

# Birmingham City University

## School Education

### Secondary Strategic Leadership Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the PGCE Secondary Partnership Committee held on Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

Ian Axtell	Secondary Partnership Coordinator and Subject Route Leader – Music (Chair)
Chris Bolton	PGCE Secondary Subject Route Leader – Drama
Peter Carr	PGCE Secondary Course Director & Subject Route Leader- Art & Design
Kelly Davey-Nicklin	PGCE Secondary Senior Lecturer – Music
Jean Dyson	PGCE Secondary Senior Lecturer – Art and Design
Tracey Goodyere	PGCE Secondary Subject Route Leader – Design & Technology
Don Newton	PGCE Secondary Subject Route Leader – Mathematics
Simon Spencer	Deputy Head of School of Education
Phil Taylor	Course Director - MTL & EPPS Education
Helen Thomas	PGCE Secondary Subject Route Leader – Science
Mandie Butler	Phoenix Collegiate – Science Mentor Representative
Catherine Coates	Perry Beeches - The Academy – Prof Mentor Representative
Edward Lee	Heartlands Academy – Drama Mentor Representative
Joanna Newman	Wood Green Academy – Music Mentor Representative
David Russell	ACE Academy – Professional Mentor Representative

**In attendance:** Matthew Waterhouse

- 1 To receive apologies for absence

Ryan Everson, Martin Fautley, Andrew Steed, Helen Yorke

- 2 To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

The minutes were considered and the Committee confirmed they contained no errors and were therefore accepted as an accurate record.

- 3 To consider the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

The Committee received that there were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

- 4 To monitor the progress of the PGCE Secondary Improvement Plan

#### **Appendix B**

It was reported that the purpose of the PGCE Secondary Improvement Plan was to measure the achievements of the PGCE Secondary Course against the targets that had been set out based on issues that had been raised by various sources. It was stated that input from schools on these achievements and targets is extremely valuable. The following points were made in relation to the PGCE Secondary Improvement Plan.

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School made the point that he would help the committee to understand the whole system. It was reported that the final column on the document provided details of the progress from the last meeting and therefore it would be more appropriate for the

committee to be more analytical of the document and discuss if the targets had been achieved and also the impact of this achievement.

Point one of the whole course section of the improvement plan related to Standard 5 and stated that data had shown that the trainees achievement against this Standard had not been as sharp as the other standards. It was reported that the committee should discuss if what had been put in place to address if what had had been put in place was worthwhile, as well as discussing the impact that school based colleagues have had.

Don Newton, Route Leader for Mathematics explained that a Senior Leader from a School had delivered 2 hour sessions to Mathematics trainees throughout the term and had been allowed to do this as part of her Professional Development. The Teacher had taken videos of herself teaching throughout the year, trainees had watched these videos and took part in discussion following this, it was stated that this was awe-inspiring and trainees gained a vast amount from this exercise.

It was reported that in Mathematics, schools often teach pupils in order to achieve certain grades but do acknowledge that there are two types of teaching. It was stated there was also an enlightened way of teaching and if this type of teaching was delivered correctly, there should be only one way of teaching. It was stated that the sessions helped to illustrate to trainees what an outstanding lesson looks like and that the use of video was becoming more powerful for developing trainees. Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School stated that Ofsted would ask how these sessions would help trainees to address Standard 5, Don Newton confirmed that the evidence of this was that only 1 trainee out of 25 had been given less than a grade 2 and 75% of trainees had achieved a grade 1.

Ian Axtell, Partnership Coordinator Route Leader for Music reported that it was important to focus on the whole course which incorporates the EPPS sessions. This was reported during the recent Ofsted inspection therefore it is important to show how the EPPS sessions are addressing the whole course. Phil Taylor, Course Director for MTL & EPPS Education informed the Committee that it is always difficult to show cause and effect between the EPPS sessions and the eventual outcomes however if possible, it would be useful to try and show this evidence as Ofsted were keen to see this. It was stated that this could be achieved through obtaining qualitative data from trainees in their PDP tasks and from gaining mentor feedback. Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School agreed and reported that this needed to be looked into very deeply in order to understand its effectiveness.

