



## Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 5.30pm via Teams

**Present:** Sarah Carroll (Foundation Governor)  
Mark Dawson (*Parent Governor*)  
Mick Martin, Chair (*Foundation Governor*)  
Joe Stead (*Student Governor*)

**In attendance:** Angela Williams (*Interim co-Principal*)  
Janet Gater (*Acting Vice Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Student Performance*)  
Laura Forsyth (*Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Quality*)  
Peter Murphy (*Assistant Principal, Staffing & Catholic Ethos*) –  
*part of meeting*  
Emma Smith (*Assistant Principal, Pastoral & Personal Development*) – *part of meeting*  
Kate Moffat (*Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator*) – *part of meeting*  
Sam Johnstone (*Pastoral Director and Staff Governor elect*)  
Ruth Potter (*Clerk to Governors*)

*The Chair opened the meeting in prayer.*

### **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. Declarations already recorded in the register of interests were noted.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted for Leigh Rice (Associate Member). The meeting was declared quorate.

### **3. ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items for submission under any other business.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2022 (*previously circulated*)**

The minutes were **approved** and would be signed by the Chair in accordance with Article 12 (3) of the Articles of Government. The publication of the minutes was authorised in accordance with Article 13 of the Articles of Government.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (*previously circulated*)**

Committee members considered the action log prepared by the clerk.

#### Minute 9.1 – Arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students

It was noted that the parent survey was scheduled to take place in June 2023.

The Committee agreed to re-order the business on the agenda in order to ensure that all items requiring approval were dealt with first to ensure quoracy.

## **6. SAFEGUARDING**

### **6.2 Safeguarding Link Governor – role description (previously circulated)**

The Chair referred governors to the draft role description for this key link governor role. The document had already been considered by the Search Committee and it had recommended that the following points be removed:

- Purpose of role – numbered point 3
- Key activities – numbered point 6.

The Committee agreed with these revisions and **recommended approval** to the full Governing Body.

#### **ACTION – FGB agenda item**

## **12. OTHER MATTERS**

### **12.1 Election of Vice Chair of Quality and Standards Committee (previously circulated)**

The sole nomination for the role of Vice Chair was for Mark Dawson. The Committee unanimously **agreed to appoint** Mark Dawson to the role for the period 7 March 2023 to 6 March 2025.

## **11. POLICIES**

### **11.1 Use of Reasonable Force Policy (previously circulated)**

The Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Personal Development) presented this policy following scheduled review and indicated that minimal revisions were proposed. She reported that the policy remained in line with current guidelines.

The Committee **recommended approval** of the Use of Reasonable Force Policy to the Full Governing Body.

#### **ACTION – FGB agenda item – Use of Reasonable Force Policy**

### **11.2 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy – updated Appendix 8 (previously circulated)**

The Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Personal Development) presented the updated Appendix 8 setting out details of safeguarding key personnel. She reported that no amendment had been made to any other part of the Policy which remained available on GovernorHub for governors to review.

**Q** – Had all staff and students been updated on these key staff changes?

**A** – Yes. Circulated to all staff. Communicated to all students during 10:10 tutorial sessions.

The Committee **recommended approval** of the updated Appendix 8 to the Full Governing Body.

#### **ACTION – FGB agenda item – Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy – updated Appendix 8**

- 11.3 **Relationship, Sex & Health Education Policy** (*previously circulated*)  
The Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Personal Development) presented this policy following scheduled review. She reported that the policy's name had been updated to include the word 'health' and also updated governors on the changes to key personnel.

The Committee **approved** the Relationship, Sex & Health Education Policy.

- 11.4 **Dignity at Work Policy** (*previously circulated*)  
The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this policy following scheduled review and advised that no changes were recommended. He reported that all HR policies had been reviewed by the College's solicitors in order to ensure continued compliance with relevant legislative requirements.

The Committee **recommended approval** of the Dignity at Work Policy to the Full Governing Body.

**ACTION – FGB agenda item – Dignity at Work Policy**

- 11.5 **Redundancy Policy** (*previously circulated*)  
The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this policy following scheduled review. No amendments were proposed.

The Committee **recommended approval** of the Redundancy Policy to the Full Governing Body.

**ACTION – FGB agenda item – Redundancy Policy**

- 11.6 **Staff Code of Conduct** (*previously circulated*)  
The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this code of conduct following scheduled review and indicated that revisions had been made to the outdated introductory statement.

The Committee **approved** the revised Staff Code of Conduct.

- 11.7 **Staff Recruitment Policy**  
The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this policy following scheduled review and indicated that revisions had been made to key staff names and roles. In addition, a paragraph on flexible working had been removed upon the advice of the College's solicitors as a separate Flexible Working Policy was in place.

