



Notes of the informal Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13 June 2023 at 5.30 pm via Teams

Present: Mark Dawson (*Parent Governor*)
Sam Johnstone (*Staff Governor*) – *joined meeting at 5.45pm*
Michael Martin (*Foundation Governor*) – *Chair*
Leigh Rice (*Associate Member*)

In attendance: Angela Williams (*Interim co-Principal*)
Janet Gater (*Acting Vice Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Student Performance*)
Laura Forsyth (*Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Quality*)
Liz Walls (*Assistant Principal, Super Curriculum*)
Emma Smith (*Assistant Principal, Pastoral & Personal Development*)
Ruth Potter (*Clerk*)

The Clerk confirmed that a quorum of four governors had not been achieved and hence the Committee meeting was not quorate. Those members present agreed to proceed informally with the meeting and refer any formal decision making to the full Governing Body meeting on 27 June 2023.

Notes were taken of the informal meeting as a record of this discussion.

1. ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Declarations of interest

Attendees were invited to declare whether they had any direct or indirect personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any matter which formed part of the agenda for this meeting or was likely to be discussed at this meeting. No additional interests were declared by governors other than those already recorded on the College's register of interests.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Sarah Carroll (Foundation Governor) who had been unable to attend at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

Apologies from the Student Governor were submitted via email following the meeting.

1.3 Items to be included under any other business

There were no items for submission under any other business.

1.4 Minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee meeting held on 7 March 2023 (previously circulated)

These were noted as an accurate record of the meeting. Formal approval of the minutes would be deferred to the next quorate meeting of the Committee.

ACTION – Next Committee agenda item – approval of draft minutes from 7 March 2023

1.5 Matters arising from the minutes (previously circulated)

Committee members noted the action log prepared by the clerk.

2. SAFEGUARDING

2.1 Safeguarding Termly Update (previously circulated)

The Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Personal Development) presented the safeguarding termly update and highlighted the following points:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023 – the draft statutory guidance had only just been published and work was underway to review and update the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Low Level Concerns Policy. Once reviewed by the College Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the draft policies would be presented directly to the full Governing Body for approval at its meeting on 27 June 2023.
- Safeguarding Officer – an appointment had been made to this new role and the successful candidate would be starting in College in September 2023. The full-time Safeguarding Officer would replace the current rota system and thus ensure greater distinction between safeguarding and pastoral support.
- Staff training – Pastoral Team members had all completed designated safeguarding lead (DSL) training; all staff had completed Prevent training; CPD reported for the College's DSL and Deputy DSL.
- Safeguarding incidents – report provided. Increase in incidents in year largely behaviour related. 'We stand together' campaign launched within College to set the right tone for students moving forwards.
- Mental health and counselling – significant increase in tier 0 and tier 1 referrals. Six students had received training as Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors.
- Sexual harassment and misogyny – student voice survey and focus groups taken place as part of a deep dive into this area. Some positive findings identified alongside some actions to take forward.
- E-safety – personal achievement tutors receive monthly reports on any online activity that flags as a potential safeguarding issue. Policy in this area would be updated following publication of KCSIE 2023 draft statutory guidance.

Sam Johnstone joined the meeting at this point.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her report and requested that, following the appointment of a Safeguarding Officer, an overview of the updated Safeguarding Team structure and the Pastoral Team structure be presented to the next Committee meeting.

The report was discussed in detail with numerous questions raised by governors and responded to by the SLT. These included:

Q – Increase in number of safeguarding incidents noted. Given changes in staffing, how was the team coping with this increase in demand?

A – The new full-time Safeguarding Officer would have a positive impact on resources in September. In the meantime, it was confirmed that the

Safeguarding core team had been reinforced. Pastoral staff were still involved in the highlighting of safeguarding concerns (as this was the responsibility of all College staff).

Those members present noted the Safeguarding Termly Report.

ACTION – (a) Circulate draft policies to Committee members once SLT review complete to provide additional opportunity for scrutiny prior to full Governing Body meeting
(b) FGB agenda item – Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Low Level Concerns Policy
(c) Next Committee agenda item – overview of Safeguarding Team structure and Pastoral Team structure

Emma Smith left the meeting at this point.

