

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
QUALITY & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
HELD ON Monday 11 March 2024 at 16.30

Present: Steve Allen, Dan Lodge (Principal), Tanishka Mehra, Dr Grant Powell, Helen Smith, Bev Valley, James Yandell

In attendance: Members of SMT – Rob Hussey (VP Curriculum), Andrea John (VP Pastoral)

Russha Sellings (Director of Governance)

Chair: Dr Grant Powell

1. Chair's Introductions and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Staff Governor Will Power. It was noted that this would be the Student Governors last committee meeting as their terms of office were due to end in May.

The Chair had not received any questions regarding the proposed consent items. Item 5, Strategy & Quality Assurance would form the main focus of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

None declared with respect of items on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising

(not already covered on the agenda)

Item 5a – PR assessments/comms and the action for the VP (Curriculum) who confirmed he had gone back to staff about the accuracy of PR3 assessments, in particular studentship gradings and outcomes. To demonstrate the commitment to ongoing dialogue and in continuing to refine the process, this had been raised at Curriculum Directorate level and at Curriculum and Education Committees and was also covered at a recent all staff meeting. The VP (Pastoral) added there had been discussions at Education Committee about the need for all subject areas to explain PR grades to students, as the Student Governors had previously reported variations in coverage between subjects. She asked the Student Governors if feedback could be gained from the student body, although more relevant to 1A students at this point, the Student Governors agreed to feedback if they heard anecdotally if the position had improved over time.

The Chair referred to a previous matter arising from the last meeting regarding students' understanding of monitoring and filtering of online activity, specifically the process of consent. The Student Governors had raised awareness of this via the RCU as it had appeared that some students could not recall the detail of the agreement which the VP (Pastoral) said formed part of the pack of information received at the start of their college journey. Further methods to ensure the message was reinforced were discussed. A Student Governor commented that it could be more effective to alternate tutor reps in the second year to spread the workload as this wasn't currently a route for consistent communications. It was thought subject leaders could play a role at the start of a lesson which may also be more impactful. Members were keen that data consent was properly understood as it was something that students would encounter throughout their working lives. **(Action: VPs)**

5. Strategy & Quality Assurance

Papers: EDI report 22-23, Education KPIs, QIP updated, DfE performance data, Ofsted update, EQR, internal audit reports (SharePoint)

a) EDI

i) Annual report 2022-23

The VP (Pastoral) explained the EDI officer had produced a more streamlined report covering progress against previous targets and objectives for 2023-24. The report dovetailed the SAR-QIP and was shared with the EDI Link Governor. Questions were invited.

A member asked about the current arrangements for the prayer room. The VP (Pastoral) wished to clarify that the report referenced the ad hoc position in the previous reporting period. The offering of a dedicated space had been disrupted by the RAAC discovery but this had now been resolved. Currently only a few students per day were making use of it, although there was an increase during religious festivals. The College were not legally obliged to offer a prayer room, however it was considered important from a wellbeing perspective to provide permanent and accessible space which members fully supported.

There was a query on page 3 on the accuracy of the numbers of students registered with a disability. It was considered important that Governors were aware of the true picture and this would be checked with the EDI Officer (**Action: VP Pastoral**)

It was questioned whether the staff body accurately reflected the student community where diversity in applications were observed as low. The VP (Pastoral) believed this was typical of the local area and while students tended to travel from further afield, this was not the same for Support Staff due to factors such as salary and travel costs. It was confirmed that national recruitment methods were used and increasing diversity was important but remained challenging in the area. It was confirmed the term 'people of colour' was accepted language.

In terms of gender diversity, there was a question about sources of the data for students. The VP (Pastoral) said this had started to be captured via the application in the last few rounds of admissions and the term 'trans' in this instance was an umbrella category for data gathering purposes.

The trend in outcomes by gender was also noted as a common theme in education. Members were delighted that SEND students achieved good outcomes above national average.

