



RICHMOND SCHOOL and SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Draft Minutes of the Improvement Committee Meeting

held on Thursday 12th January at 4.30pm in the Library

Present: Lesley Abbey (LA), Peter Cradock (PC), Caroline Hall (CH) Judy Hooton (JH) –Chair of Committee, James Robson – Chair of Governors *arrived 4.45* (JR)

In attendance for all or part of meeting: David Clark – Deputy Headteacher (DC), Emma Dunwoodie – Assistant Headteacher – Challenge the Gap (ED), Jenna Potter – Deputy Headteacher (JP), Steven Speakman – Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral/Maths (SS), Charlotte Wardle – Deputy Headteacher (CW), Lesley Sweeting – Clerk.
(5 governors + 6)

Apologies: Andy McCarthy

Item No	Minute	Action
IC1617:19	Welcome and Apologies JH welcomed those present. There was one apology for absence from the governor named above which was CONSENTED TO.	
IC1617:20	Declarations of Interest/Confidentiality There were no declarations of interest and no items were deemed confidential at this point.	
IC1617:21	<p>Presentation – Impact of Behaviour and Attendance Strategies - SS</p> <p>Governors were provided with relevant documentation prior to the meeting. SS drew attention to the attendance trend where those in receipt of free school meals (later referred to as ever 6) have been tracked over the last few years. This shows some ups and downs but the trend line is travelling in the right direction. Overall attendance at Richmond School is largely on an upward trend. Governors were reminded that a key feature is that support of attendance officers was lost to the school in April 2016 and these personnel ceased to pick up new cases from November 2015 onwards. Richmond School made the decision to employ their own Attendance and Behaviour Officer, Sophie Hall (SH) and the latter figures are from her first year of working.</p> <p><i>GQ: Are these trend figures last year's?</i> Answer: Yes they are taken from RaiseOnline data.</p> <p>SH has now been working on a more consistent approach to attendance as shown by the attendance flow chart. (in governor documents). Those with 97 to 100% attendance receive 'well-done' from tutors on a weekly basis. The chart shows what is done regarding attendance and who picks up what and when. As attendance falls the interventions change and there are key trigger points for action. This system was started last year and has been tweaked where necessary.</p> <p><i>GQ: So is this happening?</i> Answer: Yes – we have tweaked it – 92% was previously the trigger point for meeting with me as Pastoral Manager but only 4 days off were needed last year</p>	