The Committee **approved** the revised Staff Recruitment Policy.

- 11.8 **Capability Policy**  
11.9 **Disciplinary Policy**  
11.10 **Grievance Policy**

The Committee **approved** all the above policies which had been reviewed in line with the policy review cycle, and no amendments (other than minor name/role changes) made.

## 6.1 **Safeguarding Termly Update** (*previously circulated*)

The Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Personal Development) presented her Safeguarding termly update report. Key points highlighted included:

- Safeguarding rota implemented from January 2023 – all staff on rota had received Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training. The named DSL and Deputy DSL maintained oversight of more complex cases.
- Staff training – additional staff training had been provided this academic year using the Smartlog training system which was useful to monitor compliance. Bitesize training programme in place for the Pastoral Team to reflect arising issues.
- Internal audit – safeguarding internal audit outcome of ‘strong’; one recommendation arising from the audit has been actioned.
- Safeguarding leadership and governance – weekly Safeguarding Team meetings held and attended on termly basis by Safeguarding Link Governor. Wider Safeguarding Team meetings held every half term.
- Prevent – good links in place with local Prevent Co-ordinator. No referrals this term. Staff training scheduled for April 2023.
- Safeguarding incidents – data provided. Increase in bullying incidents reported, largely based on friendship issues. Staff CPD put in place in response to this.
- Looked after children, young carers and vulnerable students – student numbers reported and related activities highlighted.
- Mental health and wellbeing – increase in the number of students presenting with higher tier, more complex issues. This trend appeared to be in line with the national picture across the sector. Pastoral Team was working closely with different agencies to provide appropriate support to students. Six students to receive training from the Lee Cooper Foundation to become Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors. Foundation Learning students also involved in collaboration with Lee Cooper Foundation.
- Sexual harassment and misogyny – one incident so far this year, appropriate external advice sought. Student education in 10:10 tutorial sessions.
- Counselling – full Counselling Service Report presented for the period September 2022 to January 2023. Staffing of service and referral data highlighted.

The report was discussed in detail with numerous questions raised by governors and responded to by the College Management Team (CMT). These included:

**Q** – Is the Safeguarding Team sufficiently resourced to deal with increasing demand?

**A** – Current workload being managed by the team through the rota system, weekly meetings and DSL oversight. Exploring options for building capacity in the team for next year.

**Q** – Has there been an increase in mental health referrals from last year?

**A** – Tier system for monitoring mental health referrals only introduced in May 2022, so not yet able to do accurate benchmarking with previous data sets. Trend so far suggests a decrease in lower level ‘tier 0’ cases and increase in higher level cases.

**Q** – Is the Counselling Service under pressure?

**A** – Service had requested a slow down in referrals. Weekly Safeguarding Team meetings provided an opportunity to prioritise referrals to the service. Six week waiting list currently.

**Q** – Counselling Service Report referral data shows majority of referrals were for female students. How were male students being encourage to utilise the service?

**A** – Plan to start male mental health support group to encourage male students to open up about issues and access relevant support services.

**Q** – Does the Safeguarding Team have access to sufficient support?

**A** – Yes. Weekly meetings provide opportunity for peer support. More complex cases coming out of Foundation Learning department which require specialist support; currently getting this via Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Foundation Learning team will require access to ongoing support for these cases.

**ACTION – CMT to review how best to address safeguarding support needs for Foundation Learning department.**

The Committee thanked the Safeguarding Team for the work they were doing and **noted** the contents of the termly Safeguarding Report.

*Emma Smith withdrew from the meeting at this point.*

## **7. Progress and Achievement**

### **7.1 Whole College Summary Including Specific Student Cohorts** *(previously circulated)*

The Acting Assistant Principal (Curriculum & Quality) referred the Committee to the most recent monitoring achievement and progress points: MAPP 7 for Upper Sixth and MAPP 2 for Lower Sixth. For each MAPP, 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.

Drill down data was provided in relation to specific student cohorts, namely: looked after children, young carers, high achievers, students in receipt of the College bursary, special educational needs students, students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and students from disadvantaged postcodes.

The intervention approach to students tracking as below expected progress was highlighted. Intervention actions were both academic and pastoral in nature depending on the individual needs of the student.

It was noted that both cohorts had high levels of performance at or above expected progress. Investigation was underway to explore the marginal decrease in achievement of the high achiever and bursary cohorts in Upper Sixth. No trends had emerged from the Lower Sixth progress data, however it was reported that the bursary and special educational needs cohorts were on the watchlist.

