



## THE COUNCIL OF ST. JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

Minutes of a meeting of the Academy Council held at 6.00 pm on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

PRESENT: Rev Dr J D Cortis (Chair), Mrs B Blackham, Ms C Anchor,  
Mr K Higgins (Head Teacher), Mr P Booth, Mrs S Collins, Mrs F Wilson,

In Attendance: Alan Burkey (clerk).  
Ms S Wilkinson (Deputy Head Teacher)

### 1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER.

The Chair welcomed governors and Ms S Wilkinson (deputy headteacher) and opened the meeting with a prayer.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs H Zaman, Fr E Hagerty and Mr A Oldroyd.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Additional items to be taken under item 23 as follows:

- (i) Pay Policy
- (ii) Executive summary of the Parents' and Pupils' Kirkland Rowe survey for 2014-15
- (iii) Term Dates for Academic Years 2016-17 and 2017-18
- (iv) Proposed Rugby Tour to Australia
- (v) Investors In People

### 4. ELECTION OF CHAIR

No election is necessary because Rev. Dr J D Cortis was elected Chair until 16 September 2016 at the meeting held on 22 October 2014.

### 5. THE ACADEMY COUNCIL IS ASKED TO:

- (i) Confirm their protocols on apologies and consent to governor absence.

The Academy Council has 3 options to either:

- (a) Consent to all apologies received (blanket consent)
  - (b) Grant no consent
  - (c) Decide on whether to grant consent on an individual basis depending on the circumstances.
- (ii) Approve the Governors' Code of Conduct.

- (iii) To confirm that the Academy Council have published their Declaration of Business Interest information on the school website to ensure compliance with new legislation which came into effect on 1 September 2015.

15/01 RESOLVED: Protocols on apologies and consent to absence will be determined on an individual basis.

15/02 RESOLVED: to defer the Governors' Code of Conduct to a later meeting due to the fact that the Diocesan Council for Education has updated this document.

15/03 RESOLVED: Academy members' declaration of interests will be published on the web site once information has been collated.

## 6. REPRESENTATION ON THE ACADEMY COUNCIL

### Resignations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Mr A Quinn	Foundation – Catholic	2.7.15
Fr P Mungovin	Foundation – Catholic	25.8.15
Mr N Dalzell (retirement)	Staff	31.8.15

### Appointment

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Fr Eamonn Hegarty	Foundation-Catholic	15.9.15

15/04 RESOLVED: The changes to representation on the Academy Council have been acknowledged and to note that currently there is one foundation member vacancy

## 7. MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 9 JULY 2015.

15/05 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.

## 8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES

- (i) Approved Academy Policies-(min 14/112). Policies have been placed on the academy's website.
- (ii) Dates for Academy Council and Committee Meetings 2015-16-(min 14/129). A paper containing the dates has been circulated.
- (iii) Pupil Placement Protocol-(min 14/30). The Head Teacher informed the Academy Council that the response had been forwarded to the Local Authority and that a positive response to the protocols had been

received. It is noted that the Local Authority have appointed a small working party to review the protocols in more detail and the final decision is still waiting.

15/06 RESOLVED: to receive an update at the next meeting

9. ELECTION OF ACADEMY COUNCIL VICE CHAIR

No election is necessary because Mr P Booth was elected Vice-Chair until 16 September 2016 at the meeting held on 22 October 2014.

10. ACADEMY COMMITTEES FOR 2015-16

The Chair referred to the decision taken by the Trust Board to change the name of its Finance, Pay and Personnel to that of Resources Committee.

15/07 RESOLVED: for the Academy Council's Committees for 2015-16 to be: Resources, Mission, Standards in Learning and Teaching, Complaints/Appeals, Headteacher's Performance and Admissions Panel.

11. TO APPOINT GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Governor Training Contact : Mr P Booth
- Governor for Looked After Children: Mr A Oldroyd
- Child Protection Governor: Mr A Oldroyd
- Special Educational Needs Governor: Mrs F Wilson
- Health and Safety: Mr P Booth
- Equality Governor (Optional): Rev Dr Cortis
- RE Governor Can J Aveyard: To confirm
- Literacy Governor: Mr P Booth
- Numeracy Governor: Mrs S Collins
- E-safety Governor: Ms C Anchor
- Kirklees Employment and Skills Board: To defer whilst further information sought
- PHSCE: Fr Aveyard to be consulted for availability

15/08 RESOLVED: that the appointments of Governors with special responsibilities are approved and to receive an update at the next meeting regarding the Academy representation on the Kirklees Employment and Skills Board.

