



Minutes of the Alde Valley Academy ARC Meeting

Date of meeting	July 11th 2017	
Venue	Colchester Academy	
Members present	Heidi Hoskin (Chair) Linda Bamford Cassandra Williams Mike Wilson	Director of Primary Education Director of Secondary Education Regional Executive Principal (Observing) Principal, Alde Valley Academy
Apologies	No	
Absent	No	
In attendance	Jane March – PA to CEO Mary Mckeeman (observing) Sam Elms – Clerk	

The meeting met its quorum

Areas of challenge during discussions indicated in bold text.

Agenda Item 1	Welcome & Apologies
Discussion	Heidi welcomed Mike Wilson to the meeting, introduced herself as Director of Primary Education and explained that she would be chairing the meeting. She asked everyone around the table to introduce themselves. There were no apologies.

Agenda Item 2	Declaration of interests
Discussion	There were none.

Agenda Item 3	Minutes of the last meeting
Discussion	The Chair explained that she had not received a set of Minutes from the previous meeting. Mike confirmed that he had not received a set either and they were not on the website. Minutes didn't go out and are not on the website. She explained that they would normally be circulated to him about two weeks after the meeting for him to

	check for factual accuracy and they would be signed and uploaded onto the website.
Action	Heidi agreed to chase the Minutes and circulate them for signature.

Agenda Item 4	Matters arising		
Discussion	No Minutes available for this item		
Action	What:	Who:	By when:

Agenda Item 5	Actions from previous Arc meeting		
Discussion	<p>Heidi took each of the actions from the previous Arc meeting in turn, asking Mike to report against them.</p> <p>February 2017 sickness figures</p> <p>Mike expressed surprise that this was raised. He explained that there were 2 members of the staff away on long-term sick leave, one of which has returned and the other is due to return to work in September. He expressed the view that with a FTE of 24 it doesn't take much to affect the absence figures. He expressed concern about the comments made about the number of staff taking time off for "personal" reasons, but he explained that this was as a result of redundancies and staff were requesting time off to attend interviews, which skewed the figures.</p> <p>Mike was asked whether HR were involved in managing the absences?</p> <p>Mike explained the Academy's process for managing sickness, including referral to Occupational Health, and back-to-work interviews with himself.</p> <p>Do you follow the Trust's Absence Policy?</p> <p>Mike explained that the Academy follows the Policy and uses the Principal's discretion in extenuating circumstances. He explained that having gone through four extensive restructures in two years that it is important to operate a "fair", consistent system, judging every case on its own merit and keeping staff on board.</p> <p>Do you have Systems and processes in place for checking and monitoring?</p> <p>Mike confirmed he did.</p> <p>Advertise the Academy's excellent results</p> <p>Mike confirmed that the results have been advertised on the website, via social media, banners outside the Academy and have communicated with local politicians and the Houses of Parliament as well as advertising them at events within the Academy.</p>		

It was noted that the Academy has excellent links with Radio Suffolk and Mike confirmed that he has done a number of BBC interviews, not just regarding the examination results but other successes within the Academy. Mike explained that he was developing more media contacts and was pleased with the amount of coverage the Academy was achieving.

Improvement targets to be set

Mike explained that the focus within the Academy is on Quality First teaching and the target was for all teachers to consistently deliver good or outstanding lessons. He said that currently every teacher was capable of delivering at least a good lesson and those identified as requiring improvement were all leaving at the end of the Summer term.

Mike explained that the biggest change has been the delegation of responsibility from SLT to Middle Leaders, explaining that they had been given much more responsibility to QA the books and lesson delivery.

How are the teachers identified as requiring improvement supported?

Mike explained that the Lead Practitioner provides them with an individual support package and the experience has been that this has moved a teacher from "RI" to "Good". He explained that the focus on Quality First teaching was beginning to show in outcomes, both in exam results and in the quality of teaching and learning.

Do you formalise the support packages?

Mike explained that this was an area of development. He went on to say that the member of staff responsible for doing this had left and that the Academy was currently developing a system of accountability at Middle Leadership Level, which he admitted was at present a weakness.

Report on top, middle and lower performing Pupil Premium

Mike set the context by explaining that in a year group of 79 pupils there are only 2 or 3 pupils in each band (top, middle and lower) He reported that last year the upper Pupil Premium children performed very well against the National target, which was reflected in the Raise Governor Dashboard. He highlighted a cohort of middle ability boys who need additional support as a cause for concern, which again is highlighted in Raise. He explained that the Academy was using 4Matrix to analyse every child in every subject to identify where they were not making the required progress. He reported that last year they did much better in Maths than in English, but explained that the English department was strong, so wasn't concerned about it this year.

