

Quality & Standards Committee

Monday 22nd February 2016

Minutes

Present:

Cindy Berman
Ben Charles
Akash Varia
Gloria Wells

In Attendance:

Ian Hooper
John Rubinstein
Becky Sharp
Peter Thompson
Beth Yap

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

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Lynn Blades and Yumna Mobeen.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 12th October 2015 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. Self-Assessment Report

Ian Hooper presented the Committee with the College's latest self-assessment report and explained that the format of this has been amended so that it reads like an Ofsted report in the new framework.

Ian drew particular attention to value-added (the progress made by students at Woodhouse compared to students elsewhere), informing the Committee that this is measured by two systems at the College; one of which is a subscription

service called ALIS, whilst the other includes national figures and is used by the DfE and Ofsted.

Ian Hooper explained that using the DfE value-added analysis, the A Level grades have dipped to -0.07 (previously +0.08), which equates to 7% of a grade. However, the Committee noted that the only area that is 'significantly negative' is 'AS levels that are not continued at A2'.

The Committee also noted biology, maths and further maths are the only A level subjects shown as 'significantly negative'. However there are a number of subjects that are 'below average' such as biology and physics. The College has begun work on the subjects where improvement is needed; for example targeting these for internal inspections.

John Rubinstein explained value-added has been an issue since the College changed to a 6-block timetable in 2011 as this reduced contact time between students and their teachers, and gave teachers a larger number of students to monitor.

Staff invited ex-students who have over-achieved to speak to current students and there is a mentoring programme between upper and lower sixth. Akash Varia agreed that the mentoring schemes are useful but require more structure, as currently quite informal.

One of the learning zones has been converted to a silent working area and there is a big push to encourage students to go to the library rather than spend free time in the social area.

Ian explained that he has invited an Ofsted inspector in to discuss the decline in value added with the Curriculum Quality Managers and Heads' of Departments and help identify additional strategies for the College to pursue or amend the current ones.

Governors questioned how much emphasis Ofsted put on the level 3 value-added. Ian explained that this is very high on the Ofsted agenda and has arguably taken over from success rates as the most important metric. However, other factors such as progression rates are also taken into account.

Governors thanked SLT for the self-assessment report, agreeing that the new format makes it concise and clear. However, the Committee requested an introduction or flow chart showing where the evidence for the analysis has come from. Ian explained that the SAR is derived from tangible and non-tangible evidence, including results, talking to students, principal's question time, SLT meetings, and the student council.

IH to add introduction into future SARs,

5. Quality Improvement Plan

Ian Hooper explained that the SAR informs the Quality Improvement Plan and the four priorities for the year:

- **Student Progress-** Poor VA in STEM and for female students.
- **High Achievement-** A* and high-grade achievement at AS fell in 2015.
- **At-risk students-** Insufficient monitoring of students who are at risk of

- underachieving.
- **Attendance-** Too many students have attendance below 90%

Akash Varia explained that although the ILP system is helpful and shows individual progress, there is not enough emphasis on students to use this to reflect and improve. Akash also explained that more exam-based work would be helpful to constantly remind students how they are progressing.

Governors asked whether the change to the late rule has affected attendance. John explained that attendance has increased by about 1% this year. Attendance overall is very good, but the concern is a small group of students with extremely low attendance.

Governors questioned what parent involvement is like at the College. Becky Sharp explained that parents are contacted immediately if there is poor attendance. In addition to this, parents have regular access to the students' ILPs and mark-books and the new boot-camp has also begun to build links with parents.

Governors requested that the Quality Improvement Plan is reviewed at every meeting of the Quality & Standards Committee. The specific request was for an additional column to record progress, as and when monitoring took place.

BY to add to the agenda.

6. In-Year Student Progress

John Rubinstein informed the Committee that for the first time the College held a full, formal 'mock week' and the 'current working grades' have been heavily influenced by these results. Governors were reminded that this and the change in gradings would make this year's grades difficult to compare against last year's.

Governors noted the progress data and were reminded that another set will be made available in March 2016.

7. Teaching & Learning

Peter Thompson explained the work being done to improve teaching & learning within the College, such as the TLCs and recent CPD day. The main focus is to get staff to reflect on their performance, work with different departments and try new things in their lessons.

STEM is a major focus for the College at the moment and the STEM forum meets each month and focuses on key concerns such as under-achieving students or underperforming girls.

A number of internal inspections have also taken place in further maths, physics and psychology. Governors were provided with the further maths inspection report. John explained that there are plans to record lessons and watch these back with a mediator to give effective feedback to teachers.

Governors asked if there are any fundamental differences between STEM and non-STEM subjects. Peter explained that in STEM subjects there is often not

enough time to cover the topics in sufficient detail, which means lessons are often focused on providing students with the basic knowledge rather than the application of this. However, students are often encouraged to read ahead and learn prior to lessons.

Governors questioned why the internal inspections do not grade each lesson. John explained that this has been removed from the new framework and Ofsted no longer grade individual lessons. John went on to explain that it is important the staff take on board any feedback given rather than focusing purely on a grade. Even though individual lesson observations are not graded during inspections, Ofsted form a judgement on the overall quality of lessons as to whether they are Outstanding, Good etc.

Governors asked about learning sets and peer working and if there was a way to encourage this further. John explained that subjects such as English and philosophy promote this very strongly and encourage group working for homework. However, some subjects such as maths require individual learning to encourage the student to build resilience.

The Committee went on to discuss ‘developing learning muscles’ such as resilience and reflectiveness. John explained that there is currently no framework for teaching and learning for the whole College, as it is important that departments retain an autonomous understanding of what constitutes effective practice in their area. However, there is further work that could be done to teach skills, as well as content in lessons.

8. 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 the retention rate is over 99% and the College has received 12 Oxbridge offers. Governors noted that medicine offers are starting to be received and agreed that these have increased since the implementation of the medicine academy. John confirmed that SLT are looking at increasing this further and linking with the career academy.

9. Any Other Business

The next meeting of the Committee will be 20th June 2016.

10. Dates of Next Meetings

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| 21 st March 2016 | Board |
| 20 th June 2016 | Quality & Standards Committee |
| 4 th July 2016 | Board |

The meeting concluded at 7:55pm