

Minutes – Digitech Studio School Academy Council

Version: FINAL
Issue Date:
Meeting Date: Thursday 29th April 2021
Location: Virtual online via Microsoft Teams
Time: 5.00pm

AC Members		Attended	Apologies
Rob Gillman	Sponsor 1 (Chair)	√	
Russ Gallon	Sponsor 2	√	
Antony Merritt	Sponsor 3	√	
Lindsay Curry	Sponsor 4	√	
Madison Fowler	Sponsor 5	√	
Megan Ferguson	Student Advocate	√	
Lis Jolley	Principal	√	
Rebecca Kemp	Parent Councillor	√	
Debbie Boucher	Parent Councillor	√	
Leila Henry-Thorne	Staff Councillor	√	
Sally Apps	Executive Principal	√	
Isabel Tobias	Local Authority Rep	√	
Invited attendees			

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions, Administration, Apologies	
1.1	RGI opened the meeting and welcomed all. This meeting took place on Teams.	
2	Declaration of Interest	
2.1	No verbal declarations were made.	
3	Academy Council Membership	
	N/A	
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed as a true record.	
4.1.1	Actions are listed at the end of the minutes.	
5	Matters Arising	
	N/A	
6	Quality of Education including curriculum developments	
	Reopening	
6.1	(LJ) There have been no positive cases at DSSB. Most students are wearing masks & adhering to protocols, with students also being able to go outside in between lessons.	
6.1.1	(LJ) 10 students however have yet to return to DSSB due to their Mental Health, with several other students maintaining a part time timetable.	
6.1.2	Attendance is a work in progress with our current attendance at 89%.	
6.1.3	(LJ) "We are looking forward to Yr11 leaving" to enable full focus on Yr10. (I think I know what you mean...)	
6.1.4	(LJ) Our FTE (Fixed Term Exclusions) have increased as we have listened to staff and have FTE for COVID breaches.	
6.1.5	(LJ) It's been a tough term, the staff morale is low, although staff have begun to receive vaccinations which is alleviating some anxiety.	
6.1.6	(LJ) Teachers are not circulating classrooms and are remaining at their desks, this doesn't make the lessons fun. The TAs are in class for the beginning and then taking the students out to allow for social distancing, and more work is taking place in the Hub.	
7	Achievement & Standards	
	Student Outcomes	
7.1	Assessments are taking place next week and will be moderated shortly after. The Central Team is heavily involved in moderating, and 5 students will be randomly selected to be audited. The A Level/ Diploma results will be released on 10 th August and the GCSE results will be released on 12 th August.	
7.1.1	Helen Angell from the Central Team has been excellent.	
7.2	What happens when TAG (Teacher Assessed Grades) are submitted?	
7.2.1	(LJ) There is Trust level standardisation and moderation. On the last day of Term 5 the Principal moderates the TAGs and then sends to the Central Team, the grades are then sent back to the school. The final grade sign off is with the subject teacher, pastoral (is this right?) Executive Principal (see below EP is just observer?) and finally the grades are sent to the exam board.	
7.2.2	(SA) The Central Team perform data analysis on the grades, and the EP (Executive Principal) role is as a critical friend/observer.	

7.2.3	(LHT) It's really helpful for a class teacher to be close to the grades. We work closely with the students.	
7.3	How are you pairing Single Subject Teachers?	
7.3.1	(LJ) We have divided the school into 4 communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federation Network nights • Raising Attainment • BTEC Community • ARTS Community Media (LHT & Richard) had a moderator in to view the student's work/grades prior to lockdown. Specialist subject leads help with moderation.	
7.4	What are you doing with students who have subject gaps and evidence missing?	
7.4.1	(LJ) We are able to sign off some due to Covid, but there are not many students with evidence gaps.	
	Attendance	
7.5	Our current attendance is 89% which is in line with the National Average. We are tracking the attendance and we do know where our students are and we are working to have them return to learning.	
	Behaviour	
7.6	Are FTEs (Fixed Term Exclusions) working?	
7.6.1	(LJ) They are working for staff morale as they are getting respite from the challenging students. It is the same students who are being excluded, but we are not convinced the other students notice.	
7.6.2	(LHT) It's good for staff respite and we feel it is keeping the staff safe. We are not just preparing the students for school, but for life, and in life there are consequences.	
7.6.3	(SA) FTE works if it used sparingly, LJ is aware of that.	
7.7	Is there a new process for behaviour?	
7.7.1	(LJ) Yes, we have a graduated response to behaviour, short sharp shocks are not working. Students are phased and then interventions are put in place. We are very keen to show that if we have to PEX a student, that we have done everything we can.	
7.7.2	(LJ) Going up the behaviour scale gets a more intensive intervention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor • Pastoral • Outside agencies • Managed Move/Pupil Referral Unit 	
7.8	What is the reset room?	
7.8.1	(LJ) It's the former isolation room, the student remains in the room until the end of the lesson they were asked to leave. I am reviewing this in T6 with a view to removing it.	
7.9	What about the Pivotal program?	
7.9.1	(LJ) We launched the program and then COVID happened so it's currently on pause. We will bring it back but it does require a lot of input from staff with language and contact with home. Staff are very stretched right now with the COVID protocols, and the TAG that we are in a holding pattern with the behaviour.	
	Following this discussion the Council moved to Section 12	
	SEND Update	
7.10	(IT) I've had 2 meetings with Carolyn Goh (SENCo). One of the challenges is finding the time for teachers and support to plan. It is unclear when the CLF SEND review will take place. There needs to be more on the school website about the SEND provision, and	

