

**Archbishop Tenison's School
Interim Executive Board Minutes (Part A)
13 March 2018. 3.30 pm**

Sue Heely (SH)	Chair	Present
Jim Henderson (JH)	Headteacher	Present
Phyllis Dunipace (PD)	Vice Chair	Present
Rev Steve Coulson (SC)		Present

In attendance: Adam Crosier (AC) Clerk
 Craig Morrison (CM) SBDE
 Madeleine Hughes (MH) Head of English

Agenda item	Discussion/questions asked	Action/decisions
41/2018	<p>Welcome</p> <p>SH opened the meeting at 3.30 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. There were no new declarations of interest.</p>	
42/2018	<p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>Due to time constraints, it was agreed that the minutes from the last 2 meetings would be reviewed at the next meeting on 27 March.</p>	
43/2018	<p>Review of pupil progress: English</p> <p>MH was welcomed. PD explained the need for IEB members to understand reasons for past poor performance in this subject, to be informed of expected attainment levels, with a focus on Yr. 11, and to hear about proposed interventions being taken by the school to improve performance. She explained that it would be helpful to hear views about the department overall, and to focus on each pupil individually, and to consider where there were pupils who were performing better/worse in English compared with other subjects – and to consider reasons for this. She said that the starting point was that results in English at Yr. 11 last year had been poor.</p> <p>MH explained that the most recent wave of data based on mock exams had arrived previously that day and she had that information in mind. She said that overall the results were not good. The higher performers had done well (those expected to achieve Grades 7+). However, there were a larger number of pupils expected to achieve Grades 4-5 who had underperformed overall.</p>	

She reported that she was clear about some of the reasons for this under-achievement and that there were strategies that would be implemented to improve performance in the final exams.

Some were basic examination techniques including reading the question. She said that pupils were often not taking sufficient time to read and understand the question and the requirements of the question.

For English Lit, there was more opportunity to 'coach' students to give an answer that would produce at least a Grade 4/5. This was because it was possible to practice model answers with model sentence starters, to identify key quotations and to feed the analysis.

For English Lang there was less scope for this level of preparation, because of the nature of the test.

She reported that she planned to hold visualizing sessions with large groups, using a white board to show how to plan and structure answers. She felt that with a lot of modelling and practicing it would be possible to raise performance levels, but that there were some important factors that could not easily be overcome. These included several children with SEND including Autism, students who continued to be absent from school for significant periods of time and a general disengagement by some students from wanting to learn.

MH discussed each pupil in Yr. 11, identifying current expected grade, and her assessment of what she planned to improve performance.

Q. SC asked why some students appeared to be better performers at RS and History than English, given that use of English was presumably a requirement for these subjects.

A. MH agreed that there should be cross over between the subjects, but that in practice there were differences in the content of the courses and the examination.

JH added that for English and Maths the staff had already had one year working with the new specification. For all other subjects this would be the first year. As a result, he suggested that the final achieved grades between English and other subjects may be less dramatic than currently envisaged.

MH reported there were also 6-8 persistent non-attenders who if they attended the school, certainly had the potential to pass English GCSE, but unfortunately would not do so because they were frequently absent. There were also several students who were persistently late arriving at class.

She said that for some students there was a problem of motivation and for others a panic response.

A small number of students have EAL and MH reported that for these children she had arranged an EAL coordinator to lead an intervention group, with immediate feedback on writing practice, and communication of clear information to the students about the requirements of the test and how to structure their answers.

She said that she had organized 4 groups of 6 students into intervention groups.

She said that for some students there was an ability to structure the answer but a failing in ability to add any depth and to show any analytical power.

Q. SH asked whether there would be greater emphasis on exam technique as this appeared to be a major factor in performance and one that should be addressed.

A. MH agreed and confirmed that this was being done. She also said that she was working with parents to help motivate children for whom this was a factor, and ensuring that lots of praise and encouragement was given to lower achievers when appropriate.

JH summarized the discussion of pupil progress in English, saying that there were challenges in engagement and self-belief among some students, and that there was a legacy that informed this of embedded low expectations. Part of this was a consequence of poor teaching and learning at the school. However, he contrasted this year's Yr. 11 group with the previous group and said that there was a significant difference in terms of motivation and expectation. He repeated that over the coming weeks every Yr. 11 student would meet with Head of Yr. 11 and the subject leaders for a motivational one to one meeting.

Q. SH asked whether Easter revision sessions were planned.

A. MH said they were and JH reminded IEB members that 30 Yr. 11 students had attended a weekend session at Marchants Hill recently.

CM asked whether it may be valuable to consider a strategy of focusing some students to achieve at Eng. Lit, if this was the more 'coachable' subject of the two, as from the point of view of the student and the school, it would be better to have one good pass than 2 'near miss' results.

MH and JH agreed to consider this strategy.

	<p>IEB members thanked MH for her report and discussion.</p> <p>SC commented that in contrast to Science, it appeared that for English, there was little turbulence regarding staff turnover at the school in the recent past, and that the syllabus had been taught and covered. The main reasons for under achievement appeared to be much more concerned with individual level factors of attitude, motivation and behaviour of the students. He asked whether there was any more that could be done to address these factors.</p> <p>JH reported that the school had brought in a motivational speaker 'Action-Jackson', but that he had not been able to engage Yr. 11 students.</p> <p>MH discussed the group of students who were afraid of trying, because they were aware of the risk of failing. From their perspective it was better to not try at all and fail than to be seen to be trying and then fail.</p> <p>JH reported that the school was making use of a successful ex student who came in to work with the top-grade students.</p> <p>MH left 4.35.</p> <p>IEB members agreed that there was no suggestion of complacency, and that MH showed very good knowledge of almost every student in Yr. 11.</p>	
44/2018	<p>Restructure</p> <p>Reported under Part B.</p>	
45/2018	<p>Budget</p> <p>This item was deferred to the next meeting because of lack of time.</p>	
46/2018	<p>Reports of complaints, racist incidents, bullying reports, exclusions and safeguarding issues</p> <p>JH reported that there had been a complaint from a parent about the proposed closure of Yr. 13.</p> <p>There had been no exclusions, and there were now arrangements with other local schools for students at risk of exclusion. There had been no fixed term exclusions since before Christmas. While there was a lot of low level bad behaviour, it was rarely sufficiently serious to warrant exclusion.</p>	



47/2018	Health and Safety None to report.	
48/2018	Any Other Business None.	
49/2018	Part B (Confidential items) Item 44 and part of Item 46 were reported under Part B.	
50/2018	Date of Next Meeting 27 March 2018	