

Local Governing Body

Monday 15th November 2021

Minutes

Present:

Aisha Adesanya
Sugra Alibhai
Sam Bailey
Louise Burke
Lynn Blades
Pamela Chowdhury
Del Cooke
Funmi Esuola
Angela Hille
Matthew Konneh
Jo Large
Marco Macchitella (Chair)
Emma McCoy
Niamh Walters

1.	Governance
2.	Minutes
3.	Matters Arising
4.	Self-Assessment Report 2020-21
5.	College Improvement Plan – Autumn Update
6.	Principal’s Report
7.	Student Experience: Wellbeing and Workload
8.	Teaching & Learning Report
9.	Risk Management Plan
10.	AOB

In Attendance:

Peter Green
Ian Hooper
Lubna Hussain
Peter Thompson
Beth Yap

Minute	Decision /Action	D/A
1.3	All governors to consider how the Governing Body can become more engaged with the College and pass on any suggestions to the Chair or Clerk.	A
3.9	Pemi Arowojolu to be appointed as the Careers Governor.	A
4.	To approve the 2020-21 Self-Assessment Report, subject to the requested changes.	D
5.	Any feedback on the Oxbridge process to be sent to Sugra Alibhai so this can be looked into.	A

The Governing Body welcomed Sam Bailey, who would be replacing Annalisa Alexander as an Imperial Appointed Governor and introductions were made.

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Mahima Ali, Pemi Arowojolu and Farina Begum.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

1.3 Governor Engagement

The Chair reminded governors that, whilst meetings are online, the Governing Body remains somewhat limited but encouraged all to participate as much as possible during meetings. All governors were asked to consider how the Governing Body can become more engaged with the College and to pass on any suggestions to the Chair or Clerk.

Action

2. Minutes

The Governing Body approved the minutes of 27th September 2021 as a true and accurate record of the events that took place. It was agreed that these minutes should be uploaded to the College website in their entirety.

3. Matters arising

5. **Following a request** at the last meeting, Sugra Alibhai presented destination data by key groups explaining that this has also been shared at Trust level. Sugra explained that the College is looking to move away from using Russell Group universities as an internal measure and considering higher tariff universities instead.

In response to a question from governors, Sugra explained that there are no areas of serious concern for the Senior Leadership Team, as the gaps between key groups are much smaller than the national picture. However, the College would like to move to a position where there are no gaps between groups. The biggest area of focus this year is to reduce the number of students who enter clearing.

In response to a follow-up question, Sugra confirmed that there were very few cases of students self-releasing into clearing. The aim for the College this year is to work with students to have a realistic view of how their grades will be read by universities without dimming their expectations. Sugra explained that every student that entered clearing was contacted and offered a large amount of support, including a one-to-one with the careers advisor. Whilst the Governing Body agreed that further work could be done to reduce the number of students who remain unplaced, it was also agreed that 64 students out of a possible 700 was not disproportionately large, given the work that was done this summer to support all students placed in clearing.

9. Noting that only one expression of interest had been received, it was agreed that Pemi Arowojolu be appointed as the Careers Governor.

Decision

4. Self-Assessment Report

Ian Hooper presented the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2020-21, reminding the Governing Body that this document is used by Ofsted as part of a desk-based analysis when reviewing the schedule of inspections for the year. In addition to this, the SAR is also used as an internal measure to see how the College is performing.

The Governing Body noted that each member of the Senior Leadership Team wrote the area of the SAR for which they had responsibility, and this was written in line with the Ofsted framework.

A section on Covid has been included, despite this being a key theme throughout the document, as the College is aware that Ofsted is particularly interested in the impact Covid has had on students and what the College has put in place to address this.

The Chair thanked the Senior Leadership Team for this document, agreeing that it clearly outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the College and shows how it has managed the challenges of covid over the last year.

It was noted that the College has judged itself as 'outstanding' and **governors** suggested that more evidence is included to justify this in every area to ensure that the document stands up to the scrutiny of Ofsted.

Governors also suggested that, under 'implementation', more information around the pedagogy of learning online and the adaptations of delivery, along with the impact this had, is also included.

In addition to this, **it was suggested** that the impact and quality of CPD is clearly outlined, to show how this added value to the student experience and subsequent outcomes.

The Governing Body questioned the work around mental health and wellbeing, given recent feedback from students on this area. Lubna Hussain confirmed that much of this feedback related to last year when the College was closed and students are now aware of the support that is accessible to them, including counselling that is available 5 days a week. Governors agreed that stronger wording should be included to show that the provision has increased this year.

The Governing Body approved the Self-Assessment Report, subject to the requested changes, and noted that the College was still working on this internally.

Decision

5. College Improvement Plan – Autumn Update

Sugra Alibhai presented the College Improvement Plan which included updates on the work that had taken place this term. Sugra informed the Governing Body that some priorities had been marked amber as the work had already begun but it is too early to see the impact of this yet.

