

**Minutes of the meeting of the University Academy of Engineering School  
Advisory Board  
held at 4.00 pm on Thursday, 3 December 2020  
MS Teams**

**Present**

Chris Mallaband (Chair)  
Alex Drake (Vice-Chair)  
Safia Barikzai  
Philipp Herzberg  
Zakir Matin  
John Taylor

**Apologies**

Dan Cundy

**Absent**

Veronica Allen

**In attendance**

Ciara Carroll

**1. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed the members and attendees to the meeting. The above apologies were noted.

It was noted that Veronica Allen was absent without apologies.

**2. Declarations of interest**

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

The SAB approved the minutes of the meetings held on 9 July 2020 and 15 October 2020.

**4. Matters arising**

Supporting request for coronavirus costs

The Chair confirmed that the principal's request for help with covering coronavirus related costs has been reviewed in depth and a submission will be going to the Board on 15 December 2020.

Approve July 2020 minutes

This item is on the agenda and has been completed.

## 5. **Principal's report, including safeguarding update**

### Coronavirus

The SAB was informed that staff absence is the most significant issue as the end of term approaches. Cover is required for each class, even if the teacher can teach online from isolation. The Principal explained that there is a fine balance between functionality in staff meetings and having everything take place virtually; a recent staff planning meeting required use of the prep room. A risk assessment should be completed shortly following a positive test of a staff member at this meeting.

To give some time back to teachers, the school is considering teaching the last day's lessons at home and conducting the January INSET day through Zoom.

Following a question from the SAB, the Principal said that he had not seen a significant increase in non-coronavirus related absence, either stress-related or from other illnesses. He explained that the school is focusing on keeping staff morale as high as possible. The staff governor said that staff were more stressed but are focussed on pushing through to Christmas.

The Principal explained that the school is putting together a list of options for staff to do things in school that may not be possible in normal life, such as hiring gym equipment for a work-out after school. However, he emphasised that time and rest is currently the biggest need.

*The SAB queried how the school was managing the impact to children's learning if they are required to isolate at home.* It was explained that, following two positive cases in separate year groups, attendance had dropped significantly, even amongst students who were not advised to isolate. Behaviour and attitudes in school are positive and calm where regular teachers are in place. Following another question, it was confirmed that when a large number of children have to self-isolate, the timetable for the year in question will be reviewed and all children who are still attending school will have a qualified teacher assigned to their class. All lessons are streamed on-line, potentially with both teachers and students dialling in.

### 1 to 1 devices

This will prove to be a pivotal point in the process of educating students. Roll out to students has started with 6<sup>th</sup> form. The devices will be kept in lockers at school and are restricted to use in school, unless a full lockdown is enforced. A bursary scheme is available to give children devices at home if they are unable to supply their own.

### Year 6 recruitment

Recruitment remains static from last year to this year. This has implications for the budget and the school is looking to natural wastage to keep staff costs down.

### Professional development

The school is investing in CPD to support staff who are ready to make the move to SLT. A new role has been created of associate member to SLT, with provision for coaching and progress monitoring. The role is not substantive and will last for one year.

*Meirion Lewis joined the meeting.*

### Safeguarding

Governors noted that role descriptions and responsibilities for safeguarding would be rolled out across the Trust over the next term.

### Staffing

Governors were informed that, due to a shortage of good engineering teachers, the management had taken the decision not to offer engineering to new students at the UAE next year. *When asked if the school would wish to continue offering engineering as a subject if teachers were available*, the Principal explained that he felt that the school did not have appropriate facilities or equipment to offer the subject on site.

This situation is part of the bigger debate on renaming the school, as it is felt that the word 'Engineering' in the title is dissuading girls from applying to the school. In turn, the SAB wants to have a wider discussion with the Trust as to their vision for the school.

*Alex Drake left the meeting and Zakir Martin joined the meeting.*

### Assessment Year 11

Year 11 sat their mock papers just before October half term. Progress 8 figures indicate that students are doing as well as last year's Year 11, and better than the previous year's Year 11, at this time of year. However, the level of content delivered and still to be taught is at an earlier stage than would normally be the case.

