



STANDARDS AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting on Thursday 2 November 2017

Present:	Mr J Kirk (<i>Chair</i>)	Chair of Governors
	Ms N Cuffy	Governor
	Mr R Laher	Governor
	Ms M Moore	Governor
	Ms J Rossa	Governor
	Mr M Sim	Interim Principal
In Attendance:	Mr J Bagley	Principal Designate
	Ms F Rippin	Assistant Principal
	Mr R Mansfield	Clerk

Ref.		Action
Q/17/46	<p>Item 1 – Apologies for Absence: There were no apologies for absence. The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	
Q/17/47	<p>Item 2 – Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items: There were no declarations of interest in agenda items.</p>	
Q/17/48	<p>Item 3 – Minutes of previous Meeting and Matters Arising: The minutes of the meeting on 13 June 2017 were accepted by the Committee as an accurate record and were duly signed by John Kirk. Martin Sim stated that a requested action on the linking of 'at risk' and safeguarding cohorts was under investigation by Nicola Martin and Liz Ward, together with other ways of strengthening the College's safeguarding arrangements. James Bagley said that much of the data dashboard was no longer fit for purpose and that timely reporting from Cedar would very shortly be available. There were however Data Protection issues to be considered before remote access was provided.</p>	JB
Q/17/49	<p>Item 4 – Examination Results Summer 2017: James Bagley presented a paper, recently updated to</p>	

contain the latest data on examination results, ALPS headlines and headlines from draft DfE data. Examination results had been mixed. Pass rates had in the main improved, other than at level three which saw a small decline. However, mainly as a result of poorer retention, achievement rates had generally declined, other than at entry level. Results at level three and AS were generally below national benchmarks for 2015/2016. National benchmarks including the new AS and A level courses had yet to be published for 2016/2017, and falls in these benchmarks were expected. It was unclear whether the College should continue to accept learners on to GCSE Mathematics and English courses.

Jackie Rossa asked whether the College accepted that the issue was the quality of teaching and learning and not the qualifications. She also asked how far the College had identified the root causes of underperformance, as it was clear that some learners were able to succeed. James Bagley said that there had been some instances of poor teaching. Appropriate action had been taken with those concerned, a few of whom had left the College. Firm action was continuing in areas such as Mathematics. Frances Rippin said that changes had also been made to the timetable in order to support improvement. John Kirk asked whether a clear timetable had been established for governors to scrutinise the performance of current learners. Robert Mansfield and James Bagley confirmed that meetings of the Committee had been scheduled to scrutinise data from Cedar shortly after each data entry milestone, the first such scrutiny to be covered under item 5.

James Bagley identified the subjects at levels two and three that had had most impact of the College's aggregate results and were causes for particular concern, and summarised the measures taken to address these subjects. Areas where performances had been positive were also listed. Achievement on BTEC courses had improved significantly, and was now in the ALPS 'blue zone' though still below benchmark. Value added at AS level had fallen, but had improved at A2. Martin Sim said that the College's added value scores had been adversely affected by a backlog of missing base data for students without prior GCSE results. There had also been a history of admitting students to inappropriate courses to make up programme sizes. This practice had ceased, though there remained a legacy in the current year. In future the College would admit students to a programme

of three A levels where feasible or to a programme designed to gain qualifications that would lead to employment. Some weaker areas of provision had been eliminated from the curriculum. Science AS courses were to be discontinued.

James Bagley said that initial examination of DfE data for the College, which were not yet validated, showed these to be broadly in line with the College's ALPS scores. He summarised the College's national standing on A level and Applied General courses. Although progress measures in English and Mathematics had fallen slightly they remained above average. He advised the Committee that this autumn students taking GCSE Mathematics and English examinations would be sitting papers based on an unfamiliar syllabus.

The Committee received the report on examination results.

S/17/50

Item 5 – Current Student Performance:

James Bagley presented the tabular data now available to staff in Cedar. Student attendance had risen to 93% in aggregate. The data flagged courses and individuals that were below target so that prompt action could be taken. Data tracking learner progress were based on standardised assessments of set pieces of work, and would build a picture of the flight path of each learner relative to target outcomes. The reports were not only triggering remedial action but were also informing actions in the Quality Improvement Plan. Martin Sim acknowledged the contributions of the MIS team in the progress that had been made. James Bagley gave an undertaking that reports appropriate to the needs of governors would be available for the Committee's meeting in January 2018.