IC1617:21 continued	<p>to fall to 92% and it might be someone was genuinely poorly for that short a time so that happens below that now.</p> <p>One of the circulated documents shows a summary of SH's routines re attendance. Home visits are part of this e.g. she stood outside a Year 11's house for 20 minutes this morning until he got up and dressed and came to school. SH is trying to build up pupils by postcode in areas. From 8 am SH gets texts from parents on a school provided phone and can pick up and bring to school. There is a particular focus on Pupil Premium pupils with less than 90% attendance.</p> <p><i>GQ: What happens if SH is absent?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: Pastoral managers would still have lists of the vulnerable students and someone else would be able to double up for a while to cover. But she is key to the process.</i></p> <p>A sample tutor attendance sheet was shown to governors and SS explained how it relates back to the flow chart. Those marked as 'green' are commended. This system is used across 9 tutor groups in the 5 years. Summary documents are produced on a regular basis and show week on week attendance - the sample shown to governors is Year 10. Overall attendance is shown and also Pupil Premium attendance and those showing concern in relation to attendance – those marked as green are improving. On the sample there are 12 with cause for concern and these have actions against them and external agency involvement and any medical concerns are recorded.</p> <p><i>GQ: Are we getting a noticeable improvement in attendance?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: From a monitoring point of view we have a better picture of where we are and SH picking pupils up to bring in helps. However we have some really tricky cases where we have invited parents in to discuss and they don't come – and their children continue not to come. If an intervention doesn't work we change it. Sometimes of course there is a genuine reason for a longer absence.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: Has the lawsuit regarding authorising holiday in school time had any impact?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: We are liaising with other schools regarding this difficult area.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: At which point do you invoke the law?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: If the parent will not come in we may involve the Prevention Team or a child protection referral may be considered if there is a possibility of neglect.</i></p> <p>It was noted last year that disadvantaged pupils were not doing particularly well in terms of attendance and it was focussed on in June and July particularly. We also identified attendance concerns with the then Year 7 (7 pupils) and tracked them from September in Year 8 – the greens on this term's figures show % improvement. Those who have improved significantly are not then tracked as closely.</p> <p><i>GQ: Do we have a report that shows those who were persistent non-attenders last year that have now come out of that category?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: Governors have been provided with two case studies which show intervention and then the subsequent improvement.</i></p> <p>Governors thanked SS for his report.</p> <p>It was agreed to look at the possibility of following the fining and prosecution route for those parents where all avenues had been explored</p>
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IC1617:22	<p>Minutes of the previous Improvement Committee held on 3rd November 2016.</p> <p><u>a. Approval</u> The minutes of 03/11/16 were deemed to be a true record and were APPROVED and duly signed by the Chair of the Committee.</p> <p><u>b. Matters Arising</u> There were no matters arising not already dealt with on the agenda.</p>	Clerk to file
IC1617:23	<p>Raise Online Presentation - JP</p> <p>It was explained to governors that the Raise Online document is now in a new format with different analyses. The in depth analysis on the first 7 of the 58 pages has been summarised and was distributed at the meeting. This is the key data which external eyes- including Ofsted will focus on. The figures are based on the first results from the summer examinations and Richmond School had large numbers of resits in Maths, English and Science which requires a second analysis. Also the bottom two sets were allowed to do Applied Science which doesn't feed in to Progress 8. These factors affect the data and make it look even worse than it is. The disadvantaged pupil figures on Raise Online have taken a significant downturn because of under-performance in that Year 11 cohort.</p> <p><i>GQ: Would the factors you have mentioned affect a lot of schools?</i> Answer: Probably yes, particularly the EBAC bucket criteria – some decisions schools took 3 years ago may have changed this. Many schools will have resits which will change the data. Ofsted have to take into account all data sets – at the last visit to Richmond the inspector had the Raise Online data and we had to produce additional evidence.</p> <p><i>GQ: Can this data trigger an Ofsted visit?</i> The rest of the data and our post 16 look relatively OK but the disadvantaged data is poor and doesn't look good and could trigger a visit.</p> <p><i>Governor comment: Newcastle schools were told recently that a lot of previously 'good' schools would be deemed 'requiring improvement' on their progress.</i> The disadvantaged measures on the data dashboard in 2015 were good – if the old measures are used on 2016 data it reads as 996.5 which is OK but the new EBAC measures and Progress 8 yield a poor result.</p> <p>Page 1 of the summary shows an overall +0.02 which is not significantly positive. The disadvantaged figure is – 0.59 (rounded up to –0.6) revisiting the data the best result is –0.48 which is still significantly negative. If the Applied Science grade is counted as an Additional Science grade the resulting –0.41 is still significantly negative.</p> <p>Page 2 – the effect of persistence absence on these figures is analysed. There were 4 non-attenders in last year's Year 11, 3 of whom were disadvantaged students. If these 4 are taken out of the overall figure the +0.02 would be +0.09 and if the 3 are taken out of the disadvantaged figure the progress eight rises from –0.48 to –0.27 which would then no longer be significantly positive. (In the current Year 11 there is only one partial attender but there is a similar problem of poor attendance with some current Year 10 and Year 9 students).</p> <p>94% Disadvantaged students made progress in line with national expectations – the reality is still not good but is not as significantly bad as the figures suggest.</p> <p><i>GQ: Do Ofsted accept this type of explanation?</i> Answer: It depends on the position of the overall data – last visit the area of disadvantaged students was not a specific focus. If what the school says is legitimate evidence Ofsted will listen.</p>	