Thanks were recorded to the EDI Officer for her work on this and the VP (Pastoral) for the presentation of the report.

ii) *DfE consultation: [gender questioning guidance](#)

While this was a consent item, the Chair considered it important to cover off at the meeting following a question about how the guidance might be received by some students and the risk around this. The VP (Pastoral) was keen to emphasise the non statutory guidance was only at draft stage for the purposes of consultation, due to close tomorrow, and it was uncertain what the timeframe might be for publication. The College had responded by seeking views of staff and students including the LGBTQ+ and Trans Society.

A member commented on the guidance with respect to Gillick Competencies and the VP (Pastoral) confirmed that in its current form, the guidance conflicted with equality law in several areas. The College would put a plan in place at the next stage should it arise. The Principal said sector bodies were feeding back on behalf of SFCs and wished to assure students that safeguarding practices and professional judgment would take precedent. The VP (Pastoral) agreed, especially where the guidance referred to parental consent where the College would determine what was in the best interests of the young person.

b) KPIs (Education)

The VP (Curriculum) said the position was looking positive across the board including Vocational and Technical. He invited comments on the content and format of the report where it now linked to Alps data by subject providing a national data comparative. Members agreed it was very helpful to have an indicative position broken down by subject, which was especially beneficial in

identifying consistency and patterns across the progress review points. It was agreed for the meantime to remove L3 Value-Added data by subject from the KPIs. *(Action: VP Curriculum)*

The Chair asked the VP (Pastoral) to comment on the attendance KPIs. The data point was pre-Spring term so was slightly out of date but overall the picture was improving. Interventions had already been identified for Transition students and it was recognised that the cohort was much larger this year due to readjustments in GCSE grading. The team were looking further into whether studentship was impacting the figures. With respect to retention, the team was very pleased with the figures in particular for 2A.

c) College QIP 2023-24 update

It was usual at this point of the year for the target areas to be RAG rated amber in the main. A member asked about the timings and purpose of the next student survey. The VP (Curriculum) said this was specifically scenario planning for students taking vocational courses in response to future curriculum reforms (1.3). It was important to understand the alternatives students may have considered if the choice had been narrowed. It had become apparent looking at the current applications that A-Levels were increasingly becoming the predominant choice. The VP (Curriculum) had undertaken some analysis and confirmed the additional blocks of teaching required to support increased numbers were much more heavily weighted towards A-Levels. It was important, however, that when surveyed, students understood that BTECs were still valued, especially by HE providers. In terms of timing, the survey would be circulated at an appropriate time to ensure maximum response.

There was a question on 1.5 about how A.I driven initiatives would be received by staff. The VP (Curriculum) referred to the lack of an impactful proposition for the education sector, however it was important to include and monitor what was possible in this emerging area. The College were considering a new post for a Digital Lead who it was hoped could help move this forwards.

The VP (Pastoral) spoke to the relevant areas which were on track. The main highlight was staff wellbeing linked to workload and resources had been focused on ways to address this.

d) DfE Performance Data

The VP (Curriculum) introduced the new report. The data didn't take into account Value Added and the Principal said that some of the providers included in the report had much higher entry requirements. The particular area of concern was T-Level results locally. However, members queried whether the cohorts were large enough to effectively compare. It was also observed that the data would be more useful for comparative purposes when broken down by T-Level subject and members would welcome this once available.

e) Ofsted update

SMT were pleased with the progress in the response plan. Members heard that preparations were underway for a consultant from FEA Associates who was one of the HMI inspectors involved in the last inspection to undertake a readiness review. The Principal said this would form part of the Strategy Day in June where the feedback would be presented and it was hoped some Governors may participate the day before and join the consultant in an online session.

f) EQR (e-science)

The report was noted as a positive report and there were no further comments.

g) *Exams /safeguarding audits

The reports were available on SharePoint and provided strong assurance from the internal auditors. There were no comments raised.

6. Student Progression

Paper: Student Progression report

The VP (Pastoral) included a top sheet by way of explanation of the annual update. The Directorate SAR-QIP was shared with the Link Governor last term.