Governor questions were invited.

**Q** – Any concerns regarding correlation between underperformance and retention?

**A** – Retention data reported in the Quality Improvement Plan update report. On track to be in line with last year's retention which is above the national average.

**Q** – MAPP7 – High Achievers tracking below expected progress. Given proximity to final exams, what level of concern was there about this? Had there been any previous concerns with this cohort?

**A** – No concerns highlighted last year. As escalated towards exam practice, some students have struggled with higher level critical thinking skills. Structured interventions in place to support these students and confident that these actions will address concerns.

**Q** – 140 SEN students reported: are these spread fairly evenly across the curriculum?

**A** – Yes. Although, sometimes the type of assessment can influence subject choice.

**Q** – Foundation Learning MAPP data available?

**A** – This monitoring is in place for Foundation Learning students but is not currently in line with the wider College MAPP timetable. Reviewing options to align process.

The Committee thanked the Acting Assistant Principal for her report and **noted** the contents.

**ACTION – Report Foundation Learning MAPP data to Committee when available.**

*Kate Moffatt joined the meeting at this point and the Committee agreed to consider item 10.1 next.*

## **10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

### **10.1 Equality & Diversity Annual Report, Policy and Plan (previously circulated)**

The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented the Equality and Diversity Annual Report, Policy and Plan and reported that he had taken over executive responsibility for this area in January 2023. He confirmed that the College had taken advice on the documents from both its solicitors and an

external equality and diversity consultant. Only minor amendments to the policy were proposed.

The following points in the annual report were highlighted:

- Student performance data by protected characteristic
- Staff data by protected characteristic
- Governing Body data included in the report for the first time.

The College's Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator proceeded to present the annual Equality and Diversity Plan which had been embedded in the policy to ensure it remained a live document. Annual priorities had been identified and were flagged to Committee members. Of particular note were:

- Equality impact assessments (EIAs) – plans to embed this process within the College's quality assurance cycle
- Diversity objectives for the CMT and Governing Body
- Plan to re-introduce Equality and Diversity Link Governor role.

The Co-ordinator updated governors on a change in government guidance on the correct terminology to use when referencing ethnicity. It was noted that the specific role of 'BAME representative' on the Student Council may need to be reviewed and amended accordingly.

An update was provided on the work of the College's E&D champions, the E&D Committee and the menopause support group. It was noted that staff awareness training took place on a regular basis and overall engagement was strong. The Chair reinforced the message that equality and diversity was fundamental to the College's ethos and mission and, as such, must be embedded in everything it does.

The Committee thanked the Assistant Principal and Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator for their comprehensive report and **recommended approval** of the Equality and Diversity Annual Report, Policy and Plan to the Full Governing Body.

### **ACTION – FGB agenda item – Equality and Diversity Annual Report, Policy and Plan**

*Kate Moffatt withdrew from the meeting at this point.*

## **8. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### **8.1 Quality Improvement Plan 2022-23** *(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).

It was reported that the College would continue to focus on sustaining value-added performance of high-volume subjects as well as ensuring improvements in under performing subjects. It was noted that QIP reviews were currently taking place within College and the Acting Vice Principal and Acting Assistant Principal were directly involved in overseeing reviews for high volume and under performing subjects. All other QIP reviews were led by curriculum leaders.

Discussion ensued on summer 2023 examination results and it was reported that Ofqual had issued a statement advising that nationally both the raw results and the value-added data was expected to be lower than last year. As such, governors were advised that a more accurate benchmark against which to measure 2023 results would be the 2019 (pre-pandemic) results.

The Upper Sixth cohort had been adversely affected by the pandemic and reference was made to the extra support put in place to assist this cohort in their preparations for final examinations.

**Q** – Any concerns with MAPP7 data in relation to high volume subject performance?

**A** – No major concerns.

*Sarah Carroll and Joe Stead withdrew from the meeting at this point. Remaining members were advised that the meeting was no longer quorate for decision-making.*

### Student retention

Retention data was reported and a trajectory of improvement was noted. It was anticipated that the College on-course retention rate would be higher than the national average, but may not achieve the stated target of 90%. It was noted that national concerns regarding attendance and retention had been the subject of discussion at a recent Association of Catholic Sixth Form Colleges (ACVIC) conference.

**Q** – When will benchmark retention data be released?

**A** – After the summer break.

### Ofsted

Janet Gater, as Acting Vice Principal, had taken over as the College Ofsted nominee and updated governors on preparations for inspection which was anticipated in the next academic year. A range of staff training and development projects linked to areas of the inspection framework was underway.

