



**Ninestiles Academy Trust
Progress and Standards Panel
Cockshut Hill School and Lyndon School
Tuesday 20th March 2018**

In Attendance

Catherine Anwar	CA	Chief Executive Officer
Gaetano Ferrante	GF	School Improvement Director – Secondary & 6th Form
Richard Beamish	RB	Chair of Cockshut Hill & Lyndon Academy Council, Trustee
Caroline Hick	CH	Vice Chair of Cockshut Hill & Lyndon Academy Council
Jason Bridges	JB	Principal, Cockshut Hill School
Vicky Creedon	VC	Vice Principal, Cockshut Hill School
Abid Butt	AB	Principal, Lyndon School
Mark Thorogood	MT	Vice Principal, Lyndon School

CA welcomed the panel to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. CA noted that they would be looking at Year 11 data specifically during this meeting and would be looking for ways to challenge, but mainly support colleagues in the lead up to the Year 11 GCSEs. CA noted that Jayne Smith (Trust Director of Maths) would be joining the meeting when Cockshut Hill is discussed.

Lyndon

CA asked AB to give the panel an overview of the data and explained the panel may pose questions throughout.

AB presented the data that was circulated in advance of the meeting and noted that improvements have been made in some areas, and in those subject areas that have not progressed, the reasons for which are known to the leadership team.

AB noted that English was causing concern and explained that despite collaborating across the trust on grade boundaries, the team leader for English decided to set her own. These boundaries were higher than those that the Trust English leads agreed. AB felt that this was done in order to give the students a nudge and not get complacent. However, this meant that English and overall achievement data was skewed.

CA asked whether middle leaders were aware of the reasons this type of data is collected; i.e. to scrutinise and support and to identify underperformance at a macro level. CA noted that if assessment isn't accurate then it makes the job of deploying appropriate resources very difficult. AB agreed and noted that middle leaders are currently moving forward and accepting support of the Trust and this message has been relayed. AB noted that after Easter he will have nearly a full complement of Assistant Principals (after almost a year of being short-staffed in leadership) and their roles will focus of the management and development of the middle leadership at the school.

GF expressed concern as to how the information of their current attainment is communicated to students currently. MT explained that action has been taken to rectify this issue and the students are aware of where they currently sit with regards to grades.

AB explained that next year there will be absolute clarity and the senior leadership team will be managing and directing the process to middle leaders. Layers of scrutiny will be built into this by one of the new Assistant Principals who takes up post after Easter.

CA questioned whether this was an issue in other subjects as well as English. AB explained that he felt a similar method was being used in science, but not to the same extent. AB noted that he felt middle leaders were erring on the side of caution and this has been a learning process for the senior leadership team in terms of their clarity and communication methods.

CA asked whether the new Assistant Principals that will be in post after Easter are receiving an induction beforehand. AB noted that they will be spending a day with MT and Syreeta Anderson (Vice Principal) prior to starting after Easter.

AB noted that the MFL team have struggled with assessments and identifying individuals that require support. The rigor of the new specification is causing them concern also. MT noted that they had not had the best experience in terms of line management over the last academic year due to staffing issues, but MT is now line managing and supporting them.

AB noted that History have also had a turbulent year in terms of lack of leadership and now in recovery mode to move on from this. There is a new Head of History in post who had a Rapid improvement plan in place for the remaining 8 weeks.

GF raised the point that AB is taking similar actions to those that took place last year, however last year no impact was demonstrated in this time period. GF questioned how AB could be sure that the strategies he had put in place will have an impact this year. AB explained that the strategies are being deployed more thoughtfully this year and in a more precise manner. They are using Venn diagrams as a tool to target students. AB noted that he felt there has been a positive shift in the culture this year and all activities are being quality assured. CA questioned if the strategy was much tighter this year – AB agreed that this was the case.

CA noted the need to address performance in exams and students needed to be taught how to perform. AB agreed with this as data has shown that students are capable, but it is not reflected in exam results.

AB noted they are being very directive with teachers this year about getting students to be responsible for their learning. Behaviour for learning is currently being revised to address this issue also.

CA asked how confident AB is with regard to the summer results and which group will have the most impact on the progress outcomes. AB noted that the disadvantaged group which cross over into the boys' group will have the most impact. AB noted that Jayne Smith (Trust Director of Maths) is delivering maths interventions to this group.

MT explained that the majority of the actions they have taken to raise outcomes have been put in place earlier this year as they have used the Venn analysis to quickly identify those who need support. They have used these Venns and met with pastoral managers responsible those students involved to look at how they can support them pastorally as well.

GF noted that triple science is a particular issue according to the data and questioned where the issues were. AB explained that Chemistry and Physics are relatively on track but Biology is not. There are historical teaching issues in Biology, however the team leader is well aware of the issues and it will be addressed through Easter school.

CA asked if the panel had anything further questions regarding the Year 11 data. They did not.

AB explained that Year 10 are in a more positive position than the current Year 11. They are working to challenging targets and AB feels they are demonstrating good progress on average.

