

Quality & Standards Committee

Monday 24th February 2020

Minutes

Present:

Lynn Blades
Del Cooke
Jo Large
Marco Macchitella (Chair)
Milton McIntosh
Olivia Opara
Helen Pettifor
Peter Green
Ian Hooper
Peter Thompson
Beth Yap

In Attendance:

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|-----|---|
| 1. | Governance |
| 2. | Minutes of Previous Meetings |
| 3. | Matters Arising |
| 4. | Pastoral Item – Mental Health & Wellbeing |
| 5. | Self-Assessment Report |
| 6. | In-Year Student Progress |
| 7. | Quality Improvement Plan |
| 8. | Teaching & Learning Report |
| 9. | Risk Management Plan |
| 10. | AOB |
| 11. | Dates of Next Meetings |

| <i>Minute</i> | <i>Action, Decision or Recommendation</i> | <i>A/D/R</i> |
|---------------|--|--------------|
| 3.6 | Clerk to follow up with Lynn Blades on the circulation of information regarding planned enrichment programmes for Committee feedback. | A |
| 5 | A focus group to be set up to discuss the diversity of subjects and celebration of diversity. | A |
| 5 | Senior Leadership Team draft a position statement to be handed to Ofsted in the event of an inspection, which outlines what progress the College has made since the SAR was written and the outstanding work that is being done by the College at present. | A |
| 7.1 | Peter Thompson to circulate a summary of the meeting he had with students to discuss their views on maths at the College. | A |
| 8. | Peter Thompson to share the teaching and learning report for the maths department as soon as it is ready. | A |
| 10. | Committee to be regularly updated on the progress of the maths department. | A |

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Yasmin Jedidi and Indira Warwick.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 30th September 2019 were approved and would be signed by the Chair.

- 2.2 As no minute was deemed to be confidential, these would be uploaded to the College website in their entirety.

3. Matters Arising

6. Clerk to follow up with Lynn Blades on the circulation of information regarding planned enrichment programmes for Committee feedback.
8. Outcomes of the student satisfaction survey have been shared with staff for further feedback. The Principal and Vice Principal are assisting in the creation of a Student Council, which will also consider the issues covered by the survey.
9. The issues around the girls' toilets have now been resolved.

Action

4. Pastoral Item – Mental Health & Wellbeing

Ian Hooper tabled a paper for this item, informing the Committee that, due to personal reasons, Lubna Hussain has had to be out of College for much of the past two weeks.

Ian informed the Committee that the College has broadened its focus in terms of mental health support. The overall aim of the College is now to improve wellbeing and general mental health, whilst directing those who need additional support to external organisations who can provide it, such as Mind.

The Committee was informed that, since the last meeting, there has been a spate of attacks on students in the area and the College has been running a 'life not knife' week this month.

In response to a question from governors, Ian confirmed that Lubna is planning mental health first aid training with Mind and he is sure that governors would be welcome to attend this on 13th and 14th May 2020.

The Committee noted that, as part of its inspection, Ofsted ask whether students feel safe within the College and if they know who they can turn to if they do not. Olivia Opara, Student Governor, confirmed that students are aware of the various staff members who are available to talk to if they have a concern and confirmed that external referrals are also available for mental health issues.

5. Self-Assessment Report

Ian Hooper presented the 2018-19 College Self-Assessment Report (SAR), explaining that this has been amended to follow the new Ofsted framework (which focuses on intent, implementation and impact). Ian reminded the Committee that the SAR is used as the basis for the risk assessment conducted by Ofsted, as this is submitted to them in January. The Committee fed back that the SAR is extremely well written.

Governors noted that the SAR is clear on the 'intent' of the College but **questioned** whether teachers would be able to articulate that to an inspector in relation to their own subject or area. Ian confirmed that he is confident that College staff members would be able to talk about the College intent overall.

Peter Thompson confirmed that training on the new framework has taken place across the College and staff are able to talk about the 'intent' of their own department and more work is being done to raise the profile of the cross-College SAR. Ian also added that a day is planned to discuss the Ofsted framework in more detail, particularly focusing on what 'outstanding' looks like and what can the College do to get there.

The Committee noted that, within the SAR, the College has assessed its overall effectiveness as 'grade 2 – good', which is lower than its current Ofsted judgement of 'outstanding'.

The Committee expressed concern as to why the College is grading itself as 'good' in all areas rather than outstanding. Ian explained that he felt that the College cannot grade itself as 'outstanding' whilst students are not making the level of progress that they would have elsewhere.

The Committee felt that particular areas, such as personal development and behaviour and attitudes, have been graded too harshly and are 'outstanding'.

Olivia Opara, Student Governor, explained that the approach of subjects may need review, as certain subjects such as maths, are viewed as higher profile than other subjects such as computer science. The Committee agreed that the College should ensure that diversity is embraced in how various subjects are taught and celebrated. It was agreed that a focus group should be set up to discuss this further and respond to concerns

Action

In response to a question from governors, Peter confirmed that student feedback on subjects tends to be received at end of the academic year when departments are drafting their individual SARs. However, more could be done to take into account the views of students.

Finally, the Committee suggested that the Senior Leadership Team draft a position statement to be handed to Ofsted in the event of an inspection, which outlines what progress the College has made since the SAR was written and the outstanding work that is being done by the College at present.

