration and upkeep of YPA's facilities, including organising two recent weekend 'painting days' with Trust staff volunteering their time in order to improve the learning environment for the students. Miss Cornwell said this support is very much appreciated by everyone at YPA.

7.9 Compliments and complaints

Governors **NOTED** the highly complimentary email from a parent of a student at YPA. Miss Cornwell said the student in question has made excellent progress and should be continuing to the 6th form provision in September.

7.10 School events

Governors **NOTED** the upcoming school events.

Governors **RECEIVED** the YPA Headteacher's report.

The Skills Hub

7.11 Student matters

Permanent exclusions in Hillingdon continue to rise and TSH has seen a correlated rise in admissions, particularly in Key Stage 3. Miss Cornwell said she is considering operating two KS3 groups instead of one, although limited space and teacher numbers make this difficult. There is also the question of how long TSH can and should keep KS3 students; Miss Cornwell said that many of them need an EHCP but it is hard to go through the necessary 20 week process when the student population is so transient, particularly without the 5 terms' worth of data that an EHCP request requires.

TSH has also seen a rise in the number of female students, many of whom arrive with a protective set of disruptive and defensive behaviours which are extremely difficult to break through. Miss Cornwell acknowledged the specific challenges of the situation; TSH has historically been set up to engage disaffected boys with its approach and curriculum offer, and the girls who are now attending need a different approach. Work is underway on improving the curriculum offer and flexing the approach to engaging female students. Ms Oatway asked whether the girls perhaps feel isolated due to low numbers and thus feel the need to prove themselves. Miss Cornwell said this is certainly part of the situation. Mrs Callaby noted that groups of girls can often create cliques and outcasts, which can be particularly damaging to students who are already vulnerable. She invited Ms Oatway to visit TSH and get a sense of the school, and Ms Oatway said that would be very useful.

Action: Ms Oatway to visit TSH with Mrs Callaby.

7.12 Behaviour data comparison

This was presented as a half termly analysis across 16/17 as TSH had not used the same descriptors in 15/16. Miss Cornwell acknowledged that three students had received FTEs, which had been judged to be necessary and helpful in those specific circumstances; however, as at YPA, staff are seeing a general reduction in behaviours which might once have led to FTEs and a greater willingness to explore cause and effect.

Governors were pleased to note the continuing low rate of physical interventions (PIs), racist and homophobic behaviours, which is particularly impressive in the context of the cohort.

Regarding the spike in low/medium/high behaviours during Autumn 2, Miss Cornwell said that she and Mr Chambers had been able to use the data to pinpoint key individuals and monitor the progress of interventions, adjusting as necessary, which had proven very helpful.

Ms Challenger asked whether, given the rise in female student numbers, the school recorded (or planned to record) sexually abusive/threatening behaviours as a separate category. Miss Cornwell said that at present the incidence of sexually abusive behaviour at TSH is low enough for it not to be recorded separately – any sexually abusive or threatening behaviour is automatically categorised as High. Should the incidence rise, SLT would begin recording separately so that the effectiveness of interventions could be tracked.

7.13 Budget

Again, Mrs Scott said she would update governors fully during item 8.

7.14 Staff and personnel

Governors congratulated Miss Cornwell on the successful appointment of Ms Bhandal, Mrs Tarapdar and the Senior Deputy Headteacher. Miss Cornwell said that Ms Bhandal and Mrs Tarapdar, having only started this week, are already providing invaluable support.

Appointments to the maths and PE teacher vacancies are a positive step forward. Both teachers were already working at TSH via an agency, so have a good rapport with the students and a good understanding of the school. Both are unqualified but will be able to demonstrate progress as teachers via their agency tenure at TSH.

7.15 School improvement (action planning and self-evaluation)

TSH will be in the Ofsted 'window' from September 2017. The recent mock Ofsted conducted by John Prior was very positive, with a strong argument for a judgement of Good with Outstanding features (Leadership and Management, and Personal Development, Behaviour and Wellbeing). Governors **AGREED** that this was an excellent achievement. Miss Cornwell said that Mrs Callaby's thorough and effective

work, particularly around the proactive identification of training needs, was key to the success of the school.

7.16 CPD

As with YPA, the CPD programme for the summer term has included safeguarding refreshers and training focused on speech and language, and planning is underway for CPD in 17/18.

7.17 Update on additional funding streams (Pupil Premium and Yr 7 catch up)

Miss Cornwell said that the finalised Pupil Premium report should be available from next week.

Action: Miss Cornwell to circulate the Pupil Premium report to governors as soon as it becomes available.

