

**MINUTES OF THE 153<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
OF ASHCROFT TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY ON  
WEDNESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2023 AT 17.30**

**Present:** Dick Whitcutt (DW) - Chair, Richard Perry (RJP), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Angela Entwistle (AEE), Stewart Harris (SH), Kevin Chamberlain (KC), Madeleine Hughes (MH), Mike Smith (MSM) and Matt Gallagher (MGA)

**In Attendance:** Jane Kiddell (JKD) (Minutes)

**Start Time:** 17:30

Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

The appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair took place. DW and AEE were nominated and agreed to continue in their current roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Board.

DW welcomed colleagues to the Executive Board meeting.

### **3. Apologies**

Apologies for absence came from Stewart Harris (SH), Tom Chmielewski (TC) and Pat Edmondson (PED)

### **4. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

### **5. Minutes of Last meeting held on Wednesday 5 July 2023**

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed by DW.

DW referred to page 3 with regards to the Network Department running regular checks of both students and staff and report their findings to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Leadership Group and asked if this is up and running and it was confirmed that this is now in place.

The minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 5 July 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

## **6. Principal's Report**

DMI shared his report with the Executive Board.

DMI spoke about this year's A Level and GCSE results, which were impressive. The Academy is incredibly pleased with the students and DMI described the reactions – the looks of joy and the screams - from students when they opened their GCSE results. The reaction from the A Level students was much more controlled because they receive an email from UCAS before they collect their results confirming their university place. So, they have an idea of how they have performed before they open their envelope. DMI also spoke about the progress that students make while they are at the Academy, which is excellent.

DMI commented about his presentation to staff about results on the first day back from the summer break and the very positive start to the academic year this created. It is the moment when staff can see the result of their hard work.

### **Progress 8**

DMI spoke about the Academy's Progress 8 score which is an incredible +1.09. The national data set will be released tomorrow and DMI will update colleagues on where the Academy ranks nationally.

### **Open Events**

The Academy's open events have been extremely busy this year, especially for the 6<sup>th</sup> form. The Academy still remains heavily over-subscribed in Year 7, with just under half of the cohort being allocated to siblings.

### **Early Careers Teachers**

The Academy has fifteen Early Careers Teachers (ECTs), all of whom follow an extensive training programme led by Phil Hall. The Academy also has ECTs who are in their second year of the programme and who will follow a more mature programme this year.

### **Professional Development Programme**

DMI spoke about the Professional Development Programme and the work which is being done around praise. A plan has been formulated with specific activities staff can employ to develop more motivated students. Praise discussions take place each week in form time and Claire Peterson has made motivation the focus of the student forums this term.

## **Attendance Report**

Attendance continues to be very good and the Academy is back to where it was before Covid. DMI shared a graph, which shows the difference in attendance rates at the Academy compared to other schools nationally. Northern-based schools present comparatively lower attendance figures and while average attendance figures in London are 91%, the Academy is 6.5% above the London average.

## **Accident Report**

DMI shared the Accident Report and asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. They were satisfied that no patterns were evident to show anything other than a typical spread with no activities or school areas of special concern.

## **Exclusion Report**

DMI shared the exclusion report.

DMI spoke about the permanent exclusion records in the report. In one case, the Executive Board's Discipline Review Panel met to hear a case for Permanent Exclusion after which they upheld the Principal's decision to permanently exclude. The parent did not appeal the panel's decision.

DMI explained to the Board his reasons for typically excluding students for a fixed period of only one day. He said that he does not like to exclude a student for more than one day unless it is very serious. Instead, he would rather the student be in ICAS, being mentored and supported to try to change the poor behaviour which had merited the one-day exclusion.

## **Results' analysis and departmental responses ( Mike Smith - MSM)**

MSM shared his presentation with the Board and took them through the exam results for this year and the way in which they compared to 2022 and 2019. MSM explained that the grading boundaries of national results were back to normal, and based on pre-Covid trends and standards. MSM also explained the "Attainment 8" measure and the way in which it is calculated. The Academy's Attainment 8 score is a measure of how good the results are but does not reflect the progress students have made from Year 6 to Year 11. On the other hand, "Progress 8" measures the progress students make. For example, in their SATs at primary school exit, students will achieve a score between 80 to 120 in English and Maths. An able student who achieves 120 at primary school would normally expect to achieve a higher attainment score than a student achieving 80. If they over-achieve their predicted expectation their Progress 8 score is positive but if they under-achieve their progress score is negative. A progress score of +1 means that the student has achieved a whole grade higher in a particular subject than their predicted expectation. In due course, the attainment 8 scores in each subject are added together and an average taken, the overall Progress 8 Score is produced.

MSM spoke about the EBACC and explained that all Ashcroft students are taught the full suite of subjects – something that is only achieved at private and grammar schools.

With a progress 8 score of +1.09, the Academy is well above average.

MSM took colleagues through the statistics for all groups of students. MSM shared the data for all groups of students of actual results and pupil progress and ATA and explained that the staff are very pleased with the results.

### **A Level**

The correct national data has not yet been received from the Government. A Levels have dropped a little and are closer to results in 2019. The majority of students confirmed the university places for which they had applied. MSM will share correct data once it is received.

### **SEN (MGA)**

DMI gave a brief introduction for SEND in the Academy and MGA presented ATA's approach to SEND in more detail.

MGA spoke about the performance figures for this last year's cohort, which are exceptional. The students with SEND have achieved, on average, a grade better than they would have achieved in an average school. The students with an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP) who are those with very high needs, have achieved even better.

The average progress score for EHCP students in England is -1.29, which is the equivalent of more than a grade lower than the average for all students in every subject. The average progress score in the Borough is -0.1. This can be contrasted with ATA's EHCP student score of +1. The attendance figures for the SEND students are also excellent. Students want to be at school as they feel safe, happy and know they are receiving an excellent education.

These outcomes are possible because we have the same high standards for all students. SEND students receive the same high-quality teaching, they benefit from a calm, ordered, predictable and safe routine and they receive appropriate support which enables them to give of their best. Furthermore, SEN students have access to the same ambitious curriculum.

DW asked about the difference between a student with an EHCP and SEND students, MGA provided an explanation.

MGA also explained to the Board that the admissions process for a student with an EHCP is different from the process we follow for all other students. The EHCP documentation is sent to schools (by way of a consultation document) and a school looks very closely through this and decides whether the needs described in the EHCP can be met or not.

MGA said that new parents in Year 7 find the Academy's expectations challenging at first. This is normally because at primary school they tend to be more involved and the primary setting is very different to that of a large secondary school. So the transition process can take some time.

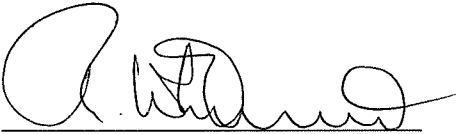
DMI spoke about the fact that when a student's EHCP is written it is very much based on a primary setting and not a secondary setting. This is sometimes a limiting factor when deciding whether or not we can meet the needs. So, often, details of an EHCP will then need to be discussed in the context of a secondary setting and sometimes sections of the EHCP's are rewritten accordingly.

MGA presented some case studies with the Board.

**7. Any other business**

DW thanked everyone for their participation and continued support.

The next Executive Board meeting will be Wednesday 13 December.

Signed: 

Richard Whitcutt  
Chair of the Executive Board

Date 13/12/2023