### T Levels

An update on the current position with applications to the College's T Level Programme was provided. The viability of the courses would be reviewed in due course.

**Q** – What were the contingency plans if T Levels were not viable for delivery? How would the impact on students interested in these courses be mitigated?

**A** – Students would automatically be offered a place on the most relevant BTEC course as an alternative. This would give students an access route to the same destinations as T Levels. Level 3 vocational qualifications national reform agenda highlighted: a full report on this would be presented to the full Governing Body at its next meeting.

### Enrichment / personal development

Governors were updated on the newly designed student enrichment programme with over 60 wide-ranging enrichment opportunities. Engagement with employers and higher education partners was highlighted with reference to the key role they played in advising on skills and curriculum development. It



was reported that the Assistant Principal (Super Curriculum) was the Ofsted skills nominee and was in the process of developing a stakeholder map to capture engagement activity.

**Q** – What is the intended purpose of the stakeholder mapping exercise?

**A** – Ofsted enhanced skills inspection would include deep dives in two subjects. Aim to ensure stakeholder involvement was identified accurately across all subjects and close any gaps.

**Q** – Participation data available for student involvement in enrichment activities?

**A** – No specific data to hand. Majority Lower Sixth students.

**Q** – Attendance data available for RE 10:10 tutorials?

**A** – Improvement in attendance reported for Lower Sixth students. Upper Sixth attendance data remained a cause for concern. Deep dive on this due to take place with the involvement of one of the Interim co-Principals.

#### Wellbeing of staff and students

Staff wellbeing considered during the SAR process, subject deep dives and other key points throughout the year. Workload and work-life balance were key elements of this consideration. Internal audit on staff and student wellbeing concluded with a 'strong' outcome in the Autumn Term. Two recommendations arising out of that audit were in the process of being actioned.

Student wellbeing was supported by a student wellbeing mental health lead and a student working party. Individual support for students was provided by Personal Achievement Tutors who liaised with external agencies as necessary.

The Committee thanked the Acting Vice Principal for her report and **noted** the contents.

*Peter Murphy withdrew from the meeting at this point.*

#### **8.2 Interventions to Raise Achievement** *(previously circulated)*

The Acting Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality and Student Performance) and Acting Assistant Principal (Curriculum & Quality) presented their report and reiterated that the College's approach had been to focus primarily on high volume departments plus any underperforming departments.

Governors were referred to the detailed report appendices which provided a comprehensive update on the progress made and action taken in respect of the two under performing departments. In particular, information was provided in relation to:

- Key contextual metrics from 2021-22 – student numbers, attendance and retention data, results and value-added data
- 2022-23 MAPP data
- Quality improvement actions – including detailed narrative on individual actions and next steps.

Discussion ensued on the intervention strategies for each of the underperforming subjects, the progress made thus far and the further improvements required. Governors' questions were invited.

**Q** – MAPP points for Religion, Ethics and Philosophy – any trends emerged regarding specific student cohort underachievement?

**A** – Nothing specific other than a general trend with regard to female students with high prior attainment. Strategies for improving female performance included in the report appendix.

The Committee thanked the Acting Vice Principal and Acting Assistant Principal for their detailed report and **noted** the contents.

## **9. CURRICULUM**

### **9.1 Accountability Agreement (Part 2) (previously circulated)**

The Interim co-Principal updated governors on the new Accountability Agreement that had been introduced to replace the funding agreement for 2023-24. Part 2, the Accountability Statement, must be prepared by the College and approved by the Governing Body prior to submission to the ESFA by 31 May each year. This new requirement had arisen from the reforms linked to the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 and was also aligned to the Governing Body's new statutory duty to review provision against local, regional and national skills priorities every three years.

It was reported that a draft of the Accountability Statement 2022-24 would be presented to the full Governing Body at its meeting on 28 March 2023 for feedback and approval. Should significant revisions be required, an appropriate mechanism for securing approval of the final draft prior to the submission deadline would be identified.

Moving forwards, the consideration and approval of the annual Accountability Statement would need to be built into the annual governance cycle of business.

The Committee thanked the Interim co-Principal for her report and **noted** the contents.

**ACTION – (a) FGB agenda item – draft Accountability Statement 2023-24  
(b) Add approval of annual Accountability Statement into governance cycle of business**

## **12. OTHER MATTERS**

### **12.2 Governor training**

The Chair of the Committee confirmed that he had completed Safer Recruitment training in February 2023.

### **12.3 Any other business**

None

### **12.4 Date of next meeting**

The Chair advised members that he would not be available on the date of the next scheduled meeting (23 May 2023) and it was agreed that an alternative date be arranged.

