



**ST MARY'S COLLEGE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 4.30PM VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Present: Mrs A Francis (20/21 Committee Chair) (AMF)
Mrs E. Best (Interim Principal) (EB)
Ms P. Lightbown (Staff Governor) (PL)
Mr P. Moore (PM) (joined during item 5)

In attendance: Mrs L. Farnhill (Clerk to the Board) (LF)

Staff: Max Makda (MM)
Howard Best (HB)
Kelly Sharp (KS)

Apologies: Mr C. Beesley (CB)

ITEM 1 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE (FOR APPROVAL)

With the agreement of the members present, 19/20 Chair AMF agreed to Chair the meeting and deferred the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair until PM was able to join the meeting.

Item 1 - Deferred to the end of the meeting.

OPEN AND WELCOME

19/20 Chair, AMF welcomed members and attendees, thanking staff for the papers prepared, adding that she was looking forward to reviewing them in more detail during the meeting.

ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES

The apologies of CB were detailed and accepted.

Item 2 – Resolved: The Committee accepted the apologies of CB.

ITEM 3 - DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No interests were declared. The Chair asked if there were any standing interests, with the clerk advising of the standing interests declared by EB, married to a member of staff, Howard Best, the Director of Curriculum. AMF clarified that there were no items relating to or presented by Howard, which EB confirmed that there were not.

Item 3 – Resolved: The standing interests of EB were noted for the 20/21 academic year.

ITEM 4 - APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD BY VIDEO CONFERENCE ON 9TH JULY 2020

19/20 Chair AMF thanked the clerk for the minutes, described as detailed and capturing the content of the meeting well. Members were asked to raise any points of inaccuracy, with none declared, the minutes were approved to be signed at the next face to face meeting of the Committee.

The clerk detailed the matters arising and actions undertaken as outlined on the cover sheet, with explanations provided for those that had been deferred. This included the action from February relating to the equality and diversity action plan, delayed by the college closure and with the staff responsible having since resigned, informing the committee that this now needed to be reassigned to a different member of staff, asking for the committee to approve this deferment to the next meeting. The other item deferred, was the comparative HE data, which was not yet available due to a large cohort of HE students having deferred submission. The committee approved the on-going deferment of these items, both to be presented in December.

Item 4 – Approved: The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee, with signing deferred to the next face to face meeting.

Actions: The following actions will be carried forward:

- Equality and Diversity action plan/ strategy - KS to review the progress columns and feed back to the next meeting including review dates and actions (carried forward) (KS)
- HE Outcomes Data - This should include national average information (PL)

ITEM 5 - COURSE AND SUBJECT PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW (REPORT OUTLINING PASS RATES, PROVISIONAL ACHIEVEMENT RATES AND PROVISIONAL ALPS GRADES)

Overview: MM asked if members had received and read the report distributed, which was confirmed. MM stated he was delighted with the outcomes which had been analysed over last few weeks, describing the hard work of staff culminating into an excellent set of results that were 0.3% above the national average, stating that the whole College was proud of the achievements of the learners. MM then provided a summary of the pass rates detailed within the report.

MM reiterated the point made in July, that the staff believed that all learners were capable of passing, pushing for 100% pass rates in A Levels and were proud to have achieved the pass rate of

100% for A Levels for 19/20, placing St Mary's College in the top 25% of schools and colleges nationally, increasing the 3 year trends for all key indicators.

Attendance: MM informed the Committee that the rate of 93% was in line with the College target.

Retention: MM expressed concern over retention rates that were 1.2% below the national average, resulting in careful analysis of the data and trends. Analysis revealed that the largest cohort, level 3 learners, were actually above the national average, necessitating additional focus on other levels where retention needs to improve.

MM noted that in the small level 1 cohort, 10 learners had left, 4 up to June and 6 since. This resulted in retention for Level 1 learners being 18% below the national average, pulling down the College average. MM informed the Committee that 5 students had transferred onto different courses, with only 3 having left the College. MM advised the Committee that actions would be put in place to improve this for the next academic year.

MM advised that another key concern to be addressed was the retention in GCSE classes, with 56% of Level 2 learners excluded, resulting in retention of Level 2 students being 3.3% below the national average, to be addressed by a revised and strengthened student discipline policy.

Pass rates: MM outlined the pass rates, indicating that the overall rate of 99.3% was the highest it had been for some years, whilst continuing to highlight areas for improvement including entry level maths which had a 50% pass rate, inviting questions from the committee regarding the College achievement data.

A member commented that the data was positive and asked if the national average data used was the Sixth Form Colleges National Average data which MM confirmed.