Action: Ms Challenger to upload a copy of the Pupil Premium report to the website when it becomes available.

7.18 Health and safety

Miss Cornwell referred governors to her previous comments regarding Louise Milton's health and safety report and the need to balance site maintenance against the avoidance of overinvestment. Governors **AGREED** that this approach remains prudent.

7.19 Compliments and complaints

Miss Cornwell drew governors' attention to the school's ongoing relationship management work with the local community, particularly local shops. TSH has been responsive and involved in any matters regarding student behaviour in the local community, and community relations are positive.

Mrs Callaby said that she continues to see a marked improvement in students' general attitudes e.g. during an incident when a student fell and injured himself, his peers responded in a responsible and compassionate manner which impressed the staff.

Governors **RECEIVED** the TSH Headteacher's report.

7.20 Dashboards

YPA

Attendance data continues to be quite positive within the context of the cohort, although Miss Cornwell noted that persistent absentee data has been removed. There are plans to convene an attendance team to look at barriers to attending, any safeguarding issues that may be impacting etc. – Mrs Callaby will lead this team, as part of the ongoing drive to bring YPA and TSH together ahead of the free school opening.

Staff typicality is good, which Miss Cornwell said reflects the improvements made as a result of raised expectations of all staff. Mr Lumley asked whether staff numbers had indeed been higher in February and March. Miss Cornwell confirmed that this was so, and that posts have since been covered by agency staff while recruitment continues.

Staff sickness absence has improved. A well-regarded member of staff has returned from long term sick leave, which has been a great boost for everyone; Miss Cornwell said the LSA reorganisation has also impacted positively on sickness absence figures.

Mrs Callaby asked whether an acronym key could be added to the dashboard, in order to make it accessible to governors without an educational background. Governors **AGREED** this proposal. Miss Cornwell said that Ms Oatway is the voice of parents and asked her to let fellow governors know where accessibility of information can be improved.

Action: Ms Challenger to ask the MIS team to include an acronym key on dashboards.

Mrs Callaby offered to go through the standard documents, acronyms etc. with Ms Oatway to ensure that everything is clear and accessible. Ms Oatway agreed that this would be useful.

Action: Mrs Callaby and Ms Oatway to meet to discuss documentation etc.

TSH

There are high numbers on roll. Regarding attendance, Miss Cornwell said there have been some minor inaccuracies with SIMS and data collection that are currently being cleaned up, and that the most recent figure is closer to 74%.

Governors were pleased to note that staff typicality is 100% good or better. Miss Cornwell said this was proof of a rigorous Teacher Evaluation Schedule (TES) as well as the support available to teaching staff. There is an emphasis on proving that interventions work, e.g. a member of staff was able to demonstrate to Miss Cornwell that informal book scrutiny has contributed to the improvement of teaching standards.

Mr Lumley asked whether there were plans to take the maths and PE teachers through Qualified Teacher Status. Miss Cornwell confirmed that both would be supported through the Assessment Only route offered by the OHC&AT Training School. Additionally, both YPA and TSH have strong links with Harlington School and unqualified teachers spend one morning per week on placement there, which gives them invaluable experience of working in a mainstream school.

Staff sickness absence figures have improved, in part due to the medical retirement of a staff member on long term sick leave.

Mr Lumley thanked Miss Cornwell for her reports and the dashboard data, and said that both schools look to be in a healthy position overall.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT

Governors **RECEIVED** the Equality Objectives for both schools. Miss Cornwell said that in addition to the annual review of objectives, Assistant Headteachers collect evidence every half term to show how the schools are addressing their equality objectives, including British values and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. This helps to identify any gaps as well as evidencing progress.

Mr Lumley asked if there were any gaps at present. Miss Cornwell said that same sex marriage is now a protected characteristic and therefore needs to be added in, but otherwise the objectives are comprehensive.

9. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR VISITS

Governors chose to discuss the portfolio visit reports as a group.

Ethos, Vision and Strategy: governors agreed that Ms Everett's report was positive and thorough. Mr Lumley said he had been present at the appointment of the new Senior Deputy Headteacher and believes he will be an excellent addition to the YPA TSH team.

Teaching and Learning: Ms Horrigan had delegated this visit to Michele Gibbons, Harlington School's Lead on Teacher Training, who has been working with Miss Cornwell. Governors were pleased to note the thorough and detailed assessment of strengths and areas for development contained in the report.

Finance and Resources: Cllr Davis noted the ongoing financial challenges to the sector as a whole. Mr Lumley said that a recent report from SSAT, "*Triumph in Adversity?*", predicted that all but 16% of schools will be running a deficit within three years. Cllr Davis agreed that the situation is difficult but said that prudent management and creativity can account for a lot, and that Miss Cornwell and Mrs Scott remain clear-sighted and capable in their management of school finances.

