

Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting Held on Tuesday 18 November 2014 – Room 108

Present:	Carol Skewes Jamie Spracklen	Nick Spenceley (Principal) Shri Footring	Chris Humpage Natalie Tickle
Apologies:	Linda Maynard	Liam Purnell	Craig Davidson
In attendance:	Theresa Cope (Clerk to the Corporation)	John Driver (DP Curriculum & Quality)	Eileen O’Gara (Director of Commercial Development)
	John Revill (VP Information Systems)	Justine Selman (AP Quality Improvement)	Sarah Chamberlain (AP Head of 6 th Form)

15/14 Apologies for absence

The apologies were noted & accepted.

16/14 Eligibility & quoracy

All members were eligible & the meeting was quorate.

17/14 Declaration of interests

No declarations of interests had been received.

18/14 Election of Chair & confirmation of committee membership for 2014/15

Following discussions with the Chair of Corporation, the Chair had proposed, subject to committee approval, SF as Chair for the 2014/15 academic year.

The committee approved the recommendation & SF was duly elected as Chair for 2014/15.

CH, NT & SF were formally welcomed to the committee & the membership for 2014/15 was confirmed.

19/14 Minutes of previous meeting (21 Oct '14) & progress against matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 October 2014 were agreed & signed as an accurate record, save for the correction of a minor typing error on item 10/14.

There were no matters arising.

20/14 Report of actions taken by the Chair on behalf of the Corporation

There were no actions to be reported.

21/14 Ofsted Action Plan

The Ofsted inspection report was circulated. JD advised that the report had been challenged & the outcome of the appeal was awaited.

The summary of the key findings had identified areas for improvement as well as highlighting a number of strengths.

The Ofsted improvement plan had been compiled in relation to the areas for improvement highlighted within the report.

The gradings consisted of:

- Outcomes for learners
- Quality of teaching, learning & assessment
- Effectiveness of leadership & management
- Overall effectiveness

Inspection grades were:

1. Outstanding
2. Good
3. Requires improvement
4. Inadequate

The committee noted that 6 curriculum areas had been graded as '2'.

JD was asked to explain the statement that had been made with regards to safeguarding. It was stressed that at no point was any learner put at any risk whilst in College. The statement related purely to the oversight of reporting directly to governors.

22/14 College Quality Improvement Plan

Please refer to handout. The Ofsted Action Points (OAP) had been clearly identified within the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

Referring to Paper B, JD advised that there were a series of issues that needed to be addressed (as identified on pg 2 of the inspection report).

Appendix A referred to the OAPs & these would be tracked using a RAG system which would be tracked on a monthly basis with progress reports being given at subsequent committee meetings.

(SRC joined the mtg @ 10:14am).

At the annual Autumn conference held on 14 November 2014, a safeguarding training session for governors was facilitated by the Head of Student Services. **TC would address any training requirements in this area** for those governors who were not present at the conference.

Management were questioned as to what was being done to ensure safer recruitment of staff.

NS explained that HR had an action plan in place that included obtaining both professional & personal references for applicants. This would be completed by December 2014.

JD explained that the comment made with regards to safeguarding had related to 2 particular issues. The first related to the training of governors with regards to safeguarding to ensure that they fully understood the requirements with regards to their role as a governor and the second point was that a safeguarding report had not been presented to governors.

This had been recognised as an oversight & **would be rectified by submitting a full safeguarding report to the Corporation at the meeting on 9 December 2014.**

However, JD emphasised that Ofsted had recognised that learners were safe whilst in college & were not at any risk. The inspectors had highlighted that there had been no opportunity for governors to challenge management in relation to the statutory requirements. Given the changes implemented from September 2014, inspectors were required to make a statement within the report (not graded) with regards to safeguarding.

NS advised that in all other respects of safeguarding, the College actually exceeded statutory requirements.

JD gave an overview on each of the action points to update the committee & to provide some background information.

The committee noted a new inspection framework would be in place for 2015/16.

23/14 Applications/Attendance

Please refer to the tabled data supplement. JTR advised that applications were being monitored on a weekly basis with a detailed report generated every 2 weeks.

Referring to Table 1, JTR advised that applications were higher than in 2013/14. There had been a high attendance at the interview evening last week (11th).

There were a number of factors to take into consideration such as a slight increase in the local demographics of 1% although there was a 5% drop predicted in the Year 11 cohort for 2015/16.

It was noted that there was currently a 26% increase in AS applications. This would be closely monitored. Overall, applications had increased by 10% this year.