Value Added Performance (ALPS) – MM stated that the value added scores highlight fantastic achievements with an overall ALPS score of 3 for A Levels, with significant improvement across all subjects, noting continuing concerns for the area of maths. MM stated that although results had improved, attributed to the measures introduced to improve the quality of teaching and learning, including support from link governor CB, the Director of Teaching and Learning, MM and HoF, more still needed to be done, suggesting additional interventions would include further support from the Director of Teaching and Learning and the sharing of good practice to see alps and achievement rates improve further.

MM noted areas highlighted as necessitating improvement relating to prior attainment, highlighting the lower achievement for students coming in with higher prior attainment and an issue in maths where the B and C grade students fail to achieve their expected grades, whilst acknowledging that those in maths with higher prior achievement continue to do well, again, considering this to be as a result of inconsistent teaching styles.

Vocational outcomes – MM noted that the results had been impressive, highlighting the achievements of learners entering the courses with lower prior attainment. MM indicated that the only concern had been in relation to the Sports Sub Diploma, which EB confirmed would not be running in the next academic year.

Grade Distribution by Course – MM drew attention to the 54.85% of learners achieving high grades against approximately 40% the previous year, and for vocational learners, this increased to high grades of 68%.

A governor stated that they had watched with interest as government decisions relating to CAG's were amended and updated, **asking** what impact this had on this set of results, to which MM advised that the impact had been significant, having already begun analysing the results ahead of the decision to allow CAG's to stand, stating that high grades were 34% with **a member confirming** the impact had been a 20% improvement.

MM concluded by noting that the results had been positive, and whilst he had drawn attention to the lower outcomes, this had only been to demonstrate the College's continued commitment to improvement but there had been considerable highlights, with a number of courses having demonstrated improvements that need to be celebrated.

A member commented that the results should be celebrated and advertised widely across different media, adding that they wished for the gratitude of the governors to be passed onto the staff for their effort in generating the grades and then furthermore for the outstanding outcomes that this resulted in.

Item 5 – Resolved: The governors noted the details of the report.

Action –The gratitude of the governors should be passed onto the staff for generating the results along with congratulating them for the outstanding achievements.

PM entered the meeting and was updated by AMF and given the opportunity to ask any questions or raise any points on items 2-5, PM thanked AMF for the update and the meeting resumed.

ITEM 6 - QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TIMELINE

MM provided the Committee with the background information which led to the creation and implementation of the procedure used. MM informed the committee that during staff inset, staff on every course were asked to complete a subject analysis and were given a pre populated document of data to support them with this.

MM stated that this was completed in full by 7th September, with fully informed targets from the analysis feeding into their performance review and the SAR, ensuring continuity and data driven, reliable information to inform the Whole College SAR and the performance review process.

MM advised the Committee that faculty SAR's would be written by 10th October, with the Whole College SAR completed by half term along with the Quality Improvement Plan which will encompass retention as a key issue requiring improvement. MM indicated that the validation for faculty SARs would take a different format, asking the Committee to note the date of 6.11.2020 for validation which would be confirmed closer to the time.

MM advised that the documents distributed to staff were the template along with detailed performance data inclusive of SFC national average data. This was used to inform personalised targets which had been set by individuals and validated. MM advised that targets were based on national average data, ALPs, 3 year trends and transferred into individual performance management targets, with detailed data relating to gender and ethnicity, providing an example of Maths where boys perform better than girls by 3 ALPs grades which must be addressed within the targets set. The areas for improvement were formulated based on objective data, supported by an action plan and underpinned by the CPD strategy, which includes teaching and learning support that looks at all elements including gender, deprivation and ethnicity to support key areas for improvement. MM advised that this would be followed up by subject analysis within Personal Performance Reviews, then summarised in the Whole College SAR, informing the direction of the QIP.

A member commented on the high quality and level of detail that had gone into the process, impressed at how well coordinated the processes were which was good for staff development, **asking** what the staff had thought of it. MM advised that staff reviews had already begun, during which staff had fed back positively, particularly supportive of the single set of targets threaded through all elements of the process. MM added that staff have never been provided with this level of detail in the past, having to seek it out without assurances of the accuracy, which have been provided this year by the MIS consultant.