<p>IC1617:23 continued</p>	<p><i>GQ: With non-attenders affecting results so obviously can't such pupils be removed from roll?</i> Answer: Not easily – it is very frustrating. For example a Year 10 parent was very distressed when the prosecution route was proposed – the children didn't care and the mother didn't know what to do – the prosecution route just makes that parent feel worse and there is not much more the school can do – external agencies are already involved – there is a younger sibling in Year 9. <i>GQ: Can the police be involved as they are breaking the law?</i> Answer: Yes today this has been actioned by the home-school liaison officer – the police have been given some context but we have yet to see whether this has any effect. Year 10 as a group need to be a focus – there are 3 persistent non-attenders currently, all of them disadvantaged pupils. This is a real concern. This takes a great amount of ED's time and is not due to a medical concern – it may be a mental health issue in the above case but the family will not engage with mental health services so no referral can occur. <i>GQ: Are any of these forces children?</i> Answer: No they are all good attendees. Table 3 shows the data in break-down groups. Taken across the whole school there are no significantly negative Progress 8 scores. There is a large cohort of mid-prior attainers with very positive outcomes. The disadvantaged cohort have significantly negative outcomes in both the mid and the high prior attaining groups whilst the low prior attainers are largely in line with national figures. Table 4 takes the disadvantaged non-attenders out and then the group is no longer significantly under-performing. The school can show detailed action plans of what has been done for these children. <i>GQ: Do we get information regarding attendance issues from the primary school when they come into Year 7?</i> We do get information regarding poor attenders and sometimes detail as to why – sometimes we don't find out initially and we have to enquire - the information varies depending on the primary school. It can be challenging for some children – a big change from a small school with one teacher to a large school with multiple teachers – we could do with more information about strategies the primary school has tried already. Table 5 shows English results where outcomes are strong – there are no significant negative areas either across the school or with the disadvantaged cohort. Table 6 shows Maths. The comparisons made this year compare our disadvantaged students with non-disadvantaged nationally – rather than the previous practice of comparing our disadvantaged group with our non-disadvantaged group. Attainment indices across the school are above national average. This year in Year 11 some interventions have changed and there is currently only one persistent non-attender who is not a disadvantaged student.</p>
<p>IC1617:24</p>	<p>School Improvement Plan – Focus on Disadvantaged Student Outcomes – ED Governors have already received updates in the form of an impact document, a spending plan, an overall statement and narrative. ED distributed a 10 key developments sheet at the meeting. These developments are designed to address the issues in this cohort. ED highlighted the following: 1. Targeted English intervention with a group of 15 students who under-performed in their PPE exam in the hope of an improved result.</p>