There was a need to continue reporting on opportunities available to those students who didn't progress to HE, given the extensive support evident for students going to university. The VP (Pastoral) believed there was a lot of work in terms of events and via the Tutorial Programme to support development pathways for all students and this should be reflected in the QIP targets. There was a wider discussion on the expectations of the Gatsby benchmarks that had been raised at the Skills Agenda working party. It was confirmed the 1:1 careers advisory support was targeted to those with greatest need following a further question. It had been observed that those considering employment or apprenticeships tended to need more guidance whereas those progressing to university were more motivated. During the discussion, the VP (Curriculum) wished to point out that the 70/30 split did not translate directly between A-Level and Vocational students with a number of BTEC or mixed model students opting for university.

In reference to the destination data in the report, there was some debate on Russell Group levels compared to the independent sector. The VP (Pastoral) said it was still 7% higher than state institutions overall. One member remarked that course choice was often overlooked in most of these instances and this should be the main focus. Following a question, it was confirmed that universities across the regions were invited to talks, however universities in the south of the country remained more popular. In both cases it was acknowledged that parents had more influence over the choice.

Members supported the SAR/QIP reporting format and remarked on the strong UCAS and HESA data and thanked the VP (Pastoral) for the updates.

7. Update from Skills Agenda working party

Papers: Skills WP draft minutes, new DfE guidance (link)

i) New statutory guidance: [meeting skills needs Dec 23](#)

The Chair of the working party gave a verbal update. The working party had considered the latest guidance and it was confirmed the new requirement for a combined Accountability Agreement including the review of provision was now 30 June and was conditional for funding. There was some work to do to be completed between now and the Governing Body approval. The Chair of the working party referred to new sections of the guidance in terms of what should be prioritised and expectations on SFCs which was now clearer. Adult Ed was seen as a route in part to meeting the local skills needs. In some cases, collaboration with other education providers was considered the best option. Good progress had been made with subject and College level ERBs. The skills judgment issued under the enhanced EIF was discussed and SMT were confident 'reasonable' would be an appropriate outcome for the College should there be an inspection before the College converted to a 16-19 academy.

The Chair wished to thank the Chair of the working party for all her work and support.

ii) Accountability Agreement timeline

Covered in the above item.

8. Safeguarding termly update

No termly data was presented on this occasion. The Chair explained that there had been a meeting of the Safeguarding and MH&WB Governors with the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss appropriate reporting back to Q&C and The Governing Body. As a result of this meeting and the evolving significant changes in this area representing best practice the VP (Pastoral) had undertaken some research following the meeting and proposed an evidence-based approach focused on process and procedures as follows:

- A termly meeting with the Safeguarding Governor where the data would be presented. Reference would be made to a checklist of recommended areas available from The Key. The Safeguarding Governor would not perform routine checks of the SCR but would hear where these had been completed by relevant staff.

- A report would be prepared termly for this committee including input from the Safeguarding Governor using a template from The Key.
- An annual report would be shared with the Governing Body to provide assurances and some aids in terms of questions to ask would be provided via resources on The Key.

Members supported the suggested way forward and there would be an update at the next Governing Body meeting.

The MH&WB Governor provided a verbal update from his recent visits and discussions with key staff. There was a notable increase in referrals and there could be further impacts with student numbers expecting to rise. The College were involved in several initiatives to ensure meaningful impact of the support provided. However caution was urged in the response to further investment in resources and capacity from a strategic perspective as external agencies had a duty to provide support. There were further considerations to the College estate in accommodating expanding support services.

9. Policies

Papers: Curriculum Policy, Student CoC

i) Curriculum Policy

There were no comments on the proposed changes.

Resolved: The Q&C Committee approved the Curriculum Policy.

ii) Behaviour Policy (Student CoC)

The annual review of Code of Conduct recommended some small areas of clarification.

Recommendation: The Governing Body approve the Behaviour Policy

10. AOB

The Student Governors were thanked for their input and the Chair said he looked forward to seeing them at Mercers' Hall for their last Governing Body meeting in a few weeks.

11. Meeting Assessment

The Director of Governance wished to check members were content with the information included in links and where previously scrutinised by another committee, relevant papers had been added to SharePoint as background information. The Chair said this had worked well in terms of focusing on the key areas and members agreed.

12. Date of the Next Meeting:

The Committee would meet again in the summer term on Monday 17 June 2024, 16.30.

The meeting closed at 17.59

Chair.....

Date

RRS 12-03-24