



STANDARDS AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday 13 June 2017

Present:	Mr J Kirk (<i>Chair</i>)	Chair of Governors
	Ms N Cuffy	Governor
	Mr R Laher	Governor
	Ms M Moore	Governor
	Mr M Sim	Principal
In Attendance:	Mr J Bagley	Vice-Principal
	Mr R Mansfield	Clerk

Ref.		Action
Q/17/32	<p>Item 1 – Apologies for Absence: There were no apologies for absence. The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	
Q/17/33	<p>Item 2 – Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items: There were no declarations of interest in agenda items.</p>	
Q/17/34	<p>Item 3 – Minutes of previous Meeting and Matters Arising: The minutes of the meeting on 4 April 2017 were accepted by the Committee as an accurate record and were duly signed by John Kirk. The Committee reviewed progress against the actions listed in the minutes. Martin Sim asked that the response on possible linking of 'at risk' and safeguarding cohorts should be further held over. James Bagley displayed the contents of the job vacancies Board in <i>Sharepoint</i>. Martin Sim reported that at a meeting between John Kirk, James Bagley, Robert Mansfield and himself the future cycle of business for the Committee and related reporting requirements had been agreed in outline, and this should in turn improve the cycle of reporting to the Board. Martin Sim advised the meeting that this should be seen in the context of major changes taking place on several fronts: revised staffing structures (which had the full support of OfSTED), curriculum change, timetable change and</p>	MS

management information systems (including CEDAR). The atmosphere in the College was much improved and teaching staff appeared ready to bury the past. John Kirk said that he had just received the verbal responses to the recent staff survey. The number of these had greatly reduced, with complaints (some of which were trivial) and compliments evenly balanced. This appeared to confirm a significant improvement in attitudes.

John Kirk then asked for clarification of the holiday entitlements of teaching staff. In providing this, Martin Sim said that he was looking to achieve a 'gentler' start to the new term, with teaching starting on 11 September and more provision for preparation time. It was most important to be ready for the next OfSTED Monitoring Visit, which was expected around the autumn half-term break. He planned to 'trickle in' the next generation of managers before the next full inspection. The budget would include provision for releasing staff if that proved necessary.

Q/17/35

Item 4 – Student Performance (Grade Book Data):

James Bagley reported that the cycle for the collection of grades had been completed for the current academic year with a very high completion rate. The data showed a strong improvement in (teachers' assessments of) students' performance relative to their minimum expected grades (MEGs). The validity of these assessments (some of which were likely to be optimistic) would be checked by comparison with examination results. In 2017/2018 reported grades would be based on formally assessed work, for which the assessments would be validated internally and/or externally.

Nelista Cuffy asked why the data showed a marked fall in entry numbers. James Bagley said that this had resulted from the elimination of double-counting of students whose work had been assessed by multiple teachers earlier in the year. Martin Sim said that reporting was currently against MEGs as determined under ALPS, which was a relatively high standard. He suggested that the College might perhaps report against a lower baseline and include aspirational grades derived from ALPS.

John Kirk said that he would like also to see the percentage of high grades. Martin Sim advised that it would be more valuable for the time being to focus on Value Added.

Riyaz Laher asked a number of questions about predicted results and the extent to which targets had been set for teachers. James Bagley explained that some measures

used by schools were not appropriate for the College. Amber and green targets were not as yet being set for individual teachers. From September targets would be set for courses – it had taken a year to gain acceptance of this from teaching staff. He considered it reasonable to infer from the data presented that the direction of travel as regards value added was positive.

The Committee received the presentation on Grade Book data.

S/17/36

Item 5 – Student Attendance and Punctuality:

5.1 Dashboard Data

James Bagley presented the current dashboard data on student attendance. The showed a small year-on-year improvement. He advised the meeting that it was likely to take at least a year to raise average attendance to the College's minimum target of 90%. He outlined the action planned during 2017/2018 to embed higher standards. Riyaz Laher asked what were the main potential obstacles. James Bagley identified these as low expectations, lack of challenge by staff and social factors. It was intended to introduce differentiated targets. Benchmarks had proved hard to establish because of differences in reporting methods.