The Committee received the presentation of Cedar data.

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Q/17/51

Item 6 – Student Attendance and Punctuality:

James Bagley presented a report on student attendance and punctuality. He described 2016/2017 as a year of low expectations of learners, poor data and insufficient processes. These had all now been addressed. He advised the meeting that student attendance was likely to decline for various reasons as the year progressed. Transport problems, outside the College's control, adversely affecting the attendance of level one learners had now been resolved. He gave examples of current actions, entailing a mixture of robustness and sensitivity, to sustain and improve attendance.

The meeting received the report.

Q/17/52

Item 7 – Learner Voice:

James Bagley presented a report analysing the results of a survey of learners' views on enrolment and the start of the academic year. He drew the attention of the meeting to the conclusion that 85% of respondents were clear about expectations of punctuality, attendance, behaviour and homework. There were some disappointing scores but these were partly explained by the fact that some respondents had been would-be returners who had not been re-admitted. It was clear that there needed to be better coordination between course advice and guidance and planned destinations. Some disappointments had been occasioned by the decision to curtail the curriculum offer. Student Services had made offers of places on courses to learners, irrespective of their GCSE results. Margo Moore observed that the headline for question 5 was inconsistent with the detailed analysis also presented. Jackie Rossa said that the corollary of the statement "70% of students know who to see ..." was that 30% did not. James Bagley agreed and said that this had been addressed through tutorials. James Bagley then summarised the plans for future surveys. John Kirk said that he had observed the enrolment process at first hand, and confirmed that it had seemed much better organised.

The meeting received this report.

At the request of Jackie Rossa Item 9 was taken as the next item of business. Items are however recorded in these minutes in agenda order.

Q/17/53

Item 8 – Behaviour for Learning Policy:

James Bagley presented a revised version of the behaviour and discipline policy with a more positive slant, now named the behaviour for learning policy. This contained a positive vision and a clear statement of expected standards.

It was noted that in section 5.1 a reference to the behaviour and discipline policy needed to be amended. The importance of adherence to procedures by staff was emphasised as in previous years some otherwise undeserving appeals had been heard and in some instances upheld. Robert Mansfield assured Martin Sim that procedural irregularity had led to successful appeals only when there had been reasonable grounds for believing that exclusion might have been avoided.

John Kirk said he had hoped to find within the policy the

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expression of an aspiration that learners would take responsibility for the behaviour of themselves and others. James Bagley said that this was addressed in the Code of Conduct. Various modifications to wording were proposed. These included the vision that students should become 'productive' members of society. Nelista Cuffy felt there should be more emphasis on independent learning. James Bagley said that this was addressed in the Code of Conduct. Riyaz Laher advised that a stronger statement was required defining bullying. He commended the definition published on the DfE website. He felt that the whole policy was very "sanctions-based" and needed more emphasis on rewards and recognition. It was agreed that further work would be undertaken to take account of the comments made prior to further consideration of the policy on 18 January 2018.

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The meeting received the policy and commended it to the Board for ratification on an interim basis.

Q/17/54

Item 9 – Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy:

James Bagley presented the revised learning teaching and assessment policy.

Jackie Rossa said that the policy seemed to be focused on assessment to the exclusion of teaching and learning. The approach to assessment also appeared not to be based on the good principles set out early in the policy. There was little reference to learning. Frances Rippin said that the matters raised by Jackie Rossa were addressed in the Teaching and Learning Handbook. Jackie Rossa repeated that the policy was very skewed. Frances Rippin said that this was a deliberate attempt to compensate for the focus of the Handbook.

After further discussion it was agreed that the policy should be redrafted to take account of the comments of Jackie Rossa.

Jackie Rossa left the meeting, which remained quorate.

