

Chair of Governors Report to Parents

Post-OFSTED Response Plan

As parents and carers will know, Ecclesfield School was required by OFSTED to produce a plan for immediate improvement as a result of the inspection in January.

The staff at School have been working enormously hard to ensure that students have every opportunity of succeeding in their education, though naturally have been concentrating in the last two months on Y11 and the summer exams.

In March, the school submitted its post-OFSTED action plan. The priority actions proposed by the School were:

- 1 Improve outcomes for all pupils, especially Disadvantaged, SEND, and High Attaining cohorts, and Science groups.
- 2 Improve quality of teaching and its impact on all pupils, especially Disadvantaged, SEND, and High Attaining cohorts, and Science groups.
- 3 Improve standards of Personal Development, Behaviour, Welfare and Safety.
- 4 Improve effectiveness of Leadership and Management.

The Governing body set up a team of seven Governors to monitor the progress of the actions listed in the Response Plan – to ensure that the appropriate action were taken and the proposed deadlines were achieved. Individual Governors were allocated the following areas of the School's activities; Leadership and Management; Pastoral issues; Teaching and Learning; Curriculum issues; Disadvantaged and SEND students; High Attaining students. Governors were expected to contact the member(s) of staff named as responsible in the Response Plan, to visit the School to see what progress is being made and to ask for appropriate data to show that the outcomes are being achieved within the timescales. In addition, five external reviews have been carried out; Governance; Disadvantaged Students; SEND; High Attaining Students; Behaviour Management Systems. Feedback has not yet been received from the Disadvantaged Students and the Behaviour Management Systems reviews, but details will be given in the next Chair of governors report in July.

Governance There has been a full external review of the way the Governing Body operates by the National Governors Association, which resulted in training for Governors on 22nd May, to be followed by a full report and recommendations from the consultant.

SEND Recommendations from the SEND review have already resulted in a restructuring of the department, ensuring clear lines of accountability, and the appointment of a full-time SEND Co-ordinator. Recommendations in the report on SEND have been translated into a plan of action, with agreed timeline and allocated responsibilities.

High Attaining Students The link Governor believes that the external review is a useful starting point for evaluating where external support will be most effective. Meetings and training sessions have been arranged to ensure that monitoring of students' progress is as rigorous as possible, but the School needs to set realistic deadlines for improved provision. The Assistant Head teacher for Teaching and Learning has produced a detailed Action Plan, with responsibilities and deadlines, and the link Governor participated in feedback from students. Meeting and training sessions for Curriculum Leaders and lead Teachers are now arranged to improve the School-wide leadership involvement in achieving the aims in the School Action Plan for High Attaining students. A written report is expected soon from the external consultant.

Science The School employed a full-time Director of Science in March and a number of initiatives and monitoring procedures have been put in place. The Director of Science has produced a comprehensive plan to improve the teaching of Science subjects and the climate for learning is being closely monitored, and as a result shows improvement. Although it is very late in the Y11 final term, forecasts for GCSE results are showing better percentages for A*-C, though still below the School target.

Curriculum Issues The link Governor met with the Deputy Head for Curriculum, with the aim of monitoring increasing rates of progress in Maths and English, and improving Behaviours for Learning through Home Learning.

A huge amount of extra provision and intervention has been put in place, especially for Y11, and forecasts show a gradual improvement, most notably for disadvantaged students. Lower down the School, the Numeracy Policy has been updated and will be presented to Governors in June. Considerable work still needs to be done to improve student behaviour for learning, and home learning is quite variable and needs to be consistently good in all departments. The GRIT Passport will be used in the lower school to help competence in English and Maths, and more information on this will be provided for parents.

Teaching and Learning The link Governor met with the Assistant Head responsible for TLA and also with five teachers from different departments. Although the formal assessment of TLA was fully understood by staff, and well documented, there was an unexplained disparity between School evaluation of teaching and learning, and that of OFSTED. There are inconsistencies apparent between departments in the confidence of those appointed to assess TLA, and in the informal procedures, both in the practice adopted and in frequency. The link Governor made it clear that good practice should be applied consistently across all departments. The teaching provided by temporary staff should be of the same standard as that of permanent staff, and SLT should be fully aware of the quality of this teaching.

Leadership and Management The external review of Governance is covered earlier in this report.

The Senior Leadership Team has been operating significantly below full strength this year but the return of two senior leaders from maternity leave will bring SLT back to near-capacity. Additionally, the school is in the process of appointing Associate Assistant Headteachers to add capacity to the team, each taking a role in line with the identified priorities of the post-Ofsted action plan. It is anticipated that these changes will make a considerable difference to the operational effectiveness of the senior leadership team.

The two link Governors are meeting separately with the Headteacher and other members of SLT. One Governor is in the process of formulating proposals and timescales for monitoring effectiveness of decision making and devolving decisions from SLT downwards. The other link Governor is reassured that “there is a real focus on the areas of concern regarding Leadership and Management and a consistent drive to further improve practices and procedures.” All the Actions in the Response Plan under the headings “To improve the effectiveness of senior leaders” and “To improve the quality of middle leaders so that all are as effective as the very best” are either completed or ongoing and there is consistent evidence that progress is being made against critical objectives.

Governors will continue to monitor progress and to report findings to parents. The next report will be in July.

If you have any questions with regards to the contents of this report, please contact the school via the email address enquiries@eccoschool.com, addressing your email FAO Chair of Governors.

Rob Walker

Chair of governors