John Kirk noted that the data dashboard seemed no longer to be located at its usual place in *Sharepoint* and asked that governors be advised of the new location.

Nelista Cuffy asked how the message was to be imparted to students. James Bagley said that the code of conduct for students was to be reinstated during the next induction. There would be Learner Assemblies and better systems of monitoring in place. Riyaz asked whether the College's data were affected by groups who should have been removed from the roll. James Bagley said this true to a degree and that action to address the issue had been taken too late in the year. Martin Sim said that in 2017/2018 there would be more rigour about entry qualifications. The College had been recruiting students 'looking for a fresh life' without serious intentions of progressing; this explained the relatively high average age of the College's students. In his experience problems that had arisen at previous colleges were likely to recur.

The Committee received the presentation on student attendance.

5.2 Future Targets for Attendance

James Bagley presented a paper proposing the setting of differentiated targets for attendance. Gateway College

JB

was not a typical sixth form college, in that it catered for a wide spectrum of learners many of whom were older. The targets proposed would, if achieved, deliver aggregate attendances of 90% in 2017/2018 and 92% in 2018/2019. OfSTED had appeared supportive of the approach proposed. It was intended that attendances at workshops and tutorials should be included in attendance statistics although currently such attendances were not counted. Workshops were to disappear. Staff reactions had been mixed, as some believed they would be faced with additional work. The approach proposed avoided the thorny issue of individual targets. It appeared however that discussion of individual performances compared with course targets was viewed as uncontroversial.

Riyaz Laher stressed the importance of a clear message on this matter to parents. He wondered how this would be achieved if there were different targets for different groups. James Bagley said that the message to parents would stress the importance of the College's 90% minimum standard. He then summarised the actions to be taken to improve attendance. These were based upon recent research into proven good practice elsewhere. Martin Sim said that future reports to governors would include significant exceptions, in order to allow relevant challenge where it was needed. John Kirk said that there had been much previous debate on the attendance target. The proposed approach was based upon considerable effort and appeared workable.

The Committee endorsed the proposal to set differentiated targets for attendance.

Q/17/37

Item 6 – CEDAR Preview:

James Bagley presented an overview of CEDAR, a management information system that the College was in the course of implementing. The developers of the portal were to improve its appearance over the summer. Some of the main benefits of CEDAR were that it provided more data features, was easier to interrogate than the College's current reporting systems and offered appropriate access to students and parents. He then displayed some of the screens that were available and described the ways in which data could be supplemented and interrogated as a basis for action and challenge. The meeting agreed that the potential of CEDAR looked most encouraging.

The meeting received the presentation.

Q/17/38

Item 7 – Curriculum Development:

Martin Sim presented a paper setting out the principles upon which the curriculum was to be streamlined in the next academic year. The College had been providing an over-flexible offer. His intention was to rationalise rather than lose subjects. At Level 1 no change was proposed. Level 2 would see an end to GCSE re-sits, as learners had not progressed and had had poor attendances. Instead learners would follow a level 2 programme comprising English and Mathematics underpinned by an extended level 2 certificate or equivalent. At level 3 some courses with low ALPS scores and low numbers would be suspended. The extended Diploma would become the core vocational offer. The IT offer was to be rationalised. There would be little change to A levels. Monitoring would become easier as a result of the changes.

Nelista Cuffy expressed concern about the loss of provision of Music Technology. Martin Sim said that there only four students at the College, and provision was better transferred to one of the four larger local providers. The changes would bring about a significant release of space and possibly a saving in examination fees. He advised the meeting that BTECs were subject to ongoing changes that made them less attractive.

John Kirk said he was pleasantly surprised to see that the number of discontinued courses was relatively small. Martin Sim said that the College's course change system was paper-based, antiquated and very slow and labour-intensive. The system was a cause of loss of control early in the year. Admissions would be finalised in the light of prior qualifications and the availability of places.