3. SKILLS AND CAREERS

3.1 Careers Annual Report (previously circulated)

The Assistant Principal (Super Curriculum) presented this annual report. The following points were highlighted:

- College's careers programme – this was delivered within the framework of the Gatsby benchmarks and the DfE statutory guidance, 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers'.
- Gatsby Benchmarks – positive progress made in achieving all benchmarks as confirmed in Compass evaluation.
- Quality in Careers Standard – decision made to gain formal accreditation through the Quality in Careers Standard rather than continuing with Matrix accreditation. The standard was fully aligned to the Gatsby benchmarks. The aim was to achieve this standard by January 2024. The standard was also used by many of the feeder schools into College and so should allow for a smoother journey for students with regard to careers support.
- Intent – the intent behind the provision of careers support was to give students the best possible chance to compete successfully for opportunities within high quality, diverse pathways after College. The ambition for students was local, national and global – wherever the opportunity existed.
- Skills – focus on skills development in rapidly changing employment landscape. Close links in place with St Helens Chamber with regard to the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Links into the curriculum to ensure relevance – all subject self-assessment review (SAR) panels to include a critical friend from industry or higher education.
- Work experience – over 400 students had work experience during the 2022-23 academic year.
- Enrichment programme – including three careers fairs attended by employers and higher education institutions. These events also provided a useful networking opportunity for College staff to support curriculum development.
- High achievers – development of programme to ensure appropriate support and opportunities provided to high achieving students.
- Foundation Learning and additional learning support – bespoke careers guidance provided to support transition for these students.

Governor questions were invited.

Q – Who is the accrediting body for the Quality in Careers Standard?

A – Careers Connect

Q – Are examination boards providing any additional support with regard to mapping their specifications against the skills agenda?

A – Not specifically, but crossover already existed in terms of the skills language used.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her comprehensive written and verbal report and noted its contents.

Liz Walls left the meeting at this point.

4. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

4.1 Whole College summary including specific student cohorts (*previously circulated*)

The Acting Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality) referred those members present to the most recent monitoring achievement and progress point (MAPP 9) in respect of the Upper Sixth year group. The Committee was informed of the:

- percentage of students who had progressed 'at or above' expected progress
- percentage of students who had underperformed in two or more subjects
- percentage of students who had underperformed in three or more subjects.

The Assistant Principal reported that this represented good progress from the last MAPP point. The performance of specific student cohorts was highlighted and it was noted that underperformance of female students was no longer a feature of the performance data.

In terms of summer examination results, it was noted that these were expected to be lower than the previous two years in accordance with Ofqual's stated intention to return to pre-pandemic grading. As such, the most meaningful comparison would be with 2019 results.

Governor questions were invited.

Q – What was Curriculum Leader / Head of Department feedback so far on the exams that had taken place?

A – Generally, fair exam papers with a step up in complexity for second papers within a subject.

Members were then referred to the most recent monitoring achievement and progress point (MAPP 4) in respect of the Lower Sixth year group. Members present were again informed of the:

- percentage of students who had progressed 'at or above' expected progress

- percentage of students who had underperformed in two or more subjects
- percentage of students who had underperformed in three or more subjects.

The Assistant Principal advised that this set of data confirmed continuing good performance amongst Lower Sixth students. The performance of specific student cohorts was highlighted.

An overview of Foundation Learning performance data was provided. It was explained that Foundation Learning students undertake two discrete one-year courses and hence they appear at MAPP4 on the progress report. Additional performance data was provided verbally for the following Foundation Learning cohorts:

- Students with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCPs)
- Looked after students
- Bursary students
- Students with a special educational need or disability (SEND).

Governor questions were invited.

Q – Does the MAPP4 data suggest strong retention of students from Lower Sixth into Upper Sixth this year?

A – 19 students had been identified at risk of dropping out. Further drill down into this data was taking place to ensure that appropriate interventions could be put in place to support these students.

Discussion ensued on the College's approach to retaining students from Lower Sixth into Upper Sixth. The Staff Governor confirmed a multi-faceted approach was in place, with key input from pastoral staff and a strategy that involved keeping in touch with students over the summer break.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her report and noted its contents.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

5.1 Quality Improvement Plan 2022-23 – update report *(previously circulated)*

The Acting Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality & Student Performance) presented a progress report on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) actions arising from the whole College Self-Assessment Report (SAR). The following points were highlighted:

- Eliminating under performance – deep dives completed and impact of improvement actions highlighted
- On-course retention – latest data for both on-course and in-college retention reported as on track to be at or above the national benchmark
- Preparation for Ofsted inspection – activity reported including subject deep dives and staff training
- T Level re-launch – insufficient applications received for T Level programmes commencing in September 2023, rendering them unviable for a second year. Liaison with other sixth form colleges to take place to learn from those who have been able to successfully implement these programmes.