A governor commented that a position statement for each subject which informs the QIP with pre populated information is a strong starting point for the year, **asking** how the staff felt about completing the documentation and if they received training to support them. MM advised that training was given during inset via MS Teams, which incorporated a step by step guide inclusive of a fully completed example, using MM's subject, informing staff of the key features to focus on and providing examples of areas for improvement plus grading advice. MM informed the Committee that the data outlines how much staff need to improve to move to good or outstanding, which would be shared with the Committee at validation, a process that had also been streamlined, having embedded advice from the previous validation panel which indicated that the previous process was conducted too late in the year and had been long and complex.

A governor commented that maths continued to cause concern and **asked** what actions would be taken and who would take ownership for them, with MM informing the Committee that there would be a focus on how the course was delivered. MM advised that he and the Director of Teaching and Learning would sit down with the team the following week to view and analyse the data together. MM informed the Committee that staff had visited Nelson and Colne College, where results were outstanding and brought back ideas which included banks of resources, utilisation of texts and computer packages, all of which had already been implemented. MM added that in addition, the Director of Teaching and Learning would work with the team to reduce the variation in the quality of the lessons, to embed the best practices that were being used to varying degrees by the different staff. **A member commented** that they felt assured that intervention was in place.

Item 6 – Resolved: The Committee noted details of the report.

Action: The Committee were asked to note the date of the date of 6th November for validation.

ITEM 7 – SAR UPDATE (PROCESS AND ROLL OUT)

19/20 Chair, AMF indicated that the revised process had been indicated under the previous item and asked MM to provide any additional information the Committee needed to be aware of. MM confirmed that the committee had received the template and shared this on the screen for clarity.

MM highlighted how it was broken down into the 3 faculties with an introduction which included the scope of provision. MM advised the committee that clear instructions had been given to the Heads of Faculty that they will have to provide significant justification for their grades, with subject results analysis information copied in.

MM outlined the other data that would inform the SAR, including destination data, learner survey information and deep dive outcomes along with strengths and areas for improvement, with these reviewed and added to if necessary by the Head of Faculty with every course included within the Faculty SAR. MM advised that data provided for each faculty included attendance, high grades, learner surveys, outcomes all accessed in PearTrees which will also be used to support MM in completing the Whole College SAR, indicating that the process and template had worked well the previous year with no requirement for this to be changed.

A member asked if there could be a cover outlining the previous areas identified as requiring improvement along with actions and outcomes, to provide assurance to the governors that the actions taken delivered improvements. MM advised that this had already been completed as part of the progress update in July which was further built upon after results had been released, using the outcomes to support quality improvement, with retention highlighted as necessitating further action, **with a member commenting** that retention was not significantly below, noting the high retention for level 3 learners, which MM confirmed was 0.6% above the national average.

A member thanked MM for ensuring that the College was committed to continuous improvement, without any indication of becoming complacent, describing the process as thorough, which was reiterated by all members.

Item 7 – Resolved: The Committee noted the details of the report.

ITEM 8 – ENROLLMENT UPDATE

EB advised the Committee that a full report would be delivered to the Board, and provided headline figures, with 605 students on roll, with 263 in year 13, 342 in year 12 made up of 285 students studying at level 3, 49 at level 2 and 8 at level 1.

A member asked if this was in line with the targets set, with EB advising that ahead of the pandemic, the target was set at 650, with discussions at the start of the lockdown with Board Chair, MC and then with the ESFA and FEC teams, to advise them of a likely shortfall with an agreement to scale back the target to a more realistic figure of 600. **A member clarified** that recruitment had exceeded the revised target with EB confirming that the revised target had been met, with MC, the FEC team and ESFA happy with enrolment of 605.

Chair AMF confirmed that full analysis would be undertaken at the meeting of the Full Board, with figures requested here for assurance as to the impact of quality on recruitment.

Item 8 – Resolved: The Committee noted the details of the verbal report.

ITEM 9 - POLICIES FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD (FOR APPROVAL)

KS provided a summary of the policies, indicating that the Mental Health Policy was new, introduced due to present climate and advising that the impact of Covid-19 was threaded into existing policies as well as HE, which were previously standalone policies, but now embedded into whole college policies where relevant.

KS advised that the policies had been thoroughly interrogated on a line by line basis at the executive committee, and all recommended alterations had been made ahead of presenting them to the Committee for approval, inviting comments and questions from the Committee.

A member commented that they were comprehensive, with **another commenting** that the highlighting of changes was a useful practice, thanking KS for this.

With no further comments or questions regarding the policies, approval was given **with a member commenting** that in resuming inspections, Ofsted had been reviewing the policies of Colleges, looking for amendments made in light of the pandemic, feeling reassured that SMC had already begun this process with policies presented for approval at the first meeting of the year.

