



# Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 20 May 2025 at 5pm via Teams

**Present:** Patrick Alcantara (*Foundation Governor*)  
Kevin Crooks (*Staff Governor*)  
Janet Gater (*Principal*)  
Kieran O'Sullivan (*Associate Member*)  
Mick Martin (*Foundation Governor*) – Chair

**In attendance:** Lauren Boswell (*Assistant Principal, Student Support*)  
Laura Forsyth (*Vice Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral*)  
Peter Murphy (*Assistant Principal, Staffing & Catholic Ethos*)  
Kim Wallace (*Assistant Principal, Student Development*)  
Liz Walls (*Assistant Principal, Super Curriculum*)  
Ruth Potter (*Clerk*)

*The Chair opened the meeting in prayer.*

## 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 declarations were made in addition to those already recorded on the Register of Interests.

### 1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from:

- Sarah Carroll

Mark Dawson and Leigh Rice did not attend the meeting.

The meeting was declared quorate.

### 1.3 Items to be included under urgent business

The Chair confirmed that he had accepted one item of urgent business – Staff Absence Policy – the paper for which had been circulated to members the previous day. Members agreed to consider this item within section 6 of the agenda, Policies.

### 1.4 Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held 4 March 2025 (*previously circulated*)

The minutes were **approved** and would be signed 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.

### 1.5 Matters arising from the minutes (*previously circulated*)

Committee members noted the action log prepared by the clerk.

1.6 **Committee Risk Register** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the extract from the strategic risk register which was included to provide assurance and oversight of the risks specific to the Quality & Standards Committee. The risk in relation to Level 3 reform was highlighted.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Committee Risk Register be received and noted.**

2. **SAFEGUARDING**

2.1 **Safeguarding Termly Report** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the comprehensive report prepared by the Assistant Principal (Student Support) and invited comments and questions.

**Q** – Noted increase in number of mental health related incidents recorded on CPOMS compared to same period last year, however reduction in incidents recorded against all mental health tiers. Further context available?

**A** – Increased awareness amongst Personal Achievement Tutors (PATs) during student 1-2-1s of references to emotional state/mood resulting in higher levels of mental health incident reporting on CPOMS. However, not all of these incidents represented a safeguarding risk and the introduction of a secure CEDAR thread next year would facilitate the recording of these mental health conversations without the need to add them to CPOMS.

Discussion ensued on the reduction in incidents across all mental health tiers from the lowest level (tier 0) to the most significant (tier 3). A range of potential factors were noted:

- Student Assistance Programme – increased impact of this programme due to greater awareness of the full range of services and effective signposting by the Pastoral Team. As a result, the College had decided to renew this service for the next three years.
- Mental Health First Aiders – all PATs and a number of other staff were fully trained as mental health first aiders, and this had resulted in more impactful interactions on the front line.
- Students' resilience post-pandemic – general feeling that students' resilience was beginning to show signs of improvement.

**Q** – External provider due to deliver staff training on cultural sensitivity. Any further increase in related issues/referrals?

**A** – No sustained increase in-year, just an increase compared to last year as reported previously.

**Q** – Change in Safeguarding leadership structure. Would this mean that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) remained a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)?

**A** – Yes. Assistant Principal (Student Support) to continue as DSL. New structure designed to ensure Assistant Principal has strategic oversight of safeguarding, with the new Pastoral Director for Safeguarding role providing more student-facing support. In addition, a new Deputy SENCO role had been advertised. Due to planned changes in personnel, the Assistant Principal (Student Support) would also assume responsibility for Student Development (including Pastoral).

**Q** – Had the new posts been advertised externally as well as internally?

**A** – Yes. Interviews were scheduled imminently.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her comprehensive report and governors reflected on the assurance gained from the reducing number of tier 2 and 3 mental health referrals.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Safeguarding Termly Report be received and noted.**

**3. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT**

**3.1 Level 3 student progress report** *(previously circulated)*

The Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral) introduced her report and indicated that the content of this had been streamlined to provide a more strategic, focussed overview for governors. Further changes to the report format were also anticipated once Power BI reporting had been embedded.

The Vice Principal referred Committee members to the CAP6 data for Year 13, which represented the final official assessment point for this cohort before examinations. Positive progress was noted and performance of specific cohorts was highlighted. A marginal dip in performance from CAP5 data was noted, however CAP6 data had shown an improvement compared to the same point last year.

CAP3 data was highlighted for Year 12 and positive progress was noted. The Vice Principal highlighted the performance of specific cohorts and reported on the actions designed to improve the performance of Bursary students.

Questions and comments were invited.

**Q** – Was it normal to see a dip in performance between CAP5 and CAP6?

**A** – Yes. CAP6 was the final, formal mock exam whereas CAP5 was a less formal assessment.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for her comprehensive report.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Level 3 Student Progress Report be received and noted.**

**3.2 Foundation Learning Student Progress Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Vice Principal began by alerting governors to a data discrepancy in the circulated report and referred to updated data for all 47 Foundation Learning students, 100% of whom remained at expected levels of progress. Discussion ensued on the post-Ofsted action plan, with particular focus on the work-related learning opportunities for Foundation Learning students.

Committee members requested further clarity on the approach to identifying work-related learning opportunities and the range of external employers involved in providing placements. It was explained that the College's strategy was to build on internal work-related opportunities whilst also sourcing additional external placements, facilitating a shift to more challenging external opportunities where this was appropriate. Collaboration with external employers was ongoing, with placement opportunities already confirmed across a range of providers. The Vice Principal indicated that there was a national shortage of work-related learning placements for students with moderate learning difficulties.

Following discussion, an action was agreed for Governing Body members to consider their own networks and links with a view to identifying potential work-related opportunities.

The Chair referred members to the proposed shift in focus on entry criteria for the Foundation Learning department and requested further background. The Vice Principal indicated that a comprehensive analysis had taken place of existing entry criteria and the level of qualifications held by students entering the department, some of whom had attained GCSEs. As a result, leaders were keen to ensure that students were enrolled onto the Foundation Learning programme only if it was the most appropriate and beneficial progression route for each individual, offering the right level of challenge. Discussion ensued and governors were in agreement with the proposed entry criteria to ensure clear progression and sufficient challenge for all students.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Foundation Learning Student Progress Report be received and noted.**
- **That the Foundation Learning department entry criteria be clarified to ensure admission provides appropriate progression and challenge for each individual student.**

**ACTION – (a) FGB agenda item – explore governors’ networks to identify potential work-related learning opportunities.**  
**(b) FGB agenda item – Student Recruitment and Admission Policy**

**4. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**4.1 Quality Improvement Plan 2024-25: progress update** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Principal’s progress report and specifically the May 2025 progress update against all QIP actions. Excellent progress was noted across all areas and, in particular, the sustained improvement in attendance data for 10:10 Ethics and Values sessions. The Principal highlighted the following points:

- Student retention – positive progress year on year, supported by improved tracking and monitoring activity via MIS.
- Staff wellbeing – update on range of activities and services in place to support staff. Full Staff Voice annual report would be presented in the Autumn Term.
- Academisation – Archdiocese of Liverpool was expected to re-launch its academisation strategy in June, following which a further update would be provided to governors.

The Chair thanked the Principal for her report and invited members’ questions and comments.

**Q** – Staff recruitment and retention: any challenges arisen from recent recruitment activity?

**A** – No problems encountered in making strong appointments, however a reduction in the field of applicants had been noted.

**Resolved:**

- **That the QIP progress report be received and noted.**

- 4.2 **Lesson observations and learning walks report** (*previously circulated*)  
The Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral) referred members to her report which provided an overview of the programme of lesson observations and learning walks completed so far during 2024-25. It was reported that the vast majority of lessons were found to be well-planned and resourced.

One point of clarification was raised, in response to which it was confirmed that the report included lesson observations of Early Career Teachers (ECTs).

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for her report and invited any further comments and questions.

**Q** – Low response rate in student voice surveys for certain subjects. Were these subjects targeted for lesson observations?

**A** – Yes. If deemed appropriate.

**Resolved:**

- **That the lesson observation and learning walks report be received and noted.**

## 5. ANNUAL REPORTS

### 5.1 **Student Voice Annual Report** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the Student Voice Annual Report and acknowledged the excellent student perceptions data. The data comprised Student Perceptions on Courses (SPOCs) surveys to collate subject-specific data and cross-College Student Voice surveys, both undertaken biannually in November 2024 and April 2025. The Assistant Principal (Student Development) highlighted the following key points:

- Response rates – these had improved with subject SPOC survey response rates higher than cross-College surveys and Y12 response rate higher than Y13
- High levels of student satisfaction
- 97% of students reported being proud to be a student at Carmel College
- Highest ranking question ‘My teachers’ subject knowledge supports my learning’
- Lowest ranking question ‘I actively participate in lessons’
- Range of excellent free text comments to support high satisfaction levels.

It was reported that a very small number of subjects had seen both low response rates and lower than institution average satisfaction rates. These would be subject to a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) led focus group to ascertain if any actions were required.

The survey results for the 10:10 Ethics and Values Programme were noted; these had not improved from last year despite a number of improvement actions. Discussion ensued on how to respond to student and staff feedback on this Programme and identify opportunities to signpost the College’s distinctive Catholic faith.

Questions and comments were invited.

**Q** – Had any links been identified between student voice responses on active participation in class and lesson observations?

**A** – Not generally. What was observed during lesson observations, learning walks and deep dives were students who were fully immersed and engaged in their learning. This had also been observed during the Ofsted inspection.

**Q** – Any way of benchmarking student voice data with other comparable colleges?

**A** – No, as most colleges did not fully share this data. However, feedback from Ofsted inspection team on student survey results was very positive.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her report and Committee members acknowledged the excellent survey results as well as year on year progress.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Student Voice Annual Report be received and noted.**

5.2 **Parent/Carer Voice Annual Report** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the Parent/Carer Voice Annual Report which reported on the results of the annual survey undertaken in March 2025. The report compared responses against those from the previous year and it was noted that all scores were above 90% apart from one, and six out of the nine questions had scored over 95%.

The one question which had scored below 90% was the same as last year – ‘I receive information about the progress of my young person’ – however a substantial improvement was noted of over 8%. Continued action was taken to address this area via regular parental communication, however expectations also needed to be managed as parents transitioned from familiar reporting systems within high schools to a new, unfamiliar system at sixth-form. In an attempt to address this, videos on how to access Cedar reports would be shared with parents in advance of the new academic year.

Questions and comments were invited.

**Q** – Were any monitoring reports available on how many parents were accessing Cedar reports?

**A** – Not currently, however agree that this would be useful data to track in future.

**Q** – Were free text comments used in College marketing material (anonymised)?

**A** – Comments used as evidence in self-assessment review (SAR) process, but potential opportunity to use them more in internal and external communications.

Discussion ensued on the parent/carers survey response rate which remained low. A multi-channel approach to encouraging responses was suggested, utilising text messaging and QR code link to survey in parent newsletter, rather than just relying on Parentmail messages.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Parent/Carer Voice Annual Report be received and noted.**

6. **POLICIES**

6.1 **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** (*previously circulated*)

6.2 **Low Level Concerns Policy** (*previously circulated*)

The Assistant Principal (Student Support) presented these policies which had been reviewed in accordance with the policy review cycle and minor amendments made.

It was noted, however, that the DfE had not yet published details of the 2025 update to the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Substantive changes were expected and therefore a further review of the policies would be conducted as soon as possible following publication with a view to bringing any amendments back to governors for approval.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Low Levels Concerns Policy be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.**

**ACTION – FGB agenda item**

**6.3 Complaints Procedure** *(previously circulated)*

The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this policy which had been reviewed in line with the policy review cycle. No significant amendments were proposed. It was noted that the annual review of complaints was scheduled to be presented to governors in the Autumn Term.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Complaints Procedure be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.**

**ACTION – FGB agenda item**

**6.4 Professional Development Policy** *(previously circulated)*

The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this policy which had been reviewed in line with the policy review cycle with only minor amendments proposed. It was noted that the annual report on staff professional development was scheduled to be presented to governors in the Autumn Term.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Professional Development Policy be approved.**

**6.5 Staff Absence Policy** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair invited members to consider this item of urgent business, the papers for which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Assistant Principal (Staffing & Catholic Ethos) presented this policy which was intended to replace the existing 'Managing Absence Policy and Procedure'. It was explained that the revised policy represented a substantial update and was intended to improve clarity and transparency around a number of key managing absence procedures. It was confirmed that the policy had been presented to the Joint Union Forum (JUF) in March and no concerns had been raised. The policy was now presented earlier than scheduled for governor approval in order to facilitate dissemination across College in advance of the new academic year.

**Q** – Had any issues prompted such a significant policy review?

**A** – No specific issues other than the operational need to ensure greater clarity around long-term absence procedures.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Staff Absence Policy be approved.**

## **7. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE**

### **7.1 Annual review of committee cycle of business and terms of reference**

*(previously circulated)*

The Clerk invited Committee members to review the cycle of business and approve the proposed revisions. Members confirmed the updated cycle.

An amendment to the Committee's Terms of Reference had recently been approved by the Governing Body. Members were invited to confirm whether any further amendments were required. No amendments were proposed other than to update terminology relating to the now defunct ESFA.

#### **Resolved:**

- **That the Quality & Standards Committee cycle of business be updated as agreed.**
- **That amendments to the Quality & Standards Committee Terms of Reference be recommended for approval to the Governing Body.**

**ACTION – (a) Update cycle of business  
(b) FGB agenda item – Terms of Reference**

### **7.2 Election of Quality & Standards Committee Chair** *(previously circulated)*

The sole nomination for the role of Chair was for Mick Martin. The Committee unanimously agreed to appoint Mick Martin to the role for the period 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027.

#### **Resolved:**

- **That Mick Martin be appointed as Chair of Quality & Standards Committee from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027**

### **7.3 Election of Quality & Standards Committee Vice Chair** *(previously circulated)*

The sole nomination for the role of Vice Chair was for Patrick Alcantara. The Committee unanimously agreed to appoint Patrick Alcantara to the role for the period 20 May 2025 to 19 May 2027.

#### **Resolved:**

- **That Patrick Alcantara be appointed as Vice Chair of Quality & Standards Committee from 20 May 2025 to 19 May 2027**

## **8. OTHER MATTERS**

### **8.1 Governor Training**

No training was reported.

### **8.2 Urgent business**

The one item of urgent business – Staff Absence Policy – was considered under section 6, Policies.

### **8.3 Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 18 November 2025 at 5pm

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution at the meeting. There being no further Part 1 business to address, the Chair closed the meeting at 6.20pm.