- Personal development strategy that incorporates the skills agenda – College skills stakeholder map in place alongside continued liaison with external stakeholders when developing the curriculum and personal development programme. Carmel+ offer incorporating super curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. These include: high achievers programme, enrichment programme, careers guidance, work experience, trips and visiting speakers.
- QIP addendum – produced to highlight in-year developments that have arisen since original QIP approved. Key focus areas within the addendum included:
 - College leadership
 - Marketing, liaison and admissions
 - Finance strategy
 - General RE – an update on the Head of General RE role was provided.

Members present thanked the Vice Principal for her update and noted the contents of the report.

5.2 **Interventions to raise achievement** *(previously circulated)*

The Acting Vice Principal presented this report and confirmed that in the absence of validated data, the model of approach had changed during and since the pandemic. The focus had been on high-volume subjects as well as those subjects that had been adjudged to have performed poorly last year.

Reference was made to the detailed report appendices which outlined the updated performance data and interventions in place with regard to the two underperforming subjects. Positive progress was reported in each subject alongside continued improvement strategies.

Governor questions were invited.

Q – Does the latest MAPP data reflect the anticipated progress?

A – Yes. Positive data noted via improvement in percentage of students at or above expected progress between MAPP8 and MAPP9.

Members present thanked the Vice Principal for her update and noted the contents of the report.

5.3 **Deep Dive Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Acting Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented this report and explained that in preparation for inspection under the new Ofsted inspection framework, the College had run a pilot programme of subject deep dives. Initial focus for this activity had been on subjects of strategic interest, with emphasis placed on curriculum intent, implementation and impact. An overview of the methodology used was provided and it was noted that student voice and experience was key to this. There was also triangulation of evidence between the Ofsted nominee, Head of Department, teacher and student.

The deep dive findings were reported for each subject area. Following a review of the lessons learned during this pilot phase, the plan was to integrate the deep dive process into the annual quality calendar.

Governor questions were invited.

Q – Had any common themes emerged across the areas for development?

A – During the professional discussion stage in the process, staff had not always been adept at articulating key strength areas. Also, staff training would be delivered to ensure consistent knowledge of different SEND student cohorts.

Q – How time intensive was the deep dive process?

A – Very time intensive. Plan to ask another sixth form college to quality assure the deep dive process so that can learn from other experiences.

Q – Has peer review been considered?

A – In future, may want to look at Curriculum Leaders leading deep dives for areas that are not of strategic importance.

Members present thanked the Assistant Principal for her report and noted the contents.

6. POLICIES

6.1 Data Protection Policy *(previously circulated)*

The Interim co-Principal presented this policy, which was due for annual review.

The Committee noted the proposed amendments. The Policy would be referred directly to the full Governing Body for approval.

ACTION – FGB agenda item – Data Protection Policy

6.2 Professional Development Policy *(previously circulated)*

The Interim co-Principal presented this policy, which was due for biennial review.

The Committee noted the proposed amendments. The Policy would be referred directly to the full Governing Body for approval.

ACTION – FGB agenda item – Professional Development Policy

6.3 Complaints Procedure *(previously circulated)*

The Interim co-Principal presented this policy, which had been reviewed and re-written in accordance with the policy review cycle. The document would replace the previous procedure and would be applicable to all complaints made by students, parents/carers and others with an interest in the College.

The Committee noted the proposed new Complaints Procedure. The Procedure would be referred directly to the full Governing Body for approval.

ACTION – FGB agenda item – Complaints Procedure

7. ELECTION

7.1 Election of Chair from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2025 (previously circulated)

The Clerk reported that the sole nomination for the role of Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee was Mick Martin. Those members present were universally in support of this nomination, however as the meeting was inquorate the final decision would be referred to the full Governing Body when it met on 27 June 2023.

ACTION – FGB agenda item – Election of Chair of Quality and Standards Committee

8. OTHER MATTERS

8.1 Governor Training

Members were invited to update the Clerk on any training activities they had completed since the last meeting. No activities were reported.

8.2 Any Other Business

None

8.3 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 5.30pm

The Chair thanked those members present for their attendance and contribution. There being no further business to address, the Chair closed the informal meeting at 7.40pm.

Signed by the Chair



On this day _____ 19 September 2023 _____