Marketing and Business Development: governors **THANKED** Miss Watson for her strong contribution to this portfolio, both during this term and throughout her time as governor.

Health and Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding: Mr Lumley tabled his report, saying he had chosen to focus on policy scrutiny this term. He reported that the suite of policies was comprehensive and up to date, and said he had been impressed by both the attention to detail and the accessibility of information for parents/carers and other stakeholders. Miss Cornwell said that Ms Challenger is responsible for policy review and oversight across OHC&AT and governors congratulated Ms Challenger for her work in this regard.

Action: Mr Lumley to send Ms Challenger a copy of the report for uploading to the governors' portal.

HR and Organisational Development: Ms Everett's reports were agreed to be helpful and detailed in their assessment of current strengths and areas for development.

Governors **RECEIVED** the portfolio visit reports.

10. FINANCE AND FUNDING

Governors **NOTED** that both budgets are yet to be formally ratified by the OHC&AT Board at their meeting on 30th June.

Mrs Scott gave a brief overview of the management accounts, noting that the overall picture is constrained due to reductions in funding across the sector. Miss Cornwell has had to make some tough decisions in order to maintain good financial health for both schools. Additionally, governors **NOTED** that Miss Cornwell has received Trust approval to spend reserves where necessary in order to maintain the buildings and manage staffing; this means that YPA will not be in a surplus position at year end.

TSH

The budget for TSH has been agreed by Corrina Jenkins (OHC&AT Executive Director of Finance) and Dr Caroline Allen (Principal/CEO). The school is currently in deficit; however, as noted above Miss Cornwell does have Trust approval for overspends. A small surplus of £2.5k has been set. Mrs Scott said the budget has been set cautiously, based on a worst case scenario of 5 students joining in 17/18. TSH is funded for 50 students and there will undoubtedly be more than 5 new students in 17/18, but it is prudent to assume only 5 for the whole year as student income is pro rata'd due to the transient nature of the student population.

Miss Cornwell said that the LA has been giving age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) funding as well as additional pupil funding, thus effectively double funding. AWPU has now been stopped, which has affected school income. Mrs Scott added that AWPU is lagged funding that arrives as a lump sum, making it hard to know which student it has followed.

The school has a healthy cash balance.

Mr Lumley noted a zero projected spend for agency staff. Mrs Scott said that only vacant posts are budgeted for, not agency spend. Cllr Davis asked whether a reduced staff budget is realistic, noting that the YPA salary budget is up by £150k. Mrs Scott said that the LSA reorganisation has raised staffing expenses at YPA, by improving the LSA offer in order to effectively support the students. Miss Cornwell added that YPA is a special school and thus attracts more funding per student.

YPA

Governors **NOTED** that this budget has not yet been agreed by Dr Allen. There is a small surplus of £3197, based on the assumption that the upcoming Ofsted will be Good and that Small School Weighting is reinstated. Cash reserves are healthy and Miss Cornwell is able to draw down on these if need be.

Mr Lumley asked whether there were any opportunities for revenue enhancement. Miss Cornwell said that at the moment there are none due to the state of the buildings,

but that the free school should present more opportunities. She added that it has been very hard to make the necessary decisions in the awareness of how budget constraints will impact on students at both sites.

Governors congratulated Miss Cornwell and Mrs Scott for their continuing hard work and prudence in managing both budgets during such challenging times.

11. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Governors **NOTED** the listed policies and procedures that were approved by the OHC&AT Board on 17th March 2017.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Miss Cornwell gave a brief update on the progress of the free school. Having approved the application, the DfE had required further help to understand exactly how the blended SEMH and AP provision would work. Following a great deal of discussion, it has been agreed that the school will have one building and operate as one entity in most practical aspects, but will have two DfE numbers. This will incur some additional workload e.g. two sets of accounts, two Ofsted inspections etc. Miss Cornwell acknowledged that this is frustrating, but said that the project is moving forward again which is ultimately to the benefit of the students.

Governors congratulated Miss Cornwell and her team on the progress to date.

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates were confirmed:

Wednesday 8th November 2017 at 11.00am to 1.00pm

Wednesday 14th March 2018 at 11.00am to 1.00pm

Wednesday 13th June 2018 at 11.00am to 1.00pm

Additionally, governors confirmed that the YPA TSH Pay Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday 17th October at 10am.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

None.

The meeting closed at 12.40pm.

CHAIR-----

DATE-----