

# Minutes of Meeting of the Personnel & Quality Assurance Committee of the Governing Body of Carmel College held on Tuesday, 4 November, 2008 at 5.30 pm

**Present:** Mr Peter Alcock (Chair)  
Ms Esi Appiah-Anane  
Mrs Margaret Buckley  
Dr John Humphreys  
Mr Mike Nencini  
Mrs Helen Stevenson

**In attendance:** Mrs Moira Barton  
Mr Nick Burnham  
  
Mr John Perry (Clerk)  
Mrs Alison Fishwick (Minuting Clerk)  
  
Mrs Margaret Houghton and Miss Karen Baldwin for Item 5

## 1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Karl Smith and Canon Leo Stoker.

## 3. Minutes of the Meeting of 16 September 2008

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly.

## 4. Matters Arising

### Agenda Item 6 – Ofsted Report 2008 – Visit from Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector

The Principal reported that Christine Gilbert’s, HM Chief Inspector, visit to the College in October had been extremely successful and on her departure she gave a quote for the College which was both positive and complimentary. This quote will be used in future publicity.

### Agenda Item 8 – Examination Results 2008

The Vice Principal referred to the Student Governor’s enquiry regarding the restrictions of a Grade C ceiling with the GCSE Maths re-sit programme offered at Carmel. Head of Faculties had been asked to explore the possibility of working with students who had just missed out and working with them. However, the Vice Principal confirmed that the College will continue to offer GCSE Maths up to Grade C level.

### Agenda Item 10 – Staff Travel & Subsistence Policy

The requested clarification and necessary amendments required had been made by College Management. The Chair reported its completion and recommended its approval by Governors at the Full Governing Body meeting in December. **The Committee endorsed this request.**

## 5. Quality Assurance Report : Modern Foreign Languages

Mrs Margaret Houghton, Head of Faculty for Languages and Humanities and Head of French, and Miss Karen Baldwin, Head of German, gave an overview of the Languages Department and an insight into the uptake of languages nationally and locally and how it has impacted on recruitment at Carmel. Current problems facing Modern Foreign Languages nationally include the fact that the study of a foreign language at Key Stage 4 is no longer compulsory in many schools and the number of students studying languages post-16 is falling. The main problem facing Carmel is the lack of partner schools with compulsory language at Key Stage 4 alongside a poor perception of career possibilities with languages.

Governors noted the number of ways in which the Modern Foreign Languages Department is trying to resolve some of the issues via for example, early intervention with Year 9 and Year 10 pupils and increased and more targeted liaison with partner and associated schools. Another solution was to offer the introduction of language study "ab initio".

Governors questioned whether resources should be directed into subjects which students do not wish to select. The head of Faculty responded that it is the resources which help to encourage students into a language and then maintain them. The Head of German commented that many of the resources are transferrable. The Principal added that offering languages is a good for particular career pathways and personal development.

The Chair asked whether the Department had given any thought to getting involved at Primary Level; an opportunity to inspire confidence in younger pupils to learn a language which they can take with them to secondary level and beyond. It was pointed out that a number of secondary schools already do this with their feeder primary schools but there may be some development opportunities.

**The Chair thanked the team for their interesting and informative presentation.**

## 6. Value Added Report 2008

The Vice Principal reported on the remarkable value added performance by the College. The A level band is 2 and officially in the top 10% nationally. The AS level band is 1, this is the first time a College has been awarded this band in the 11 year history of ALPS. The Vice Principal added that it is a fair claim that these results are the best ever achieved by a sixth form college as measured by value added.

The Chair enquired as to whether prospective students will know this. The Vice Principal responded that the College will be publicising the message in a format which will be understood at the forthcoming Open Evenings. In addition, the College has sent out press releases and updated the Website. Governors felt that it was important to get the message across to partner schools, particularly those schools where recruitment is dropping. The Principal referred to the role of the Liaison Team in this process.

Discussion arose on how much investigatory work students undertake when considering post 16 education. The Student Governor felt that many prospective students do check different colleges and check examination results and offered to enquire as to whether there were UniStats for Colleges available.

The Vice Principal felt that the rising GCSE score has meant that there are higher attaining students in every class and this has had a positive knock-on effect on value added. However, the College thought that another factor in yielding the powerful value added is due to students being busier and kept fully engaged in their studies.

Governors commented on the effect of this on students studying at degree level; there is a tendency for students to be 'burned out' in their first year at University because they are bored. The Vice Principal felt that the Framework for Excellence may be able to explore this effect. However, the most able students who fall in Band 1 are better prepared and better qualified for future study.

**The Committee commended the College on the excellent Value Added Report.**

## **7. September Reviews**

Governors considered the September Review report which showed many examples of outstanding practice. There were also areas in which the college could improve and these will be addressed under the College's Internal Review systems or as part of Self assessment.

**Governors noted the contents of the Report.**

## **8. Review of the Equality and Diversity Policy**

The College's Equality and Diversity Policy is reviewed every year. During the recent cycle an external consultant was engaged and suggested amendments were subjected to internal consultation and a further review by the College's Senior Management Team.

The Vice Principal informed Governors of further minor amendments as a result of the Senior Manager's review on pages 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10. These were noted and approved by Committee.

Governors enquired as to whether the Performance Indicators will come to this Committee. The Vice Principal responded that achievement by gender, race and disability will come to the next meeting of this Committee.

**Governors recommended the approval of the Equality and Diversity Policy at the Full Governing Body meeting.**

## **9. Staff Development Report – to be tabled**

The Clerk apologised that this Report had not been tabled and agreed to circulate it to the Committee with the papers for the next meeting.

## **10. Staff Development Programme 2007-2008**

The Vice Principal took Governors through the Programme reporting that the budget is in line with last year. The focus for Staff Development this year (2008-2009) has stemmed from the Head of Faculties and meets with the College's Aims and Objectives.

Governors noted that the Management and Leadership Training Programme has not been included as the paper was prepared prior to the decision on whether or not to proceed with the Training Programme.

The Chair asked whether there was a system in place to measure whether money on training has been well spent. The Vice Principal responded that the College has just made a decision to implement a co-ordinated software package to include staff development which will provide improved reporting and the College Management Team will have an input into this.

Governors learned that longer term staff training is normally identified via the Appraisal process and staff are expected to identify training needs which fall under the College's Objectives.

**Governors noted the report.**

## **11. Staffing Update**

**Governors noted the posts filled and the start dates since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008.**

## **12. Accident Report**

The data was unfortunately not available at the time of meeting.

### 13. Absence Report

The HR Manager reported that at present there are two members of teaching staff on Long Term Leave and they are receiving occupational health support. (Long Term equates to more than 6 weeks absence). There are three members of support staff who are not quite hitting Long Term sickness. There is one member of the cleaning staff on Long Term Absence and is also receiving occupational health support. Cleaning staff absence appears to be high but this is because it comes from a low staffing base.

Governors noted the contents of the report.

### 14. Any Other Business

#### NUT Dispute

Governors were informed of the background surrounding the present NUT dispute. The NUT did not vote for the below inflation pay rise as agreed by the other unions. The NUT were balloting members on Industrial Action for one day's strike, there is however a conscience opt-out for NUT members. It is not known at this time how many staff will opt to strike but the College Management Team had agreed to operate the College normally on this day; it will be 'business as usual'.

### 15. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 24 February, 2009

Signed on the day: .....

By the Chair: .....