The Committee endorsed the proposed changes to the curriculum offer.

Q/17/39

Item 8 – Added Value:

James Bagley presented a briefing on added value. This began with definitions and the background to the various measures available. The timeliness of data was of critical importance in respect of its usefulness for influencing outcomes for learners in respect of value added, achievement and destinations. Nearly all colleges subscribed to APLS data as a basis for benchmarking and target setting. DfE data was of considerable significance because it was in the public domain. However the tables were published late and were based on an arcane algorithm. A drawback with ALPS was that expectations of vocational students were too high. James Bagley then

presented the College's added value scores over the past three years, highlighting those courses where there had been particular concerns. OfSTED was working with the three Leicester sixth form colleges on a joint project to try to understand better and to predict DfE figures. The College's recent disappointing scores for value added had been compounded by errors in the reporting of data. John Kirk thanked James Bagley for a most helpful presentation.

The meeting received the presentation on value added with thanks.

Q/17/40

Item 9 – Student Destinations – Update:

James Bagley summarised actions to address issues in the Post-Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) relating to student destinations. There was current debate about the period over which student progression should be tracked. This period clearly extended well beyond the exit interview.

John Kirk and Nelista Cuffy asked what more needed to be done to move OfSTED's assessment of progress to Significant. James Bagley replied that the next steps were analysis of the data for 2015/2016 now to hand and using data in shaping the curriculum to meet local needs. The curriculum needed to be effectively matched to specific job needs as well as improving employability generally. He recognised the importance of progress on this, but advised the Committee that the current priority was teaching learning and assessment. Progress on the theme of student destinations was being regularly monitored through the Performance Improvement Group.

The meeting received this report.

Q/17/41

Item 10 – Work Experience – Update:

James Bagley reviewed action taken to increase and improve work experience placements. The priority had been those students who were progressing to employment and apprenticeships. The link established with Leicester College was still in its infancy but was apparently proving effective. A further significant increase in placements was planned for 2017/2018.

The meeting received this report.

Q/17/42

Item 11 – Lesson Observation Policy:

James Bagley presented a revised version of the lesson observation policy. This had been the subject of consultation and had been agreed with the staff unions. The policy was now in operation. It formed part of

concerted action to address the question whether all the College's students made the progress that they should. He then summarised the outcomes of recent lesson observations and re-observations.

Riyaz Laher said that the agreed scope of lesson observations appeared to omit critical elements. James Bagley said that other aspects were being addressed via learning walks. Nelista Cuffy said that the opening words of the policy made little sense. This was generally agreed but it was considered more important that the policy should be approved without delay or further time being spent in consultation. James Bagley said that the quality assurance framework needed further development to improve its impact. John Kirk observed that acceptance of the policy by staff representatives was a further indication of transformation in the College climate.

In answer to further questions James Bagley said the policy was compliant with the Common Inspection Framework. All staff now had Personal Development Action Plans, irrespective of the outcome of observations. Although observations were not graded, it was the quality of the resultant action that mattered. Lesson observations had been validated externally by Shaun Dillon and Marina Gaze.

The Committee commended the lesson observation policy to the Board for endorsement.

Q/17/43

Item 12 – Notes of Performance Improvement Group:

12.1 Meeting on 24 April 2017

John Kirk presented the notes of the meeting of the Performance Improvement Group on 24 April 2017. As these had been updated by the notes of the subsequent meeting, they were taken as read.

12.2 Notes of Meeting on 22 May 2017

John Kirk presented the notes of the meeting of the Performance Improvement Group on 22 May 2017. These recorded progress against the six themes in the PIAP up to the time of the meeting. OfSTED had subsequently judged progress on governance issues to be Significant and on all the other themes Reasonable.

The meeting received the notes of the meetings of the Performance Improvement Group.

Q/17/44

Item 13 – Date and Time of Next Meeting:

The date and time of the next meeting would be advised after the planning of the cycle of governors' meetings for

2017/2018 had been completed.

Q/17/45

Item 14 – Any Other Business:

There was no other business.