12. GOVERNORS DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS (including guidance notes)

All forms had been completed and were passed to the Chair.

15/09 RESOLVED: The declaration of interest to be published on the academy's website.

13. DRAFT ACADEMY COUNCIL/COMMITTEES ACTION PLAN FOR 2015-16

It was noted that a number of minor amendments had been made to the Academy Council draft Action Plan and agreed. Review would be ongoing.

15/10 RESOLVED: for each committee to confirm its specific action plan at the first meeting of the year.

#### 14. CHAIRS DELEGATED POWERS

The Academy Council is asked to review the Chair's delegated powers concerning the following:

- (i) Change of date of a scheduled meeting, for good reason.
- (ii) Chair's powers to grant retrospective consent to absence in the event that a governor would have become disqualified if the matter had to wait for the next governors' meeting.
- (iii) To determine in advance of a meeting whether any items of the agenda should be deleted from the copy to be made available at the School.

The item was discussed at and approval was supported by the Academy Council

15/11 RESOLVED: The Chair of Academy Council is to have the delegated powers as itemised.

#### 15. DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS TO THE HEADTEACHER

It is recommended that the Academy Council makes the following resolution or some variation of it.

- (i) Planning and conducting the affairs of the academy to remain solvent.
- (ii) Establishing proper financial management arrangements and accounting procedures, which comply with the DfE/EFA's financial regulations and standing orders, and maintaining a sound system of internal controls.
- (iii) Ensuring that funding from the DfE/EFA and any other sources is used only in accordance with the conditions attached to that funding.
- (iv) Providing such information as the Diocesan Council for Education and DfE/EFA may reasonably require to satisfy these authorities that the financial management and organisation of the Academy Council are such as to enable it to fulfil the obligations specified for it.

15/12 RESOLVED: That the Academy Council delegates to the Headteacher the power to carry out on its behalf the duties as itemised.

15/13 RESOLVED: That the normal level of authorisation for payments would be £20,000 for the headteacher and £30,000 for the Resources Committee **AND** that the headteacher could authorise greater payments in respect of salaries payments to the payroll provider, service level agreements and for examination fees.

#### 16. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION RESULTS ANALYSIS FOR 2014-15

The Chair referred the Council to the Initial Examination Analysis that had been circulated before the meeting. The analysis was discussed and questions/comments were invited.

#### **Key Stage 3:**

Highlights:

- % of students achieving level 5 or above at the end of Key Stage 3

- 98% in English (upwards trend since 2012)
- 88% in Maths (upwards trend since 20 12)
- 91% in Science (upwards trend since 2012)
- Numbers of students making 2 level progress from Key Stage 2: 67 in English and 73 in Maths.

QUESTION: What would Ofsted view be on the results?

ANSWER: The Headteacher stated that the levels of attainment would be very acceptable to Ofsted but that progress seen in lessons and work scrutiny would be used alongside data to determine how well the school was doing.

#### Key Stage 4:

Highlights:

- 5A\*-C (including English and Maths) 55% a slip of 7% from 2013 and now at national level
- 5A\*-C 59%
- A\*-C English 59%
- A\*-C Maths 76%
- Figure for 'good progress' is below
- E Bacc. at 15% is comparatively weak

QUESTION: Year 11 French results were poor for the second year in succession. Why was this?

ANSWER: Examination analysis and performance management are currently taking place. Languages were under scrutiny. Performance Management was being used as a tool to drive standards as some Governors were aware. Many students were studying languages against their will so there was also a battle for hearts and minds taking place.

Acknowledgement was made as to the difference between girls and boys results. It was suggested that boys in this cohort were more challenging and that results reflected this.

