

Birmingham City University

School Education

Secondary Strategic Leadership Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the PGCE Secondary Partnership Committee held on Wednesday, 12th November 2014.

David Russell	ACE Academy – Professional Mentor Representative (Chair)
Ian Axtell	Secondary Partnership Coordinator and Subject Route Leader – Music
Chris Bolton	PGCE Secondary Subject Route Leader – Drama
Peter Carr	PGCE Secondary Course Director & Subject Route Leader- Art & Design
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
Helen Thomas	PGCE Secondary Subject Route Leader – Science
Ros Benton	Broadway Academy – Design & Technology 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

In attendance: Matthew Waterhouse

- 1 To receive apologies for absence

Kelly Davey-Nicklin, Ryan Everson, Martin Fautley, Andrew Steed, Laura Sydenham

- 2 To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th June 2014.

The minutes were considered and were accepted as an accurate record.

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

The Action Plan detailing the matters arising from the previous meeting was viewed and it was discussed that Point 1 and 2 from the Action Plan would be discussed in Item 4 of the agenda and point 3 would be discussed in Item 6.

- 4 To monitor the progress of the PGCE Secondary Strategic Development Plan (formerly PGCE Secondary Improvement Plan)

Appendix B

It was reported that the intention for this academic year was to have a more thematic approach to the PGCE Secondary Strategic Development Plan.

It was reported that during the most recent inspection of the Birmingham City University (BCU) Partnership, Ofsted highlighted that the structure of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) provided a focus on individual subject routes and therefore did not demonstrate as integrated a PGCE Secondary Course as actually existed. It was discussed that the team had noted this and for this year the structure of the SDP demonstrated more clearly the course's integrated approach. It was

stated that the Strategic Development Plan now addressed three recurring themes that were then reflected by each subject. It was reported that Route Leaders have interpreted these themes in subject specific ways that made the report both more coherent and rich in subject pedagogic knowledge content.

The PGCE Secondary Strategic Development Plan was then summarised by the relevant members of the course team. The following additional points were made with reference to individual improvement targets:

W1 – Statistical Analysis

- It was reported that, as stated in the Minutes Action Plan from the 4th June, the Course Team had been researching into strategies to ensure that all trainees that can achieve Grade 1 are able to do so.
- It was stated that trainees were encouraged to reference their learning from University in their lesson plans and comment on their University learning in their lesson observations and evaluations.

W2 – External guidance including statutory guidance and External Examiners Reports

- It was reported that future Secondary trainee allocation numbers had recently been released by NCTL and it was Noted that Birmingham City University had maintained its core numbers and had allocated an increase in its School Direct numbers.
- It was stated that David Russell, Chair of the Secondary Strategic Leadership Committee had been involved in the re-write for the design of the PGCE Secondary Course as it was being revalidated for the 2015-16 academic year.

W3 – Ofsted Recommendations

- It was reported that it was a high priority for the Partnership to improve the written feedback of mentors to reflect the excellent oral feedback that is given by mentors to trainees.

DT1 – Statistical Analysis

- It was discussed that Trainees would be given support with their understanding of the teaching of Food Technology to pupils from diverse backgrounds by workshops taking place in January.
- It was reported that Design & Technology trainees would be exposed to training on the Product Design specialism in their Subject Knowledge Enhancement workshops throughout the academic year so that this specialism can be incorporated into the subject route for the future.

Dr1 – Statistical Analysis

- It was discussed that this academic year, trainees were being made more explicitly aware that they were receiving the opportunity to assess the impact of differentiation through their University taught sessions. Furthermore, school mentors were also being encouraged to explicitly highlight evidence of differentiation in planning and Units of Work when in school.

Dr2 – Statistical Analysis

- It was discussed that trainees had been involved in workshops focussing on deeper learning. These workshops also included delivering sessions to Sixth Form students for trainees to practice their subject knowledge and add to their development.

Sc1 – Statistical Analysis

- It was reported that there has been more emphasis on differentiation before the start of School 1 this year. In previous years this has not been addressed until after School 1 prior to the start of School 2.
- It was stated that Science trainees had been involved in practical work with pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) much more this academic year.

Sc2 Statistical Analysis

- Research conducted by the Wellcome Trust was discussed. Outcomes of this involved the idea that ITE providers cannot cover Secondary Science in 9 months and therefore Institutions should seek to cover fewer topics in more detail. The research of Rosalyn Driver was discussed and highlighted as being very valuable to trainees.