Mentor representatives were asked to feed back to the committee on how their trainee and school addressed Standard 5 – meeting the needs of all pupils, and gave potential ideas for how to address this in the future.

Joanna Newman, Music Mentor at Wood Green Academy stated that her trainee was strong and that she had engaged in in-depth differentiation with pupils in the class.

Edward Lee, Drama Mentor at Heartlands Academy stated that his trainee had focussed on 5 high focus pupils within the class and provided a separate sheet for the Teaching Assistant within the class based on the pupil's individual needs. It was stated that designing a similar template could help to address Standard 5. Tracey Goodyere, Route Leader for Design & Technology agreed and reported that in the past she has prepared a negotiated document with Teaching Assistants regarding Behaviour Management. The Committee agreed that the Teaching Assistants were present in a class to assist with pupils learning and not to manage behaviour, this was the focus of the classroom teacher.

Mandie Butler, Science Mentor at Phoenix Collegiate reported that when focussing on students with EAL, the trainee had used pictures to assist learning as talking and writing were not effective ways of doing this as the pupil did not understand English.

The committee were informed that Ofsted had reported in their inspection feedback that they were impressed with how the Birmingham City University Partnership addressed the needs of all pupils

but felt that they were not so well equipped at meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils in every class within the school.

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School gave a brief overview of Shareville, a Faculty Specific virtual environment learning resource that had been created for Primary, Early Years, Post Compulsory Education and Secondary Education within The Birmingham City University School of Education. It was reported that currently, the Secondary area is the least populated.

A brief demonstration of the software was given that included viewing some of the activities designed to replicate real life activities and scenarios that take place in Schools. It was discussed that the potential to develop training materials on Shareville would continue to be explored as the software challenges perceptions and pre-conceptions of what to expect before trainees work with the real thing however it does not exactly replicate the real thing.

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School encouraged the Committee to be forensic in their analysis of the partnership and the improvement plan and explained that as a group it was their responsibility to measure the effectiveness of what is taking place and decide if it is working and ultimately, are Birmingham City University producing top quality teachers. Although the plan had been effective at eradicating the number of trainees completing at a grade 3, the partnership is not converting those trainees at Grade 2 into Grade 1 fast enough and the importance of detailing what the partnership are going to do about this was raised.

**Action – PC**

**and IA**

Don Newton, Route Leader for Mathematics explained that schools would need to be committed to not thinking that trainees are arriving in schools as the finished product and that the committee would need to focus on what the partnership can do to encourage schools and mentors to develop young practitioners. It was also discussed that feedback from schools on whether what BCU are doing is making an impact and is therefore worthwhile,

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School reported that a new approach to the Improvement Plan was to be considered and more ideas needed to be developed around this. It was discussed that the quality of the trainee's journey should be addressed and therefore it is not just the summative, numerical data of trainees that achieve grade 1. The nature v nurture approach was discussed and Ian Axtell, Partnership Coordinator and Route Leader for Music reported that it was important for the Partnership to focus on their task of nurturing beginning teachers and maintain that it remained passionate about doing so.

It was summarised that the current improvement plan gave the progress achieved up until February and that the cycle to date would now be signed off. The discussion that had taken place today would feed discussions at the next Strategic Leadership Committee Meeting. The idea was put forward that the Improvement Plan should be called the Strategic Development Plan for the next academic year as the information discussed comes from the Strategic Leadership Committee Meetings.

**Action - PC**

## **5 BCU School of Education Ofsted inspection March/April 2014**

## **Appendix C**

The Committee were distributed a document containing a summary of the Key Strengths of the Birmingham City University Secondary Partnership as set out by the recent Ofsted inspection. Another document was also distributed which contained points for discussion in order to set out ways to improve. It was stated that Birmingham City University would value the involvement and input of school mentor colleagues to highlight and share good practice and areas for further improvement. The committee were asked to work in small groups to identify their initial ideas on the points raised on the discussion notes document that had been distributed to them. The following feedback was given verbally by the committee.