With regards to attendance & punctuality, it was reported that attendance in the first 6 weeks of term was 1% greater than 2013/14 whilst punctuality was approximately 1% higher than for the same period in 2013/14.

24/14 New Requirements for Ofsted

The document "Better Inspection for All" had been circulated for consultation by Ofsted.

The purpose of this paper was to respectfully set some broad pointers to governors in responding to the new proposed framework & how to appropriately challenge management.

Leadership & Management

Scrutiny & challenge by governors was very important. For instance, governors may wish to challenge the Principal & the Executive team in particular as to whether they:

- a. consistently promote an ambitious vision
- b. promote outstanding teaching & learning
- c. provide a relevant curriculum

Quality of Teaching, Learning & Assessment

Governors should seek reassurance (with evidence) that leaders were taking effective steps to further improve T&L with effective action being taken to tackle grade 3 & 4 lessons and to improve Outstanding provision.

Governors also needed to be alert to the need to develop English & Maths skills in all students across all curriculum areas.

Governors should also understand how Equality & Diversity (E&D) were recognised & promoted.

Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare

Governors needed to be aware of how learners were encouraged to protect themselves, particularly with regards to hazards from internet & social media sites. This would also include 'cyber safety'.

Outcomes for learners

Governors needed to be confident that the college was rigorous in monitoring outcomes with a particular focus on VA, high grades & progress.

Governors should also seek assurance on how inconsistencies of performance were being challenged.

English & Maths qualifications should be subject to separate scrutiny.

NS believed it to be of importance to look at curriculum link governors in order that engagement between governors & curriculum areas could be improved. A proposal would be brought forward on how to implement this.

It was important that all students were stretched & challenged beyond expectations.

Further to the changes made to BTEC, processes had been tightened up considerably on how students were assessed. There were key assessment dates for all work to be submitted & this had been vigorously applied. The vast majority of students had met the deadline. All students were expected to work towards Distinction level.

Team training would be arranged with regards to stretch & challenge.

There was a need for all governors to meet with students & increase their visibility around the College. There was an opportunity for governors to assist students with reading & this was felt to be a good opportunity for governors to become more involved in the curriculum.

25/14 Curriculum Progress Report

Please refer to tabled paper referring to 'At Risk' students.

JD advised that staff were expected to complete M-book returns every half-term to provide engagement, performance & target grades. Further data & reports would be given to the committee during the year.

There were a number of ways that 'at risk' students were identified.

Early indications were provided within the table. **JD was asked to provide comparison data to give a context.**

It was also noted that there was no comparable data available for BTEC for 2013/14.

However, significant improvements were encouraging.

26/14 Employer Responsive provision

Please refer to the paper. The committee were asked to note the predicted overall & timely success rates.

EOG reported that the 2014/15 overall apprenticeship success rates were predicted to fall for the first time in 3 years.

The team had taken a number of preventative measures to minimise the risks (where possible). These included:

- 1-1 intensive functional skills support to support through examinations
- Additional vocational support & skills workshops
- Additional tutorial support & drop-in sessions at the Group's premises to enable staff to fit their learning in-between shift patterns.

Possible 'at risk' students were identified on a weekly basis with monthly meetings being held with the sub-contractor.

External auditors had been particularly complimentary with regards to the processes regarding funding claims whilst the Ofsted inspection report had given a Grade 2 for Apprenticeships.

27/14 Teaching & Learning update

Please refer to the tabled paper.

Overall, the lesson observation scheme was effective in predicting outcomes for learners, although there were some inconsistencies.

Referring to Appendix 1 (Summary of Lesson Observation data with draft SAR grade), the same methodology used for last year had been used for this year.

There were 5 curriculum areas with a substantial difference (of 2 grades) between the lesson observation profile rating & the draft SAR average grade. There were also some specific factors which were explained.

Appendix 2 showed the observations that had been carried out to date this year. Approximately 20 new teachers had been appointed to the College since Easter 2013. A total of 11 of these had been observed during the first half-term. The proportion of 'good or better' lessons observed suggested that the changed emphasis in recruitment was being effective.

Amendments to the lesson observation procedures were noted as well as the proposal to reduce the notice period for formal lesson observations.

28/14 Terms of Reference for committee

Further to discussions at the last meeting (21 Oct), the proposed amendments had been made to the ToR & the committee were asked to agree these amendments.

The amendments were accepted & the ToR were ratified by the committee.

29/14 Urgent AoB

There were no items of AoB for consideration

30/14 Confidential matters

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The meeting finished at 12:11pm

The next meeting will be held on Tues 20 January 2015.