Action

6. In-Year Student Progress

Ian Hooper presented the in-year student progress report following the mock exam week that took place in January. The Committee noted that this year's grades are in line with those at the same point last year.

The Committee was reminded of the College's aim this year to achieve an ALPS grade 4. However, the results of the recent mocks put the College at a grade 7 (compared to a grade 6 last January), showing there is still a long way to go. This means that, to achieve the target of ALPS grade 4, 1500 individual exam results will need to improve by at least one grade.

In response to a question from governors, Ian confirmed that the Curriculum Committee would be investigating whether the fall in grades is a result of student attainment or a more severe approach to grading. Peter informed the governors

that particular departments, such as chemistry, have set a much tougher exam than last year, which may account for the drop in progress in some areas.

However, Governors were also reminded that the timing of the mocks, which take place immediately on the return to College after the Christmas break, may also have an impact on the results.

The Committee discussed the subjects where both the mock and monitoring grades appear low, noting in particular maths, economics and geography. **In response to a question from governors**, Ian explained that ALPS highlights the students to target to improve the overall ALPS grade of a subject. However, it is up to the teacher to know how to improve the progress of that particular student.

The Committee questioned whether teachers have been asked what additional resources could assist them in getting the College to an ALPS grade 4. Peter explained that this has been discussed with staff, with ideas such as putting on additional revision classes during the Easter break being suggested. However, Peter reminded the Committee that it is difficult to find additional staffing this late in the year.

7. Quality Improvement Plan

7.1 Maths Quality Improvement Plan

Peter Thompson presented the Maths Quality Improvement Plan, reminding of the dip in the results last year with high grades reducing from 70% to 50%.

Peter confirmed that the move to linear A Levels was a concern for the maths department, but the results were more disappointing than expected. However, the Committee was reminded that this was also the case nationally.

In response to a question from governors, Peter explained that he has met with students to discuss their views and would circulate a summary report of this to the Committee.

The Committee reviewed the maths quality improvement plan, noting the large number of interventions that have taken place within the department. However, **governors expressed concern** that, being halfway through the year, there is no evidence whether these interventions are having an impact. Peter confirmed that the interventions are being measured in an informal way, such as speaking to students to confirm that their homework is being completed. The Committee agreed that any data to back up the impact of these initiatives would be useful.

Peter explained that the Head of Maths has confirmed that the results from the January mock exams are more impressive this year than last year. The department is confident that it will reduce the number of C-E grades and increase the number of high grades.

Action

After much research and consideration, the department has decided to stay with the Edexcel exam board, who have confirmed that the papers will be more accessible than they were last year.

In response to a question from governors, Peter confirmed that, despite being under a lot of pressure, the department has learnt some valuable lessons from last summer's results and has shown a great amount of resilience. The department is producing a 70-page tailored revision booklet for students, which was a huge task as there is currently a lack of exam questions.

In response to a question from governors, Peter explained that the maths department is increasing the number of staff available for 1:1 tutorial sessions, which is currently receiving a good take-up from students.

In response to a challenge from governors, Peter confirmed that a number of lesson observations are taking place, which show good teaching and learning, with regimented lessons and students focused on their work.

In response to another question from governors, Peter confirmed that resilience training is something that students require but this is a College-wide issue.

7.2 College Quality Improvement Plan

The College Improvement Plan was noted at the end of the SAR, with the key aims being:

1. For the College to achieve in 2020 A-level outcomes of:

- 72% A*-B grades
- 40% A*-A grades
- L3VA of 0.05
- Alps grade 3

2. For the quality improvement team to work closely with and support the College's four ALPS grade 7 departments: maths, computer science, economics and geography.

3. To ensure complete cross-college consistency in the way teachers, personal tutors and departments use the academic support and discipline system.

8. Teaching & Learning Report

Peter Thompson presented the teaching & learning report, highlighting the large amount of CPD activity that has been taking place across the College, particularly the training day that took place in response to the increasing number of requests that had been received for more subject-specific training.

Peter then presented the teaching and learning report from the social science department, explaining that there are currently some concerns in this area. Peter explained that the high grades, particularly the A* grades are low in the social sciences and the department has been encouraged to stretch and challenge students.

In response to a question from governors, Peter confirmed that he would share the teaching and learning report for the maths department, as soon as it is ready within the next few weeks.

Action

In response to a challenge from governors, Peter confirmed that he plans to share best practice, common themes and suggestions for improvement as a result of these teaching and learning reports.

9. Risk Management

The Committee considered the risk management plan, noting the risks for which it has responsibility had been covered as part of the agenda.

The Committee confirmed that the College is pro-active in improving but must be careful not to overwhelm staff and students in its need to improve.

10. Any Other Business

Olivia Opara informed the Committee that many students are uneasy about academisation and the maths school. Ian Hooper confirmed that a communication with students on this is imminent.

The Chair requested that the Committee is regularly updated on the progress of the maths department.

Action

11. Dates of Next Meetings

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 23 rd March 2020 | BOARD |
| 22 nd June 2020 | Quality & Standards Committee |
| 6 th July 2020 | BOARD |

The meeting concluded at 8:30pm