Riyaz Laher said that the policy needed also to reflect the headlines of the Handbook. Martin Sim said that much of the policy was in fact a description of procedure, that might be better placed in an appendix. John Kirk said that the policy should surely be entitled 'the Teaching Learning and Assessment policy. This was agreed.

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The meeting commended the policy to the Board for ratification, subject to the amendment requested.

Q/17/55

Item 10 – Safeguarding Policy:

James Bagley presented the latest version of the safeguarding policy. This had been updated by Nicola

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Martin in the light of advice from the local authority Safeguarding Board.

Martin Sim reported on action in respect of the Reflection Rooms. There had been much informal consultation on the possible closure of these rooms because of the potential risks that they posed. The imminence of the next OfSTED inspection added urgency to the issue. The College had been advised that it needed to be able to monitor the rooms visually and audibly.

John Kirk said that he had found girls eating their lunches in a Reflection Room, evidencing a complete lack of respect. On another occasion however two students had urged upon him the importance of proper facilities for reflection; they had no objection to being supervised by anyone. Martin Sim said that Friday Prayers were supervised, but that it was impractical to extend regular supervision.

There was discussion about the use of CCTV. John Kirk said that he did not consider the discovery of untoward events through retrospective examination of videotapes to be sufficient. Martin Sim said that he was most reluctant to close the Reflection Rooms, and suggested that the Board might wish to develop a Multi-faith Strategy. Riyaz Lasher said that he was uncomfortable with the proposal to use CCTV. Martin Sim said that he predicted a maelstrom of protest if the rooms were closed. CCTV was affordable as a short-term measure. Margo Moore said that closure seemed the best option. Nelista Cuffy favoured a gradual approach. Riyaz Laher cautioned that action might be seized upon and exploited to whip up trouble. The Committee eventually agreed that there should in the short term be live monitoring of the Reflection Rooms in Reception by CCTV. CCTV should also be widely deployed in corridors. The wording on signs near the Rooms should be checked. Martin Sim said that such action could be explained as the result of pressure from external stakeholders in respect of safeguarding. This action should be subject to review after an initial period.

The meeting commended the safeguarding policy to the Board for ratification and agreed the actions described.

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Q/17/56

Item 11 – Report on OfSTED Inspection – Regent College:

James Bagley presented a short report prepared by Liz Ward on lessons to be learned from the recent OfSTED inspection of Regent College. A key learning point was the depth of the enquiry into safeguarding and the Prevent strategy. Martin Sim reminded the meeting that Leicester

and Leicestershire were regarded nationally as a hotspot for radicalisation. Riyaz Laher said that OfSTED had been impressed by the clear links between data, policies and action at the Madani Schools. Will Baldet could provide details of a multi-faith group from Israel and Palestine with whom students had been greatly impressed. He advised that student representatives were likely to be a fruitful source of ideas.

John Kirk asked questions about the extent of card-swapping and other means whereby inappropriate entry might be gained to the College and about the treatment of any College students who were implicated. Nelista Cuffy expressed concerns about possible identity fraud. James Bagley explained the measures taken.

Margo Moore asked what avenues were open to educational institutions to give feedback to government on the impact of its actions – for example she considered recent 'celebration' of the Balfour Declaration had created unnecessary difficulties. Riyaz Laher said he believed Will Baldet could serve as such a conduit.

The meeting noted the report.

Q/17/57

Item 12 – Notes of Performance Improvement Group:

12.1 Meeting on 28 June 2017

John Kirk presented the notes of the meeting of the Performance Improvement Group on 28 June 2017.

The meeting received the notes of the meeting.

12.2 Meeting on 31 October 2017

John Kirk presented an oral summary of the meeting of the Performance Improvement Group on 31 October 2017, for which the notes were not yet available. The College had been advised at the recent OfSTED Monitoring Visit that, although the Post-Inspection Action Plan was agreed to have served its purpose, it still required formal 'sign-off' before the Group moved on to use the Self-Assessment Report as the basis for monitoring progress. The sign-off had now been completed.

The meeting received this oral report.

Q/17/58

Item 13 – Date and Time of Next Meeting:

The date and time of the next meeting were confirmed as Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 5.30 p.m. at the College.

Q/17/59

Item 14 – Any Other Business:

There was no other business.