Rapid Improvement plans are also in year place in year 10. RB noted that the figures dropped from December to January but have now picked up again. CA noted that the same issue was evident with the Ninestiles Year 10 data and CA believed it was due to a lack of assessment taking place across the trust for this particular cohort when they were Year 9. They are now being assessed robustly so the data should be more accurate as we move forward.

GF noted that he would be having discussions across the Trust secondary schools as to what assessments will take place for this cohort as they move into year 11, to assure there is no slippage and gaps in knowledge are evident for all.

CA questioned whether the staff knew the makeup of each cohort and were aware of their contexts and abilities. MT noted that this was coming through with subject team analysis, however one of the new Assistant Principals will be tasked with building this up and will be communicated at all levels going forward.

AB noted that overall they are positive and optimistic for both cohorts and are continuing to drive the strategies forward. CA asked whether there is anything more the trust can do to support Lyndon. AB noted that there was not at present.

CA thanked AB and his leadership team for the work they are currently doing for Year 10 and Year 11.

COCKSHUT HILL

CA welcomed Jayne Smith to the meeting and invited JB to present his data.

JB noted that the data for Maths shows there is a lot of work to be done, however feels the leadership team need to take action to ensure predictions are met. VC noted that they are planning to move several students from the higher paper to the foundation paper in order to shift their outcomes.

CA asked why the team felt this needed to be done. JB explained that boundaries are still very much a grey area across the board and that teachers are erring on the side of caution due to this. Jayne Smith clarified that the CPIs produced in November were done through the use of a genuine GCSE paper and grade boundaries. Jayne noted that the predictions were made on the fact that a student should be able to improve their grade by one level over the course of year, and in some student's cases two.

CA expressed concern that she was not hearing evidence of a systematic, holistic approach to securely predicting in maths. Jayne Smith explained that as the exam board produced a mock paper with no grade boundaries, therefore the Trust maths leaders collaborated and took the exam boards advice to use the summer 2017 grade boundaries and raise them slightly.

Jayne Smith highlighted that students were being swapped to the foundation tier as they would be not as prepared for the questions that were aimed at the lower end. CA asked how many students were being swapped. VC confirmed it was 20.

CA asked what Cockshut Hill were doing to address the issues in predictions and assessments. VC noted that the Head of Maths is using her own formula to predict the outcomes. VC noted there are anomalies that need to be addressed within these predictions.

VC noted that there were several cases of vulnerable students with mental health issues across the curriculum and they were planning to remove these students from taking as many subjects, for example, Spanish would be dropped in certain cases. VC noted that they would be meeting with parents and students to discuss this plan and propose the changes to them.

They are also re time-tabling students to target interventions where they are required. JB noted that attendance at interventions is high and Saturday Schools and Easter schools are in place for the upcoming weeks. They have moved the tutor group system from being grouped vertically, to being grouped by year after Easter. This is to enable maths teachers to have the year 11 groups and teach maths during tutor time. Aspire sessions have been changed to fit in intervention time also.

CH expressed concern as to how parents would take the news that their child was being removed from subjects at this late stage. VC accepted this may cause concern, but she assured CH they would be making it clear to parents that they had the best interests of their children in this strategy and it was all to benefit their Maths and English grades and life chances going forward. CH understood this, but noted it needs to be done very carefully.

GF questioned what action was being taken to address the literacy issue in exams and how students were being prepared to understand and answer the questions. JB noted this is being addressed through academic literacy and they are loading the classes with critical students with the best practitioners to address this.

JB noted that he felt PPEs were not currently being implemented effectively by doing all exams over 3 weeks. This is not a true reflection of the exam period. AB agreed that this could be a limiting factor in achieving accurate assessments at Lyndon also.

JB noted that a lot of extra teaching time is being given to Year 11 from the 2.5 hours of tutor time and 75 minutes a fortnight of aspire time. He is optimistic this will impact positively on data. CA agreed but expressed how important that what is being delivered in this extra time is effective and targeted.

RB noted the importance of being honest with the students as to why they are receiving so much extra support but relay a message of optimism and confidence in the at the same time.

GF suggested that at the end of each 6-week cycle, assessments should be made and communicated to the students so they can see how far they have progressed. CH agreed this would be motivational. GF noted they could use these assessments for further gap analysis.

JB continued to discuss the Year 10 data and noted that they were in a strong position compared to Year 11. The consensus is that they are a strong cohort and being well supported to achieve. They are using strategies and lessons learnt with the current Year 11 at earlier stages with the Year 10 cohort and the impact is evident.

VC explained that Knowledge Organisers have been created for all year groups across all subjects which holds all of knowledge in one place.

CA noted that in Maths, radical steps might need to be taken to ensure outcomes improve for Year 10 and 11. CA noted masterclasses could be delivered to large groups by the strongest teachers, with support from those that are weaker.

CA asked if the panel had any further questions or comments. They did not.

CA thanked JB and his team for the work they are doing to raise outcomes and noted the maths issue needs addressing rapidly.

Meeting concluded at 4pm.