The SAB queried the disparity between the maths and English results; maths is underperforming. The school is monitoring these figures closely to ensure that there are no real-world issues (versus modelling inconsistencies) emerging.

The parent governor raised a concern about communication of assessment information to parents. The Principal will investigate the particular issues raised.

### Assessment Year 13

Assessments have been completed for Year 13; the results look promising, but more data is required to make them comprehensive. An action plan is in place for every student with an identified concern.

#### **6. Development plan, including targets**

The Principal explained that the targets in the development plan have been updated to be more measurable. Formal setting of targets will take place following the principals' pay panel meetings on 9 December 2020.

#### **7. Assessment and achievement update**

This item was covered in agenda point 5.

#### **8. In-depth focus: Pupil Premium**

The Assistant Vice Principal (AVP) presented his report on PPG in the school. The current annual plan is being developed into a rolling three-year strategy, following changes to advised best practise. The new strategy will continue to focus on identifying barriers faced by the students, and the best strategies to tackle and overcome those barriers to enable closure of the PPG gap. This gap currently stands at half a grade in UAE.

*AD returned to the meeting.*

Governors were pleased to see the PPG plan and welcomed the sound principles on which it was based. Governors were keen to understand how the impact of the strategies would be assessed. Impact assessment will focus on exam results and various data drops throughout the academic year. PPG results will be reported separately, particularly at KS4.

It was acknowledged that this method of planning had not been used before; however, the school is confident that it will be successful. As this is a rolling programme, targets may change to better support the plan as strategies yield results. Student voice will be particularly important, to establish the change in attitude and approach to schooling as well as self-confidence and self-regulation.

*Governors questioned if the school was able to put resources in place, particularly in light of the coronavirus pandemic.* The school is moving to 1 to 1 devices which will support all students but particularly those who would struggle to access the internet and their learning at home, in the event of a total lockdown. PPG funding will be used to support the new planning.

## 9. **In-depth focus: Special Education Needs**

The AVP presented his report on Special Educational Needs (SEN) at the school. A restructure has taken place within the department to refocus it towards Inclusion and to include the EAL (English as an Additional Language) department. The current strategy focuses in developing expertise and linked strategies within each sub-department.

Higher Level Teaching Assistants will be trained to support the delivery of the strategy over the rest of the academic year.

*Following a question from the SAB, the AVP confirmed that the new structure is already bringing benefits to the school with more change projected over the academic year.*

## 10. **Policies**

Governors discussed the proposal to consult on the school's admissions policy. There is a requirement to consult on the school's admissions policy every seven years and the school is also proposing a change to its oversubscription criteria.

The school would like to move to a system of 'norm-based' fair banding. The principle behind this method is to allow the school to have a fully comprehensive intake. The fair banding method ranks by test outcome, splits the ranking into five groups and then reorders the ranking within those five groups based on distance from the school. This should allow the intake to mirror the achievement distribution of those making applications to the school.

The consultation will run from 20 December 2020 to the end of January 2021 and the policy will be ratified by the Board by 28 February 2021 for publication mid-March 2021.

## 11. **Governance review**

The committee noted the governance review and the planned roll-out of a new training programme for governors.

## 12. **Open Forum**

Governors confirmed that their questions had been answered during the course of the meeting and no other questions had arisen.

## 13. **Governors' visits and training**

Governors noted the safeguarding visit report and acknowledged that further clarification would be received shortly with regards to the safeguarding roles and responsibilities within the Trust.

14. **Annual business planner**

Governors noted the annual business planner for 2020-21

15. **Update from the MAT**

This update was not received as the Executive Principal was unable to attend the meeting due to a scheduling conflict.

16. **School Risk Register - updates**

Governors noted the current risk register.

**Date of next meeting  
4.00 pm, on Thursday, 28 January 2021**

**Confirmed as a true record**

..... (Chair)