



MINUTES
of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee
held on Tuesday 18 April 2023

Present: - Laura Johnston (Chair)
Barry Hansford
Debbie Lambert (Co-opted member)
Alan Layng
Jeremy Nicholls
Liz Quinn
David Williams (Principal)

In attendance: - Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)
Jo Ricketts (Deputy Principal)
Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)

The meeting was quorate as seven Members were present.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
There were no apologies.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
None declared.
3. **Approval of the Minutes of the last Meeting**
The Committee agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 as a true record.
 - I. Several Governors had participated in learning walks at the start of term who had also provided positive feedback on their experience.
 - II. Data tracking to provide an amalgamation of attendance for main qualifications, GCSE and Functional Skills is being investigated; however, this is unlikely to be available this academic year.

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

4. **Student Outcomes and Student Experience**
 - I. Attendance to main qualifications is 88.7% marginally below the 90% target which was affected by the introduction of the 'not expected' attendance mark. Attendance in the sector has been affected following the covid pandemic with a significant increase in students experiencing mental health and anxiety issues. An additional attendance mark has been implemented for students

Action

who are being supported remotely to complete work on their courses; a Governor enquired if virtual attendance could be recorded noted that there are challenges to deliver practical elements on some courses remotely. Additional 16-19 fund post-covid is being allocated to small group tuition to support and benefit students. It is anticipated that education following the pandemic will continue to affect students for several years. A Governor challenged if the target is sustainable noting that this will be kept under review with an option to reduce the aspirational target. Faculties have reported challenges around student attendance during the rail strikes, floods and snow. Governors were encouraged that all faculties have reported an increase in student engagement evidencing the impact of wellbeing and pastoral support.

- II. English and Maths attendance rates are comparable with last year at 78% and 78.1% respectively. Attendance at Oswestry College and Walford College has improved. Attendance to mock exams was good at 81%-87%.
- III. Retention has improved marginally at 94.2% against a target of 95%.
- IV. Student progress reports showed percentages of students making limited progress, some, good or strong progress by faculty. More students have made good and strong progress in all faculties. There has been an increase in progress following covid. Students making limited and some progress are reviewed in detail at the quality summits which correlates with students at risk. A Governor asked why progress at Oswestry College and Walford College is lower with reasons explained including the synoptic exams for animal care introduced last year with expectations based on these, and staffing issues in some areas at Oswestry College with cover teachers who are less familiar with students and their progress. GCSE English and Maths progress was based on key assessments with achievement levels from unclassified to grade 5. Students should improve and progress during the year as they complete more assessments. This year grades are lower than previous years. The Head of English and Head of Maths are discussing progress with main qualification teachers and mechanisms to motivate students to work hard and improve their grades. There is also uncertainty on the grade boundaries. In schools the GCSE syllabus finishes in May creating a gap until students commence College in September.
- V. November 2022 GCSE results were good with 24 students taking English and 26 Maths. 46% achieved 9-4 grade in English and 62% in Maths.
- VI. Apprenticeships 2022/23 overall achievement best case is predicted to be 68.2% compared to a target of 76% which has been affected by the End Point Assessment (EPA). The new accountability framework has introduced new measures to be reported against. Timely achievement best case is predicted to be 52.9% against a target of 69%.
- VII. Learner voice survey results 2022/23 for all respondents was encouraging with the majority in the A quartile and above external benchmarks. There was a marginal reduction in scores relating to good and outstanding teaching; however, some students had not responded to this question. There was a marginal increase in distance travelled to develop skills in English and Maths which had

improved. There are good levels of engagement by students in weekly English and Maths quizzes and opportunities for book swaps. Results were outlined by faculty noting that Landbased faculties have lower scores which mirrors the national trend. 92% of all students agreed that they receive feedback on their assignments; teachers endeavour to give feedback to students within 21 days.

- VIII. Apprenticeship voice survey results 2022/23 showed a low completion rate of 217 apprentices. There were improvements in scores in most areas showing overall satisfaction with apprenticeship programmes. Landbased programmes showed lower levels of satisfaction, specifically forestry, relating to issues with the EPA which is being addressed. A Governor asked how feedback on results is provided to students; this is fed back to course reps and with 'you said we did' posters.
- IX. National Achievement Rate Tables 2021/22 has changed which no longer use learner aim references and report 16-18 and 19+ student achievements separately. Apprenticeship data is currently provided for all age data with the College achieving 64.5% which had exceeded national achievement of 53.4%. It was encouraging that results have been maintained following despite the impact of covid on apprentices. Attendance had decreased but subsequently increased; there was variation across different standards.
- X. DfE Performance Table Headlines 2021/22 showed progress at the end of students' journeys. Data had not been provided since 2018/19 due to the covid pandemic. Overall performance was equal to or better than the local Authority and national performance except for some disadvantaged cohorts which was slightly less. A Governor questioned why A Level results are compared with Herefordshire Local Authority despite delivery being delivered in Shropshire; this was because these are submitted through the Folly Lane College address. Comparisons with A Levels in Shropshire would be useful in future.
- XI. Curriculum Review Meeting January 2023 had been held slightly later in the year compared to previous years. Its focus is to review enrolment and assist with curriculum planning for the following year. Governors agreed that this was a useful report identifying actions taken by management with information into context.
- XII. Courses in serious concern [a confidential minute was recorded]

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the comprehensive reports and data

5. Individual Review of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Developmental Observation 2022/23, and Learning Walks