History results were poor. The Headteacher explained that he was still working on moderation. Edexcel moderation removed 7 UMS from every student. It was a year of transition for humanities. However, new appointments to the leadership team were already making a significant difference. An appointment for Head of Humanities was currently being advertised

#### Key Stage 5:

AS:

Highlights:

- 91% pass rate compared with 88% last year
- 16 subjects had 100% pass rate compared to 11 last year
- Numbers of students achieving A/B grades better than last year in certain subjects
- Overall performance classified at 3 (excellent)

AL:

Highlights:

- Overall pass rate 99% same as last year

- Average point score per student is 733 (last year 775) but still awaiting some results. Has this figure changed?
- Average point score per entry for academic subjects is 181 (last year 197)
- Average point score per entry for vocational subjects is 234 (last year 235)
- 33% A/B grades similar to last year
- 16% A/A\* slightly lower than last year at 17% mostly gained in vocational ICT
- 24 subjects have 100% pass rate
- 91% of students gained 3 or more A Levels based on 70 out of 79 students
- 23% have 4 or more A-levels based on 70 out of 79 students
- A welcome improvement in the value-added performance of students
- Overall performance graded at 6 (satisfactory /below average)
- Most students got the higher education course and university they wanted

The Chair thanked the staff for their efforts. Weaknesses have been identified from the results and staff are aware of areas for improvement.

15/13 RESOLVED: to note the results for academic year 2014-15 and for members of the Academy Council to have a further scrutiny through the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee meeting in January 2016.

#### 17. ACADEMY'S PROSPECTUS FOR 2016-17

The Headteacher advised that the prospectus had been produced at an effective cost.

15/14 RESOLVED: The Academy's Prospectus for 2016-17 was approved in readiness for the open evening scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup>. September 2015.

#### 18. ACADEMY'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015-18

There are three broad areas informing specific objectives as follows:

##### 1. Mission

Development of the mission, ethos and distinctive Character of the school.

1.1 Develop partnership working within the Blessed Peter Snow Academy Trust whilst also developing partnership working across the Catholic schools within Kirklees, Calderdale and further afield. This to include the further development of a collaborative approach to quality assurance with other schools.

1.2 Develop opportunities for the spiritual, moral and cultural formation of students and staff in line with the school Spiritual Development Policy.

a) Promote the values of the school effectively to pupils and parents including in such a way that the mission and ethos of the school is deepened, and events impact positively on student learning and behaviour.

b) Further promote the vision of the school to all staff, and through support and development enable them to contribute to fulfilling it.

- 1.3 Formally review the levels of student attainment and progress and the quality of teaching and learning, in RE and plan to ensure that the Faculty is performing well.
- 1.4 Further promote equality and the dignity of all
  - a) Working to the Code of Practice (2014) improve the provision for and outcomes achieved by students with Special Needs.
  - b) Ensure that the school maintains the NACE Challenge Award thereby ensuring that more able students are fully challenged.

## 2. Learning and Success

Raising student attainment and achievement by building an effective Learning Community that includes students, staff and parents.

- 2.1 Ensure that the standard of teaching and learning in key curriculum areas is consistently good or better:
  - a) To further raise standards in English by strengthening leadership, teaching and learning so that students in all year groups make at least their expected progress and a greater proportion make better than expected progress (see 3.1c).
  - b) To further raise standards in Mathematics by further improving teaching and learning so that students in all year groups make at least their expected progress and a greater proportion make better than expected progress.
  - c) To further raise standards in MFL (Modern Foreign Languages) by strengthening leadership, teaching and learning so that more students in all year groups make at least their expected progress and a greater proportion make better than expected progress (see 3.1c).
  - d) To raise standards in Science by strengthening leadership, teaching and learning so that more students in all year groups make at least their expected progress and a greater proportion make better than expected progress.
  - e) To raise standards in Humanities subjects by improving teaching and learning so that students in all year groups make at least their expected progress and a greater proportion make better than expected progress.
  - f) To lead and manage further improvements in the quality of teaching in all subjects not just a-e above, through ensuring that:
    - pupils of all abilities experience a suitable level of challenge in lessons
    - the school's policy for promoting pupils' literacy is applied consistently by all subject teachers
    - the majority of written feedback that teachers provide in pupils' books matches the quality of the best practice in the school
    - teachers monitor pupils' responses to written feedback more carefully