**Point 1 – Increase the proportion of trainees across all subjects, programmes and routes, who attain at an outstanding level by the end of their training.**

- The expectations cannot be the same for a trainee and for an experienced teacher of 20+ years however some mentors treat the standards the same.
- Often, trainees have secured employment towards the end of the placement and the motivation to push themselves and reach a 1 at the final stage is not there, tiredness can also affect trainees in this way.
- There is confusion of the grading for tutors and mentors, for example, for what period of time do trainees need to demonstrate that this is the level they are at, there can be issues with consistency.
- The length of half terms and the timetable can affect the trainees ability to consolidate the level that they are at, for example they may only teach a class once during a short half term if on a 2 week timetable with bank holidays etc. It is also however unfair to penalise trainees if they lack the opportunity to teach due to these circumstances.
- The word “consistently” is used in formative descriptors however trainees are worried about what exactly “consistently” means and in what context.

**Point 2 – Build on improvements in recruitment and selection to ensure increased completion and retention rates for all trainees in all subjects**

- There are often difficult, complex reasons that affect completion/retention rates
- Strategies to assist applicants could be set out by the Partnership
- Adjust what is expected before interview, often trainees are put off from applying and choose an institution where less rigorous pre-interview expectations exist.
- Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) can be developed. Schools are choosing to deliver and run SKE that they buy from institutions however SKE is only available in hard to recruit subjects. However, the concepts of SKE or pre-course activities can be applied to support accepted trainees for when the course begins. This could include developing PDP tasks to encourage the trainees thinking.
- Trainees could be sent pre-course tasks and bring trainees in to University for sessions, alternatively hold these sessions in partner schools.
- If trainees attend schools prior to attending the course there are less shocks when they actually attend placement.
- Often, trainees assume that the school experience they have pre course will be similar to their teaching placement however this does not always reflect what they actually experience.
- It would be good for schools to meet potential trainees pre-course and interviews can take place more in schools.
- Potential to apply to Birmingham City University and a cluster of partnership schools which may improve the strength of the partnership
- Take aspects from the Teach First Maths programme where trainees spend time with specialists in different areas whilst in school pre course.
- If trainees are confident and comfortable and have settled into partner schools already they may be more likely to gain an outstanding grade. It was raised that for certain subjects such as Drama, this wouldn't be possible as many of the trainees who attend the course previously worked in schools so pre-course they would be working and may not have the time to attend these sessions unless during summer holidays.
- It is very difficult to prepare a teacher to teach in every context, 40% of teachers leave the profession in the first 5 years of teaching. Possibility to tailor training for teachers accordingly in order to achieve better outcomes. This could however become a problem when trainees apply for jobs.
- The nature of the PGCE programme does mean that there are restrictions to what happens pre-course, however there is now possibly a model to be developed. The focus however should be more to do with what happens in schools.

The written ideas generated by committee members were then collated and can be found in Appendix C.

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School of Education reported that BCU are a member of UCET who support the nature of work that is carried out by the University. It was stated that BCU also work with the DfE and NCTL and that it was the intention of BCU to help the NCTL to create a clear definition of what School Led ITE consists of. Committee members were given a document and asked to take it away with them, they were asked to think about the points stated on the document and in order to develop a sense of strategy relating to the definition of School Led ITE. This would be covered at the next committee meeting.

**Action – SLC mentor representatives**

Phil Taylor, Course Director for MTL & EPPS Education distributed a document relating to the Birmingham City University EPPS Sessions and provided the committee with a summary of the information provided within this document. It was reported that the EPPS sessions were the generic core of the University part of training that were seen as a key strength by Ofsted following the recent inspection. The main purpose of the EPPS sessions were to bring forward key messages and ideas on policy, theory and research that can be contextualised and further discussed in the smaller subject specific follow up sessions.

It was discussed that for the 2014/2015 academic year, there would be a change to the 'Learning Styles' sessions. This is likely to be changed to sessions focussing on Standard 5 of the Teachers' Standards as although the session was previously used to make trainees aware of the issues and critique this approach, many influential figures had been criticising those Universities that still cover this.

The proposed sessions for 2014/2015 were summarised and it was discussed that colleagues were to continue to develop and strengthen these sessions. It was stated that the spring term sessions had more of a thematic style to the sessions taking place during the autumn term. Phil Taylor encouraged School Mentors and their colleagues to provide their input to these sessions as well as attending and co-delivering sessions.