IC1617:24 continued	<p>2. A Year 11 action plan prioritising a high prior attaining group of 11 students – looking at their timetables, pairing them with key staff for support and study skills development and giving learning centre time for extra study. This has required clever management and the success will be measured by Aiming High improvements, ATL grades and final results</p> <p>3. The mentoring system has been reviewed and changed and there are now different pathways. One of these is Passport to Prom where students earn points and rewards to open their access to the Prom e.g. by 100% attendance, getting no C's for poor behaviour, attending extra interventions etc. Another is Aiming for As for the high prior attaining disadvantaged students to develop their study skills, their motivation and aspirations. Success will be measured by ATL grades, passport to prom progress and final results.</p> <p>4. GCSE Pod – a whole school initiative where 2 I-Pads are to be given on loan to hard working disadvantaged students to use to access GCSE Pod and develop their independent study skills. This will be reviewed to see how it impacts the cohort.</p> <p>5. Specialised support for Year 11 in English and Maths - groups in both with target disadvantaged pupils in to support with the aim of developing their subject knowledge and increasing progress. Success measure: key students Aiming High, ATL and results.</p> <p>6. Developments re attendance – More collecting of students and active meetings with parents – success measured by improved attendance</p> <p>7. Learning Hub – a live action research project where a group of 14 staff receive some training input regarding disadvantaged students and will then look at what is going on in the classroom. They will employ the new techniques and methods and then share and roll out to the rest of the school.</p> <p>8. Key Stage 3 developments – essential disadvantaged cohort summaries to sharpen data to better tailor interventions further down the school. This will pick up which issues are pertinent to which cohort so that we can tailor interventions. Also Year 10 aspirations activity for high prior attainers with Lead Learning Managers.</p> <p>9. Reading support via the 6th form - Reading Matters (a charitable organisation) provided training to 6th formers who are then paired up with key under-performing/disadvantaged students for weekly interventions. Last year 8 out of 12 students paired in this way improved their reading scores by 6 months or more.</p> <p>10. Whole staff training planned for 17th January on these developments to support staff working with disadvantaged students to help them achieve their best. This will raise the profile of the cohort and give staff tools for moving these students on.</p> <p>There is a lot going on and staff need to work together to achieve the desired results.</p> <p><i>GQ: For the reading supporters from the 6th form do you use volunteers?</i> Answer: Year before last we didn't and trained 30 but several dropped out so this time we decided to get them to apply – we have 10 to 12 volunteers but who will see it through.</p> <p><i>GQ: Could this be done lower down the school?</i> Answer: It could. We would have to choose the Year 10/11 supporters carefully but it could be successful.</p> <p><i>Governor comment: Reading support is notorious for raising reading age quickly but not then transferring to study – but Reading Matters does also develop broader skills of decoding and comprehension.</i></p>
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<p>IC1617:24 continued</p>	<p><i>GQ: Have staff noticed a difference from this in the main subjects?</i> Answer: We will have to gather this information <i>GQ: Is the Learning Centre supervised?</i> Answer: Yes it is purposeful and useful work. <i>GQ: Does it help in all subjects e.g. food technology?</i> Answer: The challenge of any intervention is to roll it out further – staff are aware of support needs/reading ages and with more staff training they should be better able to support these students. Different departments will hook into this cohort and apply training and interventions appropriate to their subject area. <i>GQ: The Passport to Prom scheme – I find a bit uncomfortable as a concept – does it happen for all students not just Pupil Premium?</i> Answer: Students involved feel it is a motivational tool across a number of areas – attendance, behaviour, performance etc. it is used with both Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students.</p>	
<p>IC1617:25</p>	<p>Attendance – DC Additional information sheet re Attendance up to half-term 2 2016 was handed out to governors and DC added the following: Last year's Year 7 at this point in year was 97.2% attendance, with 13 students below 90% whereas this year it is 95.5% with 30 below 90%. Key factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/3 of the students below 90% are within 1 day of being above 90% • Illness in term 1 was 0.3% higher than same time last year • The most important thing is to know who the students are and what interventions are having an impact. <p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case lists have actions against each student • There is a clear picture of attendance to work with • There is a trend of improvement • Challenging the gap needs to continue - At end of term 1 10% of persistent non-attenders were non-disadvantaged students as compared to 31.8% disadvantaged • Work could be done on the reasons as to why students don't attend – if any governor is interested in looking in more detail at this they would be welcome. 	<p>All governors</p>
<p>IC1617:26</p>	<p>Additional Item JP was pleased to be able to inform governors that 6 students in Year 13 have received offers of Oxbridge university places.</p>	
<p>The next meeting of the Improvement Committee is confirmed as Thursday 2nd March 2017 at 4.30pm</p>		
<p><i>Note: The colour coding links to the three key roles of governance questioning; RED for 'setting strategic direction'; BLUE for 'holding headteacher to account for educational performance'; GREEN for 'ensuring financial health, probity and value for money'</i> There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 5.50pm</p>		