Summing up - Upper Pupil Premium pupils are performing well, lower Pupil Premium pupils are performing well, middle Pupil Premium boys are a concern. He added that it isn't just Pupil Premium pupils, but the gap between boys' and girls' attainment is wide across the Academy. **There was a note to pick this up later.**

SEF

Mike explained that no action was required because it had been noted that the layout of the Alde Valley Academy SEF was very good and he has been asked to

	share it as an example of best practice. The SEF is being re-drafted to reflect the current situation.		
Action:	What:	Who:	By when:

Agenda Item 6	Issues raised at RIG (Rapid Improvement Group) meetings
Discussion	<p>RIG to be discussed (<i>Please note the clerk did not have a copy of the RIG</i>)</p> <p>Linda Bamford commented that the RIG was ‘very detailed’ and explained that the format of the RIG is going to change. Mike commented that he found the information in the RIG useful for the Principal to have, so urged the Trust not to change it too much.</p> <p>Section 1 Learner Achievement</p> <p>Mike was clearly concerned about the low prior attainment of children coming in to key stage 2 as a significant risk to learner achievement and progress. He explained that the children coming in are all significantly below National age-expected, which presents both challenge and opportunity for improvement and progress.</p> <p>What actions are you taking?</p> <p>Mike explained that the Academy is trying to work with the local primary schools to improve literacy and numeracy, by sending an English teacher and a Lead Practitioner in numeracy to work with them to bridge the gap between key stage 2 and 3. He explained that there was also a Lead Practitioner focused on literacy catch-up in Year 7, who is willing to go out to the primary schools. He said that the primary schools are not particularly receptive because they are “too busy” and it is becoming more of a challenge to get access.</p> <p>Do you test when the children arrive?</p> <p>Mike explained that they test within the first two weeks, using the literacy and numeracy SATS papers to establish where the gaps are and to set a benchmark. He explained that Year 7 catch-up funding was being used to plug the gaps and whilst numeracy was very successful literacy was not, but he explained that next year he would be using a Lead practitioner and the position looks stronger.</p> <p>Linda referred to Mike’s intention to develop a differentiated curriculum with Quality First Teaching and asked what the impact of the narrow curriculum in key stage 3 would have.</p> <p>Mike explained that the impact is the focus on literacy and numeracy, which will be tweaked to allow for the re-introduction of music into the curriculum at Key Stage 3 to act as the gateway into the community; important as a community school. He said that it was already having an impact as illustrated by the press coverage.</p> <p>Mike explained that the assessment process was changing to one that everyone understands and one that is reflects GCSE grades, providing a proper “flight path” from year 8-11 with differentiation where necessary along the route, rather than just looking narrowly at year 11.</p>

There was a discussion about the assessment process and it was agreed that the exam results and analysis from Key Stage 3, 4 and the 3 students in Key Stage 5 will be reviewed at the next ARC. Mike explained that everyone is working in the dark with regards to progress measures and outcomes. A discussion took place around how to promote results amidst the confusion. Mike explained that he would like to achieve 40% plus 5 A*-C including English and Maths and around the National outcomes with regards to progress, which he thought was around -0.2.

The RIG noted that a lot of activity had taken place and that every member of the senior team has evidence of the work they have been doing.

Have you collected the evidence of the impact of the work?

With regards to teaching and learning the impact is the outcomes and with regards to Pupil Premium the impact is what happens in the specialist building for 11-18 year olds.

Can you give me an example of the impact of the Year 7 catch up fund?

Mike explained that outcomes have risen in numeracy, which is reflected in the data following regular testing throughout the year.

Mike explained that the impact statements are in the SEF. It was noted that Ofsted is more interested in the RIG than the SEF. Mike was asked to reflect the evidence in the RIG.

Linda drew attention in the RIG to the number of leavers, commenting that Alde Valley is a small school with a significant recruitment problem, which impacts negatively on its finances. Mike explained that the leavers were not going to another school locally, but were moving away. However, there were a number of joiners coming from competitor schools and he explained that the Academy has experienced the highest increase in numbers in 6 years.

Mike explained that Alde Valley is at a disadvantage because if a pupil, who lives to the West of the A12 is refused a place in a competitor school, the Local Authority allocates a place at the nearest school with places, which is the Free School. If they decline it and want to come to Alde Valley they can, but they will not be eligible for free transport. He explained that the Suffolk transport policy doesn't help and he has spoken to the transport department, but to no avail.

4.3 key areas that need prioritising in SEND before the next RIG (page 22)

Has this been acted on?

Mike went through the list and reported that everything on the list had been acted upon. There was a discussion about EHCPs. Mike stated that it was well known that Alde Valley Academy is not an ideal choice for pupils with SEND EHCPs. He added that the Higher Tier Funding had been used to appoint another TA to work across the specialisms in non-specific areas to complement the need specific support the Academy already has in place. He referred to the number of students with EHC plans on page 22 and said that the numbers next year would remain static.