	Carolyn is keen to visit with other SENCOs within the CLF. There is a visit report available on Teams.	
7.10.1	(SA) SEND is discussed during the ARV (Academy Review Meeting) and we are meeting SEN students on Thursday 6 th May. Susie Weaver (an Executive Principal within CLF) and an external SEND specialist have completed the SEND review, including at boomsatsuma.	
7.10.2	(LJ) A SEND audit was completed recently and there is an Action Plan and RAG rated challenges. There is regular financial review, but not aware of 1 day per term review, but will raise this within the Send cluster.	LJ
7.10.3	(LJ) SEND funding is complex and linked to students & needs. TAs are employed on fixed term contracts. We are very good with our EHCP students but could be better with our SEN K students where we have to fund approximately £6K.	
7.10.4	(LJ) We are already aware of 4 students due to join us in Yr10 in September that require EHCP and it's frustrating that the current schools have not sought this.	
7.11	How do you feel that every teacher is a teacher of SEND? Carolyn feels it is hard to differentiate.	
7.11.1	(LJ) I'm convinced that several students who frequently visit the reset room have underlying SEND needs. This would suggest that needs are not being met at some level.	
8	Safeguarding (including Link Role & Termly Report check)	
8.1	Lindsay Curry & Tom have not met this term.	
8.2	There seems to be a spike in safeguarding incidents.	
8.2.1	(LJ) There were more disclosures when the students returned to school after lockdown, which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health disclosures • Suicide attempts • Safeguarding issues • Children who were removed from the Children in need list and then put back on it. • Students have reported incidents on behalf of others This level of safeguarding incidents is not high for DSSB.	
8.3	Bullying seems to be linked to a lack of social skills	
8.3.1	(LJ) Racist incidents seem to be tied in with a lack of understanding, it has decreased, but there were lessons focused on Black Lives Matter and White Privilege. Some of the incidents came as overspill from class discussions. Yr11 are working with SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) but there have been some Race and LGBTQ related bullying.	
8.4	How are Peer mentors feeding into this?	
8.4.1	(LJ) Peer mentors are meeting on Teams to facilitate small group meetings with students who have opted into this. Parliament is focused on Equality and we have a long way to go.	
8.5	Did you receive any feedback from the website everyone invited when this was highlighted in the media?	
8.5.1	No, we did highlight this story with our staff and students.	
9	Finance, Health, Safety & Estates	
	N/A	

10	Staffing and Wellbeing	
10.1	(LHT) Staff morale is very low as we are unable to meet with each other or sit in the staff room. We miss each other.	
10.1.1	(LJ) Its been a rough term. We are more focused because of the smaller staff cohort, but LHT is responsible for over 100 grades at DSSB.	
10.1.2	(SA) T5 is usually a high-pressure term, even more so this year with the implementation of TAG. The Centre Assessed Grades from last year was an easier process. Teachers are solely responsible for the grade this year and it is evidence based.	
10.2	Are there ways in which we are able to show staff we are grateful for what they do?	
10.2	(LJ) I don't think the staff are thanked enough, we know where to go when things go wrong, but right now it is hard to show the appreciation.	
11	Policies that require review	
11.1	The following Policies were approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging & Remissions • Online Safety • Toileting & Intimate care 	
12	Student Voice/Advocate	
12.1	(LJ/AM) The students have been very positive since returning to school, although some feel different and that they don't belong.	
12.1.2	(LJ) A lot of our focus is on peer to peer relationships, we have a great diagnostic tool and have plans on how to address the issues raised.	
12.3	Will the survey be repeated, and any chance for students to give notes?	
12.3.1	(LJ) Yes, we plan to repeat it 3x per year, our students were really honest, and the survey wasn't anonymous.	
	The councillors moved back to section 7	
13	Governance	
13.1	Link councillors should Link with staff.	
13.1.1	(LJ) It would be great to have an update from Councillors regarding there subject/area link.	
14	Equality & Diversity	
	N/A	
15	Matter for the attention of the Board/COAC	
	N/A	
16	Any Other Business	
16.1	ARV is Thursday 6 th & Friday 7 th May, RGi is invited to attend the wrap up meeting.	
16.2	The Central Risk Register is more up to date due to COVID rather than at Academy level.	
	Meeting closed at 18:46	
	Next meeting – Tuesday 29th June 2021 – 5pm	

Action Log

Date	Item No	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
06.10.20	7.9.2	LJ to invite RGi to the ARM/ARV meetings	LJ		Close
02.03.21	7.9.7	The Link Councillor roles are really important and you are encouraged to contact your Link counterpart prior to the next meeting.	ALL		Open
02.03.21	8.1.2	Invite Tom to the next AC meeting re: Safeguarding	LP		Open
02.03.21	16.1	Update the Councillor section on the website Update 29.04.21 – Ongoing liaison with V.	LP		Open
	7.10.2	LJ to check with the SEND cluster if a 1 day per term SEND review should take place.	LJ		Open