It was agreed that the current PGCE Secondary Strategic Development Plan would be approved and would be revisited again at the Spring Strategic Leadership Committee Meeting on 25th February 2014.

5 To Consider School 2 Evaluations Report

Appendix B

Professional and Subject Mentors were thanked for providing their responses to the School 2 evaluations. It was reported that by returning these evaluations, mentors had helped to improve the experience of Birmingham City University Secondary PGCE trainee teachers while on School Experience placements.

It was stated that on the School 2 Evaluations Report, the areas that were shown in purple showed the responses given as “in great detail” and the areas given in red showed responses of “not at all”, these were identified as areas for improvement.

The School 2 Evaluations Report was discussed and the following additional points were made. These points were made in relation to specific areas of training provided by the school that school mentors were asked to comment on in their evaluations.

2...the National Priority: meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).

It was stated that the issue of meeting the needs of pupils with EAL was a recurring each year and possible reasons for this were discussed.

It was stated that the “not at all” responses given by schools may be because those schools feel that this issue does not apply to them as there are not any pupils with EAL attending their school. Additionally, where a school does have pupils that may be classed as having EAL in terms of whole school data, in reality the pupils may have a very high level of spoken and written English and therefore this does not present a barrier to their learning so schools feel that they do not need to address the issue.

It was stated that the Birmingham City University Partnership needs to encourage schools to see that the training they provide should be appropriate for trainees to use when working in any school or context and not just their specific school. It was stated that trainees need to receive the appropriate training irrespective of the demographic within their placement school so they are therefore prepared to teach in any context when they progress from the course.

The committee discussed ways to improve the training provided in relation to meeting the needs of pupils with EAL.

- It was stated that areas of best practice in this area could be highlighted and time at School Briefing sessions could be devoted to this so that those schools/teachers with expertise could deliver sessions to School Mentors focussing on this and the sharing of best practice.
- It was discussed that those trainees who had been on placement at schools where EAL had not been covered in great detail could have a focus on EAL in their Research Placement so that this area is fully addressed.
- It was stated that those trainees who had experience of meeting the needs of EAL pupils within their school placements could be given the opportunity to share their best practice with their peers.

- It was reported that visits from experts in the field were already scheduled and would continue to be added into the EPPS program. This was to help trainees deal with this particular priority.
- It was stated that the course team would look into expanding a task on the University Shareville area relating to this priority. This was already available and was an excellent resource available to trainees but could be further developed.

8...support with responding to the individual needs of pupils being taught by the trainees including pupils with SEN, EAL and the G & T, including access to relevant pupil information

It was reported that the response given as “not at all” was only from one trainee, however it was important for the course team to understand why this trainee felt this way to ensure that this issue is addressed.

10...discussion of trainees’ lesson evaluations, including teaching and assessment of the pupils learning.

The after lesson processes, how to encourage reflection by trainees and the processes of reflection were discussed.

Mentors reported that there is often little or no time following lessons to give in depth feedback to trainees.

It was reported that Birmingham City University have implemented a system when making school visits that encouraged trainees to look in depth at their lesson evaluations, the course team have been stressing the link between these evaluations and the trainee’s progression through placement.

It was reported that on the Mathematics subject route, trainees were asked to submit an evaluation of all of their lessons during a week. It was stated that trainees were sent the evaluation template on a Friday afternoon and directed to submit their weekly lesson evaluation by Sunday evening. It was reported that this gives the trainees time to reflect on their lessons in contrast to the immediacy of completing lesson evaluations directly after a lesson. It was discussed that it was important to recognise that a trainee’s reaction to a lesson differs over time and that during the first hour after a lesson a trainee’s reaction was often emotive but then by four hours after the lesson, a trainee’s thoughts may be more analytical. Techniques used by mentors to allow trainees to articulate their feelings post lesson and formulate reflections of their lessons were reported.

School Mentors were asked to give ways in which BCU tutors might improve practice and these were shown on Page 9 of the School 2 Evaluations Report. The Committee discussed if it was possible for these suggestions to be acted upon and if so, how the Partnership planned on doing this. Mentors were asked to contact Ian Axtell, Partnership Coordinator with any further ways that BCU could improve its practice that had not already been mentioned.

It was reported that it had been highlighted that a strength of the BCU partnership was how well equipped BCU trainees were to provide support to pupils with a disadvantage. Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School at Birmingham City University will be attending a conference in the near future to present on this topic and share the University’s best practice with a wider audience.