The Deputy Principal confirmed that the mid-cycle learning walks have been completed with three referrals made to mentors resulting from the most recent learning walks. There are some new staff participating in the observation process. Governors will be invited to participate in learning walks in the autumn term as students are focusing on assessments and exams this term.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the progress report from the developmental observation cycle

J Ricketts/
L Watkins

6. Quality

- I. 2022/23 Annual Operational Plan (AOP) reported RAG rated updates against targets. Several targets rated 'red' had already been discussed during the meeting. Careers resources are being expanded for apprentices and adults. To date 1:1 career interviews have been arranged for students. Schools have requested additional career events for years 8, 9 and 10. A sector award for equality and diversity will be pursued; this has not been progressed to date; however, the AoC have a wellbeing and quality charter. Measures have been implemented to support staffs' mental health and wellbeing. These include clinics, menopause training and the employee assistance programme offering counselling and a 24-hour help line; to date over 70 staff have accessed the assistance programme.
- II. Strategic Higher Education Committee minutes: 4 January 2022.
- III. Subcontracting termly meeting minutes – The Skills Network: 9 February 2023.
- IV. There was discussion about the Skills Agenda and the Committee's role to discharge Governors' duties meet the local, regional and national skills needs ensuring the curriculum intent is appropriate. The proposal to change the Committee to the Curriculum and Standards Committee with revised terms of reference was suggested for discussion. This was supported and would be discussed at the next meeting, and by the Search and Governance Committee, before requesting approval by the Board. The College will undertake an annual curriculum review to ensure that it meet local skills needs. A curriculum report will be provided at each meeting noting that the courses for concern report currently covers curriculum issues. There was brief discussion about course contribution levels to overheads and conscious choice to provide some courses which made less contribution based on contribution to employers and the geographical area. A briefing on the principles of the curriculum resource model and curriculum planning was proposed for the July Governors' Workshop.
- V. The Principal reminded Governors that a draft Accountability Statement had previously been presented to the Board which was approved in principle. The amended Accountability Statement will be presented to the Board in April for approval, proposing the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Chair consider any final amendments before submission to the ESFA by 31 May 2023.

D Williams/
J Ricketts

D Williams

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the AOP, minutes and actions required in response to the Skills Agenda

7. Equality and Diversity

- I. The Equality and Diversity Report outlined key issues discussed by the Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity Committee. Learner performance was reported using ProAchieve and Strata during transition to Strata which showed some variations to reporting. Ethnicity had lower retention for some groups; however, these related to very low numbers. CLA has increased from 71% in June 2022 to 97% which was commended acknowledging the positive effect of additional activity and engagement introduced.

The internal safeguarding audit has concentrated on CLA which will be scrutinised by the Chair of the Committee as the designated safeguarding governor, and Chair of the Board. Retention of vulnerable students has decreased to 83.5% with robust measures introduced to provide continual support the students with regular discussion at safeguarding network meetings.

- II. Minutes of the Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity Committee: 8 March 2023 were noted.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the equality and diversity report and the minutes

9. **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

- I. Child Protection and Safeguarding Report provided useful update including staff training. To date the safeguarding team have supported 885 with 1321 individual concerns logged. 170 students are flagged as vulnerable on the EBS system. A breakdown of issues by faculty and category showed mental health and anxiety continue to be the predominant issues for students.
- II. Minutes of the Safeguarding Network Meetings: 15 November 2022, 19 January and 23 March 2023 were noted. The implications of Martin's Law were raised which will have implications events held at external public venues. The College is reviewing its Prevent procedures and will undertake additional risk assessments for open evenings and the three colleges' days.

A Governor commented that the College's safeguarding procedures and practices are exemplary proposing pursuing a national award. Agreed safeguarding is central to the college with appreciation recorded to safeguarding team.

D Baldwin

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the child protection and safeguarding report and the minutes

11. **Any other business and comments**

Key issues to report to Board

- KPIs were outlined with good progress against KPIs overall.
- Good GCSE results in November 2022 with 46% of students achieving 9-4 grade in English and 62% in maths.
- Results from the learner and apprenticeship learning voice survey were encouraging. There was a low return rate from apprentices.
- National progress data was less meaningful which do not use learner aim references.
- DfE report showed overall performance was equal to or better than the local Authority and national performance except for some disadvantaged cohorts which was slightly less.
- The Curriculum Review Meeting was useful addition to committee reporting evidencing recruitment enrolments and curriculum planning for the following year.
- Governors supported the tabulated format to report progress of the AOP which was succinct and clear.
- Discussion about the Committee's role to meet the Skills Agenda with a proposal to change the Committee to the

Curriculum and Standards Committee with revised terms of reference. This would be discussed at the next meeting and by the Search and Governance Committee before requesting approval by the Board.

- A briefing on the principles of the curriculum resource model and curriculum planning was proposed for the July Governors' Workshop.
- Accountability Statement will be presented to the Board in April for approval, proposing the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Chair consider any final amendments before submission to the ESFA by 31 May 2023.
- Equality and Diversity Report outlined key issues discussed by the Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity Committee along with learner performance by protected characteristics, CLA and vulnerable students showing marginal differences particularly in ethnicity and vulnerable students which are followed up.
- Safeguarding procedures are exemplary proposing applying for a national award and appreciation recorded to the safeguarding team.

A Governor proposed the Committee review the Ofsted report, particularly how students with EHCPs and high needs are supported with progress of actions taken to address this. It was agreed to report progress to the Board in October.

D Williams

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 27 June 2023 at 3.15 pm

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: **Date:**