

Quality & Standards Committee

Monday 20th June 2016

Minutes

Present: Cindy Berman
Lynn Blades
Ben Charles
Sian Harris

In Attendance: Ian Hooper
John Rubinstein
Becky Sharp
Peter Thompson
Beth Yap

1.	Governance
2.	Minutes of Previous Meetings
3.	Matters Arising
4.	In-Year Student Progress
5.	Teaching & Learning
6.	Quality Improvement Plan
7.	Risk Management
8.	AOB
9.	Dates of Next Meetings

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Gloria Wells, Akash Varia and Emina Pignatelli.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 22nd February 2016 were approved and signed by the Chair.

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

BY to upload to web

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. In-Year Student Progress

John Rubinstein presented the Committee with an overview of student progress, reminding that the lower sixth are completing the new AS qualification, which is still relatively unknown.

The Committee noted that attendance this year was 91.5% compared to 90.3% in A2 classes last year and agreed that the removal of the late rule is mostly likely the cause of this. Attendance in AS classes has been 95.7%.

The Committee reviewed the current working grades and predicted grades of

the upper sixth and were pleased to know that the majority of grades had increased throughout the year. John reminded that the predicted grades have been generous in previous years but added that the exam results should be higher than the working grades in March.

Governors questioned whether the new mock week had impacted on students. Ian Hooper explained that the mock week was a big event during the year and energised both staff and students, whilst creating an opportunity for progression, feedback and reflection. Some students were encouraged by the pressure of the week whilst others found it stressful. Ian added that during the summer exam period more students have been suffering with stress and there has been an increase in the number of students sitting exams in smaller rooms and receiving additional support.

5. Teaching & Learning Update

Peter Thompson informed the Committee of the work of the Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) this year and explained how this has improved teaching and learning within the College. The Committee were reminded that the successes of initiatives such as these are difficult to measure.

Each AST has been working with teachers in 3 to 4 subject areas and chairs a Teaching Learning Community, which allows good practice to be shared across departments.

The Committee were also informed that there is an e-AST who supports IT-related teaching development across the College. Governors requested that the Committee receive a presentation on flip-learning and Google classroom at a future meeting

BY to add to future agenda

Governors were informed that the College is focusing on the learning process and equipping students with the ability to learn rather than providing information. The Committee requested that Cindy Berman circulate a link from the economist entitled 'teaching the teachers'.

CB to forward to BY.

6. Quality & Improvement Plan

Ian Hooper informed the Committee that Ofsted inspector Philip Elliott was recently invited to visit the College. The main aim of this visit was to measure how ready the Woodhouse is for an inspection and review reasons for dips in value added.

The Committee read the report of the inspector and the student survey, agreeing that they both highlighted the need for more boundaries and greater accountabilities within the College. Ian Hooper explained that many students struggle to adapt to the added freedoms and independent learning when moving from a school environment.

Governors asked whether the College could make better use of its communal areas for independent learning. John Rubinstein explained that the library and one of the learning zones are silent areas and the other is used for group work, which seems to work well for students.

Governors agreed that this was a valuable and useful report that provides staff with many ideas for improvement and asked how the College plans to take the idea of ‘developing professional learners’ forward. Peter Thompson explained that plans are underway to create a robust induction process to develop student skills, the creation of collaborative study groups and assist students to identify features of a professional learner. This will be in addition to the pastoral induction, which informs students of where they go for support and allows the College to understand their needs early.

The Senior Leadership Team informed the Committee that it accepts the criticism that College targets have been too qualitative and agreed that targets should be measurable.

Ian explained that there are plans to restructure student-facing staff by allocating two senior tutors to each year group and implementing heads of faculty.

The Committee questioned why the overall trend of the student surveys was downward compared to last year. John explained that the results of 2015 were usually high, which makes the 2016 figures look disappointing. Governors agreed that the students clearly love the College environment and often award high marks for student views being valued or feeling safe within the College.

The Committee drew attention to the fact that ‘teaching has been good’ has decreased from 93.6% to 89.2% in the student survey. Ian Hooper explained that this hasn’t yet been reviewed in detail but is likely to be because of the new A level syllabus, as there have been very few changes in staff from last year.

Governors noted that there is additional support for teaching staff but this is not translating down to students and asked how general morale is within the College. John explained that this is an uncertain time for staff with changes in A levels, curriculum and area based reviews, meaning that morale is lower than usual.

The Committee reviewed the quality improvement plan, which is borne out of the SAR, and focuses 4 main areas to be improved within the College (value added, attendance, high achievement and at-risk students). The governors requested that this document needs measurable targets and clear objectives.

JR/IH to add measurable targets to QIP.

Ian Hooper informed the Committee that the number of students dropping subjects mid-year has increased from 28 last year to 90 this year. Again, this could be due to the new A level, as many students want to concentrate on the remaining three subjects.

Governors questioned what support has been put in place for staff given the increased workload as a result of the mock week. John explained that this is currently being discussed within SLT and the upcoming change to a 5-block timetable will relieve some of this pressure.

7. Risk Management

The Committee reviewed the risks for which it has responsibility and was satisfied with the explanations given by the Principal. In particular, the Committee noted that it is likely that the College will get an Ofsted inspection next year.

8. Any Other Business

None.

9. Dates of Next Meetings

4th July 2016

Board

The meeting concluded at 7:45pm