6 University Link Tutor Role for School Direct Partners

It was reported that the University had been working on improving the links with School Direct Partners over the summer period and had been looking at ways to support its partner schools. It was also reported that there was a need for the University to monitor training appropriately and ensure that a positive partnership existed between all parties. It was reported that School Direct Partners were passionate about their own training and BCU needed to support this as part of the accreditation process.

It was stated that a strong link has now been forged between BCU and the clusters of schools within individual School Direct partnerships. This was particularly evident between the Professional Mentor at lead schools and the BCU Link Tutor. It was stated that this will help to improve communication between all parties involved and ensure that everyone that needs to be aware of any specific information is aware of this.

It was stated that BCU Link Tutors will be working with the Professional Mentors at lead schools and will be focussing on the evidence of progress for all of the trainees working with that specific school. Following this, the information can be cascaded down to individual Subject Mentors.

It was stated that there had been positive feedback on the processes undertaken where the Lead School are responsible for the Initial Teacher Education and Birmingham City University are responsible for the quality assurance of this provision.

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School of Education reported that Birmingham City University had a number of individualised bespoke programmes that were offered to its School Direct partners and that the systems and ways of working were negotiated with each individual school. It was stated that the University had been commended nationally for this approach.

7 School Led ITE, self-audit tool to support partnerships

Committee members were asked to take part in group discussions focussing on the School Led ITE document that had been distributed to them. Members of the committee were asked to discuss each of the points and provide qualitative written information on the document that could be collated by BCU and any points raised could be considered and acted upon. It was stated that a report on the information provided and considered would be presented to the committee at the next Secondary Strategic Leadership Meeting on 25th February 2015.

8 To receive feedback from Mentor Representatives

Professional Mentors

It was reported that positive feedback had been provided by subject mentors on the trainees attending Perry Beeches – The Academy, the trainees were proactive and effective support was being given by BCU tutors.

It was stated that the subject mentors at ACE Academy had given positive feedback on the trainees working with them. It was stated that the trainees enjoyed teaching and were able to set sharp targets for themselves but reported that dealing with follow on lessons may need to be looked at.

Art & Design

No mentors were present.

Design & Technology

It was reported that Broadway Academy had two Design & Technology trainees on placement but one of the trainees was absent from school for a period of time due to illness. It was stated that the other trainee had initially had more difficulty finding her own teaching personality but had observed others in the department and been given support on how teachers in the department prepare for their own observations which had led to an improvement.

Drama

It was stated that the weekly review pilot scheme that had been introduced for Drama trainees this academic year was going well. The updated pink review and analysis forms used for 2014/15 were said to be working well in school this year. Positive reports on the motivational and organisational skills of the trainees were also given.

Mathematics

No mentors were present

Music

It was stated that the trainees at Wood Green Academy had settled in to their placement well, they were well organised and seemed settled and comfortable in front of the class of pupils/students.

Science

No mentors were present

An additional point was raised regarding the creation of an exemplar pink. It was reported that BCU like the mentors to write pinks in their own style but the possibility of the format of the form and the types of information to include could be prepared.

9 To consider Equal Opportunities issues

It was reported that 20 trainees attended the last Equal Opportunities session on 20th October, focussing on the theme of food from other cultures.

It was stated that the next session would take place on 9th February 2015 at 4:15pm and that a discussion forum for trainees had been set up on Moodle

It was discussed that there was the potential for a number of the trainees on the Mathematics route to deliver a session and answer any questions on the subject of cultural diversity at the School Experience Review days on Friday 13th March 2015. It was discussed that the possibility of this would be looked into by the course team.

10 To consider any other business

It was reported that for the 2015/16 academic year, BCU had been granted placement numbers in two new subject routes, Religious Education and Computer Science and therefore potential placement opportunities would be required from partner schools in these subject areas.

It was stated that a talk entitled 'After School with Mr Drew' was taking place at Birmingham City University's Parkside Building on Thursday 13th November 2014. The talk was being delivered by Mr Drew, a Head Teacher who had appeared in the Channel 4 Documentaries 'Educating Essex' and 'Mr Drew's School for Boys'. All mentors present were invited to attend this talk and share this invitation with their school colleagues.

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

Wednesday 25th February 2015 (Attwood Building A106a 16.30 – 18.30)

Wednesday 3rd June 2015 (Attwood Building A106a 16.30 – 18.30)