- 2.2 Pursue improvements in student progress through the further development of a learning culture
- a) To plan specific interventions to enable Y11 to achieve good outcomes in their examinations.
  - b) Embed changes to Pastoral care structure and behaviour management policy in order to maximise achievement, attendance, the growth of the whole child and minimise instances of racism and bullying.
  - c) Further embed student voice and leadership pathways for all students across the school to ensure that students develop personally and contribute to their own learning.
  - d) Develop the use of the VLE
- 2.3 Ensure that the curriculum at KS3 and KS4 both develops further our commitment to the personalization of learning, including vocational pathways, and is a coherent response to Department for Education initiatives.
- a) Ensure curriculum offered provides a coherent response to the national curriculum and KS4 qualification changes that will maximise opportunity and achievement for students.
  - b) Further develop the Enhanced Curriculum.
  - c) Ensure that literacy (see 2.1E) and numeracy are embedded in all aspects of the curriculum
  - d) To further develop the identity of the School's Sports (and ICT) Specialism.
- 2.4 Throughout the school, use the rigorous analysis of data, which now effectively identifies under-achievement, to plan appropriate responses and thus improve student progress towards their targets.
- 2.5 Improve outcomes for the Sixth Form
- a) Ensure curriculum offered provides a coherent response to the KS5 qualification changes that will maximise opportunity and achievement for students.
  - b) Making sure that all students make at least good progress
- 2.6 Further involve parents in the aims, ethos and aspiration of the school
- a) Engage parents in the learning community and raise the aspirations of parents for their children.

### 3. Leadership

Ensuring that tradition is valued and that Change is welcomed

- 3.1 Ensure that leadership structures at all levels allow well-planned strategic and operational Change to be implemented effectively and efficiently.
  - a) Plan for the further development of Governors, to enhance their effectiveness in leadership.
  - b) Plan for the further development of Senior Leaders, to enhance their effectiveness in leadership.
  - c) Plan for the further development of Middle Leadership, in particular enhancing their role in proactive distributed leadership.
  - d) Further Improve quality of Self – Evaluation in Faculties and Pastoral Teams, and embed Quality Assurance Procedures across the school.
- 3.2 Support transformational Change in learning by focusing on Improving the buildings and environment.
- 3.3 Ensuring the highest possible take up of places at 11 years and 16 years of age.
  - a) Ensuring the highest possible take up of places at 11 years of age.
  - b) Ensuring the highest possible take up of places at 16 years of age.

The Chair offered some comments/suggestions on an earlier draft. Document has been reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team last month. As a result a number of sections are being re-written/enhanced.

15/15 RESOLVED: The document was approved and an updated Development Plan is to be presented to the first meeting of the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee.

15/16 RESOLVED: the three Committees will continue to monitor progress with the School's Development Plan.

15/17 RESOLVED: The Academy Council to review a RAGed School Development Plan at its March 2016 meeting.

## 19. BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The Chair stated that the Mission Committee had already considered the revised policy. The Headteacher noted that the attitude to learning by students had been observed to be positive and that the behaviour was very pleasing.

15/18 RESOLVED: The Maximising Learning through the Promotion of Positive Behaviour policy was approved.

## 20. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

The Headteacher gave a short explanation of the policy. The main change was that all Local Authorities have to create a 'virtual school'. Standards are monitored centrally, for example attendance, by Kirklees Council. The virtual school has a "Head Teacher" and is mentioned in the policy.

15/19 RESOLVED: The Looked-After Children Policy was approved.

15/20 RESOLVED: The approved policies to be placed on the academy's website

## 21. PROTOCOL FOR SENIOR STAFFING DECISIONS

Reference was made to a previously circulated paper which had been approved by the Trust Board.

15/21 RESOLVED: to note the Protocol for Senior Staffing decisions and to integrate within the academy's Recruitment and Selection Policy (Staff).

## 22. SCHOOL TRANSPORT UPDATE

Mr P Booth had previously submitted a letter to the Chief Executive of Kirklees Council highlighting statutory issues regarding transport to the school. A final decision has not been taken by Kirklees Council and the draft policy of the Local Authority was still being completed. The points raised by the school would be considered by the Council. Mr Booth stated that he would follow up his letter with Kirklees Council.

The concern was raised about the possibility of parents not being able to afford to send their children to St. John Fisher although it was acknowledged that there is not a shortage of pupils wishing to attend the school. To date Kirklees Council have not promised any funds towards transport.

15/22 RESOLVED: This matter to be raised at the next open evening.

## 23. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

The following items were raised:

### (i) Pay Policy

The Pay Policy had been sent to the two other Academy Councils as the overall aim is to have a Trust wide pay policy. Certain elements of the policy will need to be academy specific.

The Headteacher made reference to a 1% increase to teachers' pay. The Local Authority have implemented this increase without reference to Governors based on advice from the Local Government Association. The Headteacher also made the Governors aware of I.S.R.'s for the leadership team. There are two different levels in terms of budget issues. Some teachers are at the top of their grades with nowhere else to go.