KS advised that the online safety policy was underway, with significant work required due to the changes in the way learning was taking place, necessitating significant input from the MS champion and the IT team, and this would be in draft format in the following week and presented for review at the next meeting of the Executive Committee and then brought to the Committee for approval.

Item 9 – Approved: The Committee recommended the Safeguarding Policy, Student Disciplinary Policy and Mental Health Policy for approval.

Action: The Online safety Policy was deferred.

ITEM 10 - HIGHER EDUCATION OUTCOMES

PL advised that due to the number of students deferring submissions, the information provided was only an interim report. PM added that results for 50% of students with extensions would be released today; therefore the data would change dramatically after today. **A member commented** that the information available so far did not present any cause for concerns, suggesting that questions and comments should be reserved until the full results became available. PL stated that one student had deferred until October resulting in an increased workload and delayed outcomes analysis.

Item 10 – Resolved: The Committee noted the details of the interim report and deferred full analysis for when all results would be available.

Action – Full HE outcomes analysis inclusive of comparative figures against national average data would be deferred to the next meeting of then Committee.

ITEM 11 - HE MONITORING REPORT

PL advised that this would be based on analysis of the outcomes data and therefore also needed to be deferred.

Item 11 – Deferred: The HE annual monitoring report would be deferred.

ITEM 12 – OFS REQUIREMENTS CALENDAR FOR 20/21

PL advised that the document circulated provided a detailed summary of the OfS requirements, adding that the cover of each HE report would indicate the condition and requirement it was addressing.

A member commented that attention drawn to key requirements and conditions was helpful, particularly with the College having missed deadlines in the previous year. PL indicated that the OfS were slower to react and updated guidance did not seem to be as responsive as it was in FE, considering this as beneficial with the College having already implemented FE requirements ahead of being requested by the OfS to do this in relation to HE. PL advised that the ILR, which had been one of the issues from the previous year was already drafted and would be presented to EB for a final review ahead of submission and would be well within the timeframe, which stated it was due in a month.

A member commented that they wanted reassurance that they were in a stronger position, following the need to take additional action in the previous year.

Item 12 – Resolved: The committee noted the details of the circulated document from the OfS.

ITEM 13 – QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORKPLAN (for approval)

Ahead of approving the workplan drafted by the clerk, 19/20 Chair, AMF stated that she needed to ensure that the plan did not put unnecessary strain on College staff, specifically **asking** if destinations data would be available in December. MM stated that he was confident that this would be available, with a robust process for tracking student destinations, updated to reflect the changing grades, with only a few remaining to collect following finalisation of their plans. This would be obtained using an effective text message system to fill in the missing gaps in the data, with the intention for information to be available well in advance of the meeting.

The clerk confirmed that the draft had been circulated to MM and PL for clarification of timing of reports with comments addressed, indicating that the red comments on the draft had since been updated to reflect their comments.

Item 14 – Approved: the Committee approved the Quality and Standards Committee workplan for 2020/21

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No items were raised in advance or during the meeting to be discussed under any other business, therefore the 19/20 Chair, AMF asked the Committee to return to item 1, the nomination and approval of the Chair and Vice Chair.

ITEM 1 – APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

The clerk confirmed no expressions were made ahead of the meeting and asked AMF if she would be happy to self-nominate to continue in the position of Chair of the committee. AMF agreed and this was seconded by PM and approved by the Committee.

PM was asked if he would consider the role of Vice Chair and with his agreement, this was seconded by AMF and approved by the committee, with AMF confirming her continuing commitment, to provide assurance to PM in his new position as Vice Chair.

Item 1 – Approved: The Committee approved Anne-Marie Francis as the Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee and Peter Moore as the Vice Chair.

Chair AMF thanked all in attendance for their contributions and passed on her thanks and congratulations to EB, MM and the body of staff for demonstrating SMC was a College that was continuing to thrive.

The meeting closed at 5.35pm.

Actions, Matters Arising and Deferred Items:

Item 4:

The following actions will be carried forward:

- Equality and Diversity action plan/ strategy - KS to review the progress columns and feed back to the next meeting including review dates and actions (carried forward) (KS)
- HE Outcomes Data - This should include national average information (PL)

Item 5:

- The gratitude of the governors should be passed onto the staff for generating the results along with congratulating them for the outstanding achievements

Item 6:

- The Committee were asked to note the date of the date of 6th November for validation.

Item 9:

- The Online safety Policy was deferred.

Item 10:

- Full HE outcomes analysis inclusive of comparative figures against national average data would be deferred to the next meeting of then Committee.

Item 11:

- The HE annual monitoring report would be deferred