Governors questioned the amber rating around reducing the gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. Sugra explained that whilst the most recent data shows small gaps, the College is mindful of historic data along with the fact that disadvantaged students have been impacted the most by the pandemic

There was some feedback relating to the Oxbridge process, where some students did not feel that they received sufficient support. Sugra explained that the deadlines were clearly communicated to all students at various points throughout the year. Sugra acknowledged that, as many students chose to complete this on the deadline day, there were long queues in the College. It was

agreed that any feedback on this process should be sent to Sugra so this can be looked into. Niamh Walters confirmed that, overall, the communication around the Oxbridge process was clear.

In response to a question around student communication, Lubna Hussain confirmed that not all students regularly read their college emails and alternative methods of communication are being considered.

Governors questioned the objective around developing students' confidence in expression and oracy and why this had been graded red. Sugra explained that this is something that had been started but the College feels that more can be done to ensure that students can argue effectively and compassionately. Governors felt that judging this as red was overly harsh but acknowledged the College's high expectations.

The Governing Body thanked Sugra for the update and was pleased to note the large number of 'green' objectives.

6. **Principal's Report**

Sugra Alibhai presented the Principal's report, drawing attention to the change in format which sees the inclusion of data that will be updated each half term.

Sugra explained that, whilst overall attendance is outstanding at 95%, the College is now focusing on the students who have an attendance figure of less than 90% and has now implemented the new attendance process, which was approved by the Governing Body at its last meeting.

In response to a question from governors, Sugra confirmed that the College is aware when attendance relates to covid or self-isolation, and the students being targeted have unauthorised absence.

The Governing Body was pleased to note that no department is currently receiving additional support but **questioned** what would trigger this process. Sugra explained that this could be as a result of student feedback, parental complaints, poor outcomes or learning walks.

The Governing Body **questioned** why areas previously discussed on the Principal's report had been removed, such as finance, premises and health & safety. Sugra confirmed that the role of the Governing Body is to look at teaching & learning and the student experience and the other areas are now the responsibility of the Trust and its committees.

In response to a question from governors, Lubna Hussain confirmed that there have been no more than 5 students who have failed to return to College, following the pandemic but there are some instances of students who have been unable to return due to their mental or physical health.

7. **Student Experience: Wellbeing and Workloads at Woodhouse**

The Governing Body considered the report on wellbeing and workloads at Woodhouse, noting that the Student Governors fed into this report, to ensure

that student feedback was included.

The Governing Body noted the large amount of work that is taking place around mental health with 36 mental health first aiders on site and a tutorial series planned on mental health hygiene. Lubna Hussain informed the Governing Body that plans have also begun for blue Monday with a 10-day communication planned for parents, students and staff.

Niamh Walters reminded the Governing Body of the impact the pandemic has had on students who were isolated in a new environment. Niamh went on to explain that students want to feel validated and ensure that their views are heard. It was noted that much of the feedback related to last year and students are aware that the College has increased its wellbeing provision this year.

The Governing Body congratulated the College on the large amount of work that it has done in this area, particularly around creating a culture of recognising areas for improvement and implementing changes.

Governors questioned how the College manages issues that are being dealt with externally. Lubna confirmed that the Safeguarding Team liaises with external services to ensure that any risk is being managed appropriately. Lubna explained that some students have been placed in eating disorder clinics and can only return to the College when it is safe for them to do so without being triggered by the stress of A Levels.

In response to a final question from governors, Lubna confirmed that the staff who are dealing with these students receive regular supervisions. There has also been a training session for all staff on self-regulation, as the College is mindful of the additional pressure on staff since returning after the pandemic.

8 Teaching and Learning Report

Peter Thompson presented the teaching & learning report, highlighting that two separate weeks of learning walks have already taken place this term, which focused on how both year groups were settling back into College. Peter explained that the College is looking to implement a culture of learning walks to get staff used to these taking place.

The Governing Body considered a summary of the findings from the learning walks, noting that the College is looking to improve the note-taking skills and organisation of students, as well as ensuring that they understand where their learning fits into the bigger picture of the overall syllabus.

Governors questioned how the feedback from learning walks is shared with teachers and followed up. Peter explained that key themes are fed back through training or at the Principal's meetings with middle leaders.

The Governing Body noted that the College is also eager to support students who are more reserved and reluctant to contribute in class. **In response to a question from governors**, Jo Large explained that teachers are able to do this in a variety of ways such as encouraging working in pairs, issuing talking tokens, or ABCQ (where students can agree with, build on, challenge or

question the view of another student).

9. Risk Management Plan

The Governing Body considered the risk management plan, noting that separate plans had now been drafted for Frontier Learning Trust and Woodhouse College. Sugra Alibhai explained that the only new risk was a failure to disclose public records, as the College is now subject to a number of new requirements since academisation, such as publishing information on its website.

10. AOB

None.

The meeting concluded at 8:07pm