QUESTION: Why is Head of Humanities vacant in the school structure?

ANSWER: One Advanced Skills Teacher is currently acting as head of faculty. Post is being advertised.

QUESTION: Why is there a vacancy in the Maths structure?

ANSWER: The Advanced Skills Teacher is acting as head of faculty whilst the current post holder has temporarily moved to support the leadership team (to take on certain roles previously undertaken by Mr Fallon, who has been seconded to the post of a deputy-headteacher to another diocesan secondary school). The role is currently covered by both Ms Anchor and Ms S Bolland. There is no short term plan to fill the vacancy.

15/23 RESOLVED: to approve and publish the Pay Policy and that the current Support Staff Pay Policy is still fit for purpose.

15/24 RESOLVED: That teachers would receive 1% increase and that M6 teachers would receive 2%.

(ii) Executive summary of the Parents' and Pupils' Kirkland Rowell survey for 2014-15

The Mission Committee considered key sections from the document at their last meeting.

Highlights:

- Strengths in a range of subjects
- Weakness in English, science and languages
- Strengths in developing moral values and communication
- Weakness quality of teaching from the students' perspective

QUESTION: Has the report been discussed at the parents' forum and what was the response?

ANSWER: The report has been discussed at a parents' forum and the response from parents was positive overall. Staffing issues in English and physics were of concern to parents worried about student progress.

15/25 RESOLVED: To receive the executive summary from the Kirkland Rowell Parents/Pupil survey and noted that a version of the report is already on the website for visibility.

(iii) Term Dates for Academic Years 2016-17 and 2017-18

QUESTION: Why have the term dates to be over a two year period?

ANSWER: Kirklees Council have published their own school dates over two years.

QUESTION: How does the 2017-18 term dates affect the school in terms of Holy Week?

ANSWER: The school will have to break earlier than usual to ensure that students have enough time to prepare and focus on the public examinations..

QUESTION: Will feeder schools be affected?

ANSWER: Feeder schools will be in line for one of the years.

It was noted that not all Trust schools will have the same holidays.

15/26 RESOLVED: That the Term Dates be approved for publication.

(iv) Proposed Rugby Tour

The Headteacher informed the Academy Council of a forthcoming two weeks rugby tour of Australia that Batley Bulldogs had organised. A number of Year 11 pupils had been requested to go on the tour by the club, and the school had been approached to authorise the absence. The Headteacher acknowledged that it was the responsibility of parents to take such a decision. The tour was badly timed as the absence equated to between 25–33% of term time. No previous consultation had taken place between Batley Bulldogs and the school. It was accepted that there was no common policy of any of the

affected schools in the locality , with each taking a different stance. Instruction was required from the Academy Council on the options that the school faced:

- a) To recognise the absence as unauthorised, but with no fine (this affects attendance figures).
- b) To recognise the absence as unauthorised, but with fine (potential for negative publicity in local press).
- c) Approve but with letter of admonishment.

15/27 RESOLVED: It would be recorded as unauthorised absence but with no fine. The Headteacher would make it known that the absence would be recorded in the school report. Discussion would also take place with the rugby club.

(v) Investors In People (I.I.P.)

The Headteacher informed the Academy Council that the school currently held the Gold Award in I.I.P and that it was proud to be recognised as such. The mid-term review had been completed and the school was approaching the full review. However, to maintain the review of Gold Award level of attainment would involve a fee of £5,000. In view of the budgetary challenges that the school was facing, it was believed that now was the time to consider whether it was worthwhile in continuing to pay the requisite fee, or whether the money be better spent elsewhere. Discussion suggested that staff should focus on the areas identified within the school action plans, rather than completing forms to support I.I.P. Furthermore, it was suggested that the school could still work to gold level standards, but without paying the necessary fee.

15/28 RESOLVED: That the renewal fee would not be paid..

24. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS-ACADEMY COPY

15/29 RESOLVED: That no part of the agenda, minutes or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the academy, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

25. DATE OF FULL ACADEMY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- i) Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>. November 2015 at 6.00 pm
- ii) Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup>. March 2016 at 6.00 pm
- iii) Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>. June 2016 at 6.00 pm

15/30 RESOLVED: Academy meetings would take place on the listed dates.

26. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking members of the academy council and school staff for their contributions to the meeting.