The EPPS Sessions will be redesigned when the PGCE Course is validated next year and it is important that the sessions are fit for purpose therefore BCU require input from Mentors. It was stated that BCU are trying to find ways to trace what is covered in EPPS sessions right through into the trainees classroom practice. The Committee were informed that Phil Taylor, Course Director for MTL & EPPS Education and Tracey Goodyere, Route Leader for Design & Technology had worked well and succeeded in providing Ofsted with this evidence trail during the recent inspection.

It was reported that next year's sessions would take on an intended learning approach so that trainees are aware of what they are expected to come away from the session knowing.

Helen Thomas, Route Leader for Science asked Mentor representatives if they find the information provided to them on BCU's EPPS sessions useful and it was confirmed that they did. It was suggested that this EPPS information could be sent out to all mentors at key periods throughout the year to help make transitions smoother. Tracey Goodyere, Route Leader for Design & Technology agreed and raised the point that it would be useful for trainees and mentors to contextualise what trainees had covered when they attended these BCU sessions. Mandie Butler, Science Mentor at Phoenix Collegiate stated that it would be useful to find out what theory had been covered in these sessions so that this could be seen in practice whilst in school. Phil Taylor, Course Director for MTL & EPPS Education concluded that BCU would really value the input of schools and mentors on what is to be covered in future EPPS sessions.

Peter Carr, PGCE Secondary Course Director & Subject Route Leader- Art & Design asked the Committee members for their approval of next year's EPPS sessions which was given and agreed by all members.

## 8 To receive feedback from Mentor Representatives

The Chair invited members of the Committee from partner Schools to provide feedback. The following points were raised:

### Professional Mentors

David Russell, Professional Mentor at The ACE Academy informed the Committee that his school had been supporting two trainees for School Placement 2. He reported that they were both very willing to try new ideas and had embraced what was expected of them by the school. The trainees had coped well with difficult circumstances and had stepped up when the class teacher had been absent. Done Newton, Route Leader for Mathematics added that the Maths Mentor at The ACE Academy had given fantastic support to the Maths trainee.

Catherine Coates, Professional mentor at Perry Beeches – The Academy stated that the school had trainees from the School Direct Cohort. It was reported that the trainees all had a very diverse personality which backs up the idea that it is difficult to design an ideal course as all of the trainees were so different and unique. It was stated that all of the trainees that had worked with the school had now secured employment.

### Art & Design

None present

### Design & Technology

None present

### Drama

Edward Lee, Drama Mentor at Heartlands Academy reported that the Drama trainee they had on placement was super. The trainee had been organised and prepared to challenge the mentor when needed. The trainee had also been involved in the school's curriculum planning for the next academic year and had a massive impact on this.

### Mathematics

None present

### Music

Joanna Newman, Music Mentor at Wood Green Academy informed the committee that she had been very pleased with the trainee who had been on placement at the school. The trainee has been awarded all grade 1's on her final report. Ian Axtell, Route Leader for Music added that the trainee came on to the course as an instrumentalist and had now become a very strong classroom teacher.

### Science

Mandie Butler, Science Mentor at Phoenix Collegiate reported that the trainee she had on placement had been fantastic however had been required to interrupt due to personal circumstances. It was reported that Birmingham City University had been extremely supportive with all of the issues that had arisen and the school were hopeful that the trainee would return to the school next year.

## 9 To consider Equal Opportunities issues

Jean Dyson, PGCE Secondary Senior Lecturer in Art and Design reported that there were traditionally two equal opportunities sessions per year that had optional attendance. A session will take place during the autumn term which focussed on culture through food. Trainees will be encouraged to bring in food with cultural significance which will enable them to bring up issues to be brought forward and linked to the curriculum. The session in the spring term will focus on culture

through music. Trainees will be asked to bring in musical instruments with cultural significance and this will hopefully enable further discussion as will hopefully be the case in session 1.

**10** To consider any other business

No other business was reported.

**11** To receive the date of future meetings of the Secondary Partnership Committee

*Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014 (Attwood Building A106a 16.30 – 18.30)*

*Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015 (Attwood Building A106a 16.30 – 18.30)*

*Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 (Attwood Building A106a 16.30 – 18.30)*