Year 10 Data

Mike explained that he was nervous about the data. The current data shows students achieving significantly below what the outcomes will be, so it's difficult to

have a meaningful discussion. He said that he preferred to use predicted, however there is an argument that you have to look at both. He highlighted the issue with the gender gap. Boys significantly underperform in all areas. In a cohort of 72 children 16 boys come from the same estate and the Key stage 2 data shows the same data as they have come through the system. He highlighted it as a potential issue that they are trying to remedy through additional support in English and looking to take 14 boys out of Business Studies and putting them on to a finance course.

Does the current School Develop Plan reflect all of the priorities?

Mike explained that the disadvantaged community is the number 1 priority and it stretches outside the school gates.

There is a gap between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils of 18% can you comment?

Mike commented that Alde Valley was below National last year in terms of the gap, which was 29%, and this year it will be below National. He added that he was not complacent.

Linda said that at the next ARC she would like to look at how the boys were performing in Key Stage 3 to see whether there will be a problem in key Stage 4 and what strategies are in place to alleviate it.

Mike agreed.

Heidi said that she would also like to review the Pupil Premium Plans and the School Development Plans at the next ARC.

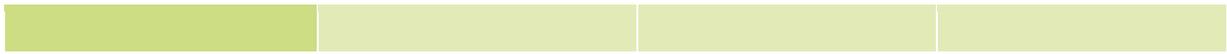
Mike explained that the Academy had identified 10 core priorities to focus on in the SEF, which are as follows:

1. Raise Aspirations for the disadvantaged Community and raise their outcomes to be in line with the non-disadvantaged.
2. Encourage the uptake of the full Ebacc for appropriate student.
3. Ensure the teachers use prior assessment to maximise progress for learners.
4. Ensure consistency in assessment across subject areas.
5. Ensure attainment and progress for SEND students is at least in line with National outcomes.
6. Narrow the gap between boys' and girls' attainment and progress.
7. Ensure that literacy and numeracy are integrated across all student learning.
8. Ensure that teachers use prior assessment to maximise progress for all learners through Quality First teaching.
9. To consult on the termination of the Post-16 provision.
10. To support 'Suffolk New College - on the Coast' to ensure its financial viability.
11. To secure outcomes for the last remaining cohort of Post-16 students.

It was suggested that Mike groups them under bigger headings. It was proposed that Mike discuss this with Cassandra and that it is reviewed at the next ARC.

	A discussion took place about performance management. Cassandra will be part of the QA process. Mike was asked to bring the information from the QA to the next ARC.		
Action	What:	Who:	By when:
	Review data (exam results and analysis and the students in Key Stage 4)	Mike	Next ARC
	Review boys' performance	Mike	Next ARC
	Review Pupil Premium Plans and SEF	Mike	Next ARC
	Sreamline the priorities for SEF. Bring an example of an anonimised performance management review (leadership and main scale teacher)	Mike	Next ARC

Agenda Item 7	Key actions from any recent monitoring visits		
Discussion	<p>Heidi asked whether there was anything to raise from any external reports? There was an external peer review and the Academy was judged to be "good".</p> <p>What was the evidence base? The reviewer did a learning walk, scrutiny of exercise books, both in the classroom environment and by collecting 100 books in. He also interviewed students at random.</p> <p>Do you agree with the findings? Mike explained that since the Review the SEF has been rewritten. He said that in his view the Academy is 'good". He explained that with the building at the back of the school he felt that the Academy was strong in terms of supporting the disadvantaged community and a strong case for outcomes. The priority has to be making Middle Leaders more accountable.</p> <p>Linda asked Cassandra to look at this during the QA process.</p>		
Action	What:	Who:	By when:
	How are Middle Leaders assuring ensuring the impact of Quality First Teaching	Mike and Cassandra	Next ARC



Agenda Item 8	Drive Teams		
Discussion	<p>Linda asked Mike whether he had a Drive Team up and running?</p> <p>Mike replied that he had. He explained that he was happier now that there was an independent Chair in place and that the first meeting was next week. Heidi asked him to look at the questions on Section 8 of the Agenda with the Drive Team, specifically focussing on Pupil Premium, Sports Premium, Safeguarding, outcomes.</p> <p>Linda asked that the member of the Drive Team responsible for safeguarding attends the next ARC meeting if at all possible.</p>		
Action	What: Linda asked that the member of the Drive Team responsible for safeguarding attends the next ARC meeting if at all possible.	Who: Mike	By when: Next ARC

Agenda Item 9	Quality of Teaching and Learning		
Discussion	<p>Heidi refereed to the list on the agenda and explained that she wanted to return to them at the next ARC. She highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance management• CPD• Pupil Voice• External Validation.		
Action	What: See above.	Who:	By when:

