

Present: Sheena Payne-Lunn (Chair), Sean Devlin, Andrew Forth, Alex Gwinn, Wendy Pickess, Ed Senior, Caroline Shaw.

In Attendance: Jane Jenkins (Vice Principal), Jo Payne (PA to the Principal/Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

1. Appointment of Chair: Sheena Payne-Lunn was unanimously appointed Chair for the academic year.

2. Apologies: Larik Voitenko

3. Standing Items

- (i) No declarations of interest were received.
- (ii) No confidential items were identified.
- (iii) No urgent business was identified.

4. Minutes

- (i) Minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee: 15th May 2024

The minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting were **confirmed** as a correct record and duly signed by the Chair. In relation to the action point, it was confirmed that a market survey of current curriculum provision in county had been completed.

5. Management & Strategic

- (i) Accountability Statement

The Principal presented the updated accountability statement and explained that whilst this had not been a requirement for 16-19 academies previously, the College's response to meeting local skills need will form part of future inspections. Progress against the actions identified last year have been outlined and new aims identified. The document also maps the College's curriculum offering against current and emerging local, regional and national priorities.

The Committee **agreed to recommend** the Accountability Statement to the Local Governing Body for approval.

- (ii) Growth Strategy

The Principal presented the updated Growth Strategy. He explained that whilst it had been anticipated that the College would experience a decline in student numbers due to a smaller intake last year, it seems likely that the student number will be in line with last year (1750) or possibly slightly higher. Recruitment of new students was almost identical, however, the number of students the College has been able to retain in the first six weeks is significantly higher, for example, 164 students left in the first six weeks last year compared to 71 this year. Possible reasons for this include efforts in the summer to have progression discussions with students who did not pass their end of year exam and the requirement for them to resit this in September. There has also been consolidated efforts in relation to ready to revise strategies and subjects setting homework from the outset. There is also evidence that better information, advice and guidance at Course Confirmation has had a positive impact so students are on the right courses which helps them to settle.

The Committee **approved** the updated Growth Strategy.

6. Quality Assurance

(i) Quality Assurance

The Vice Principal presented her report and she highlighted the following:

- Subject Improvement Support was continuing with some of the same subjects as last year and some new ones identified as a result of outcomes in summer 2024. In relation to Music Technology, Law and Criminology, the reports of the initial subject support meeting and Quality Improvement Plans were shared so that governors could be reassured that appropriate intervention and support was in place;
- The responses to the first impressions survey were positive, in particular relating to the experience of enrolling and starting at College. Where feedback was less positive, this was in relation to the time it took to enrol, which was due to a triage process introduced to improve information, advice and guidance. There was also a queue for travel advice which caused some delay, but a change was made to respond to this during enrolment. New students were less positive about Induction;
- A snapshot of the latest attendance indicates that it has dipped since half-term, in particular, on level 2 and applied level 3 courses. Attendance remains a College priority;
- There continues to be a focus on the identified teaching and learning strategies and early on this has been around developing positive study habits and routines, understanding feedback and ready to revise strategies. The College continues to respond to any identified barriers to learning in a bid to narrow the disadvantage gap and other CPD had focused on mental health strategies;
- The teaching and learning team, including 6 newly appointed Raising Standards Leads, were trialling a coaching model of working with subject areas to focus on a particular teaching and learning strategy as opposed to more formal lesson observations;
- In the end of year exams there were 35 U grades. Any student who did not pass their end of year exam was required to meet with their Head of Year to discuss their programme of study and options should they not perform better in the mandatory resit. As a consequence, 9 students changed course and 26 sat the resit with the majority demonstrating improvement. To ensure these students maintain their progress, teachers will prioritise marking mock exams of those about whom they are concerned so that appropriate interventions can be identified. In a handful of cases this might involve students being entered for the AS rather than A level exam so that they have a better chance to complete a level 3 qualification in the subject so as to secure progression;
- The achievement of specific groups was reviewed and Pakistani students did not perform as well as expected;
- Destination outcomes were positive with 27% progressing to Sutton Group universities compared to 21% in the previous year. In value added terms, this is 3% higher than what would be expected based on the prior attainment of the cohort. This evidences the impact of the new Senior Leader for Progression and it is hoped to continue to build on this momentum. The College performed favourably in relation to destinations when compared to the other colleges in the Trust.

The Committee scrutinised the details within the report and in response to challenge the Vice Principal advised that:

- In relation to Music Technology, this had the poorest outcomes in the summer with a value added score of -0.90 which means that almost all students achieved a grade below what should have been expected based on their prior attainment. The teacher in this area is well-qualified, but is still an ECT. The College had been persuaded to move from the applied to A Level course in this subject by a staff member who is absent due to ill-health. There were discussions around whether to withdraw the course this year, however, given the lateness in the year, and a commitment to working with senior staff and other colleges who deliver the course, it was agreed to continue. This decision will be reviewed if outcomes next year remain poor;
- In relation to the timescale in which it was possible to review whether outcomes were improving, it was noted that in Criminology there are controlled assessments early in the spring term and also mock exams which provide opportunity for in-year monitoring;
- If outcomes in a subject failed to improve over a number of years, support might move to capability as part of the process;

- Time would be identified to enable Raising Standards Leads to have conversations with colleagues and to visit lessons – this need not be too time consuming and would not detract from their own teaching. Given the age of our students, with the exception of lessons in science laboratories, for example, students could be left alone to complete tasks which would facilitate RSLs visiting lessons for a brief period;
- There is no formal arrangement for subject collaboration between the colleges in the Trust as this did not always work due to different exam boards, but some subjects were working collaboratively with their sixth form college counterparts;
- Whilst the College had some scepticism around moving students onto AS rather than allowing them to sit the A Level exam, senior leaders had been reassured through speaking to HoDs that this would be an exceptional action based and would require the content and assessment of the AS level to be compatible with the A Level. This might impact funding in a marginal way, hence, it would only be considered where it was felt to be in the best interest of the student;
- Of the 9 students who failed their end of year exam and changed course, this would rarely be to complete an A Level in a year and more likely would be onto a one-year applied course which would be accredited at the end of the year;
- Data on those who failed last summer and their progress in previous internal assessments can be collated and can be monitored on an ongoing basis.

There was some discussion in relation to how the College could improve its diversity in terms of staff and governor recruitment given that this was not reflective of student diversity. It was suggested that the College could liaise with the City Council's Communities team given the success of recent events to celebrate Black History Month and Eurofest and could be a presence at future events.

The Committee **noted** the information provided and thanked the Vice Principal for her report.

(ii) Quality Improvement Plan

The Vice Principal presented the Quality Improvement Plan for the 2024-25 academic year and reminded governors of the key areas of focus which include increasing the proportion of high grades and strategies to promote positive behaviour. In response to challenge around what benefit students get from the tutorial programme given their response that they value their tutor, but not tutorials, it was noted that time and effort had gone into rewriting the tutorial programme with topics aimed at developing students personal skills and raising their awareness of broader issues. Raising Standards Mentors have been appointed to support tutors in their delivery to hopefully improve student perception of tutor sessions.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

7. **Governance**

The Clerk presented her report and noted that:

- Governors had mostly met or exceeded their performance targets. Overall attendance of 80% was the only indicator not to meet the target set. This compared to a sector attendance benchmark of 82.19%;
- Governors have continued to make regular visits to College, although this was not all governors and link visits were encouraged;
- Phil Douce is nearing the end of his tenure as governor. Phil's support of, and commitment to, the College was noted;
- Caroline Shaw has indicated interest in the SEND link vacancy;
- The Principal and Clerk have met with four potential governors and the Clerk outlined their skill, background and proposed role on the Local Governing Body;
- In response to feedback from governors on possible training at LGB meetings, the Vice Principal will outline the College's focus on narrowing the disadvantage gap at the November meeting, with a focus on the whole College Mental Health Strategy in March.

The Committee **noted** the information provided and recommended:

- The appointment of Caroline Shaw as SEND link governor for a four-year period;
- The appointment of Grahame Davies as External Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee for a four-year term;
- The appointment of Chantal Pottage as External Governor and member of the Finance and Resources Committee for a four-year term;
- The appointment of Paul Rushton as Parent Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee for a four-year term;
- The appointment of Elle Beale as External Governor, designated Safeguarding Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee for a four-year term.

. The Committee proposed to **recommend** the following targets for 2024-25:

	Criteria	Target 2024-25
1	Governor attendance at LGB & C'ttee meetings	84% attendance
2	Governor attendance at training sessions	80% attendance
3	Number of papers tabled at meetings	5% of papers at meetings
4	Number of planned policy reviews completed	90% of reviews carried out
5	Duration of (i) Local Governing Body meetings (ii) Committee meetings	90% 3 hours long or less 90% 2 hours long or less
6	Link Governor visits	11 per annum
7	Scrutiny of Subject Quality Improvement Plans	4 per annum

The Clerk will consider whether governor performance could also be measured qualitatively as well as quantitatively, for example, identifying the areas where governors identify that their challenge has been focused.

8. Policy Reviews

(i) Curriculum and Programmes of Study Policy

The Vice Principal advised that the curriculum and programmes of study policy had been updated to reflect this year's assessment schedule, changes to curriculum provision (e.g. new Health T Level) and also to include reference to the possibility that students may be entered for the AS Level instead of the A Level where they did not demonstrate appropriate progress and it was likely that this would result in them achieving a level 3 qualification and securing progression beyond College. The Committee **approved** changes to the Curriculum and Programmes of Study Policy as outlined.

(ii) Careers Strategy 2024-25

The updated Careers Strategy was **approved**.

(iii) Work Experience Policy

The Work Experience Policy and the aim that all year 1 students will complete work experience, was **approved**.

9. Closing Standing Items

(i) Risk Management

The pertinent risks for the Committee were shared in relation to teaching and student support and where the score had been changed an update was provided on the reason for this change. The Principal noted that this needed to be reviewed again to reflect that the student number would not decrease as anticipated.

It was noted that a new risk has been added in relation to the possibility of reputational damage through inadequate identification and support for neurodiverse students. This was in response to a specific incident the College had to manage over the summer, but given the prevalence of neurodiverse students, this should be an area for reflection.

The Committee **noted** the updated contents of the risk register. No additional risk management issues were identified.

(ii) Impact

The Committee's in depth scrutiny of the performance of the College last year in terms of outcomes, attendance and retention and the focus on particular groups, e.g. disadvantaged students and those from minority ethnic backgrounds was noted.

(iii) Any Urgent Business: No urgent matters were raised.

(iv) Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 5th February 2025

The meeting finished at 7.14pm.

Signed:.....

Sheena Payne-Lunn (Chair)

Date:.....

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE: ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 6TH NOVEMBER 2024

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
C&Q/06.11.24/6(i)	Review data on those who failed last summer and their progress in previous internal assessments and report on outcomes of students who failed their end of year exam and their continued progress.	JLJ	February 2025/ Ongoing	
C&Q/06.11.24/6(i)	Consider means of engaging with local communities teams with a view to improving diversity among the staffing and governing bodies.	EYS	Ongoing	
C&Q/06.11.24/7	Consider whether governor performance could also be measured qualitative as well as quantitatively, for example, identifying the areas where governors identify that their challenge has been focused	JJP	February 2025	

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
C&Q/15.05.24/4(i)	Conduct a market survey of current curriculum provision in the county.	EYS/JJP	September 2024	✓

*denotes change