



Mission Statement: *Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures*

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS BOARD

Date: Wednesday 23rd November 2016
Venue: The Blackpool Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 5.30-6.50pm

Present: Dr P Anderton (Chair)
Mr J Corry
Mr G Curry
Ms W Middlemas
Ms D Taaffe
Ms J Gray (Principal)
Mr M Waterhouse
Mr N Webster
Ms M Wakefield
Ms T Choudhury

Together with: Ms E Bellamy (Assistant Principal: Academic)
Ms T Cooper (Assistant Principal-Vocational)
Mr A Lloyd (Vice Principal: Information Systems and Resources)
Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
Ms S Hawitt (FCAT –Governance Administrator)

Apologies: Mr J Boyle, Cllr D Clapham and Ms J Trembles

| | | Action |
|----------------|---|--------|
| 70.2016 | Preliminaries The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted | |
| 71.2016 | Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest | |
| 72.2016 | Consideration of any items of urgent business. There were no items of urgent business to discuss | |
| 73.2016 | Confirmation of Quoracy It was noted the meeting was quorate <i>Wendy Middlemas joined the meeting</i> | |
| 74.2016 | Directors' CPD-Area Based Review Update-Delivered by The Principal | |

In the absence of the Chair of the Corporation the Principal gave Directors an update on the Area Based Review process, she informed them that two steering group meetings had been completed with the next one taking place on Tuesday 29th November 2016; a site visit had also taken place.

The Directors were informed that BSFC had been approached by Blackpool and the Fylde College to become part of a merger but that this option had been declined by BSFC, however they are happy to collaborate with other colleges in the future. The Principal informed Directors that the outcomes of the meetings thus far have been very positive.

Tara Choudhury joined the meeting

The Chair welcomed Tara to her first meeting as newly appointed Student Director. Everyone introduced themselves.

75.2016 Minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2016

The minutes of the meeting held 27th September 2016 were approved

76.2016 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- a) **Directors CPD** - (item 63.2016 from the previous minutes) confirmation Directors training on the new reformed A levels, BTEC and achievement rates will take place at the Directors' Residential Conference
- b) **Maths and English** - (item 63.2016 from the previous minutes) confirmation that monitoring dates have been added to future reports.
- c) **Level 2Plus** - (item 63.2016 from the previous minutes) confirmation the word 'highlights' has been changed to key points in all future reports
- d) **College Action Plan** - (item 64.2016 from the previous minutes) confirmation retention figures from year 1- year 2 are reported on after 1st October
- e) **Area Based Review** - (item 68.2016 from the previous minutes) confirmation staff have been informed of the position of the college in terms of ABR
- f) **Student Voice** - (item 45.2016 from minutes 13th June 2016) confirmation messages regarding price increases to catering services has been discussed with Lower 6 students.

77.2016 Destinations Report

Directors received the Destinations Report (paper 8.1) prepared by Stuart Ormson, (Head of Student Services). The Deputy Principal informed Directors that the report gives a summary of headline data this will be provided in much more detail at the Directors' Residential Conference in February.

Questions from Directors

In response to a question regarding the decrease in apprenticeships the Deputy Principal stated that, courses had not changed and the same opportunities are being offered as in previous years. However there is an increase to students opting for a gap year, this could possibly be due to financial climate change, there is also an increase to employment with training.

In response to a question about the correlation between students who resit A levels it was noted that some data is not yet known, more detailed report will be shared with Directors at the Residential Conference which will include data regarding students taking a gap year and the reasons for it.

It was noted that a recent survey of employers showed that the majority thought gap year was not a good use of students time, however some students have taken gap years in different countries to study the language with positive impact.

Asked about the link between gap year and mental health issues, the Deputy Principal stated that the college are committed to finding out more about gap year, especially with students one year on.

Directors were informed about a new list of “highest tariff (Russell Group)” and “high tariff” universities now being used. It was noted that one of the targets on the College Action Plan is to increase the number of Oxbridge and high tariff university offers by 5%, overall the percentage of all students progressing to HE has increased from 27.95% in 2015 to 30.96% in 2016, there is a 3.01 percentage point increase in students progressing to the highest and high tariff universities.

In response to a question about how to increase students’ attendance to Russell Group Universities it was noted that the Gifted and Talented lead is working on promoting this through working with students from feeder schools.

In response to a question about transport being an issue it was noted that students have had the opportunity of visiting universities within a 60 mile radius of the college; it is not known why some students choose to stay nearer to home

The Chair noted that an interesting debate had taken place regarding gap year, it was agreed to devise some questions in terms of destinations for the stakeholder conversations with students, staff and employers at the Directors’ Residential Conference in February. He thanked the Deputy Principal and Stuart Ormson for the report.

78.2016 Attendance and Retention Report

The Assistant Principal: Vocational gave a summary of the report highlighting the following, retention is above target and has increased slightly in all year groups, however attendance had fallen compared to the same time last year in all year groups resulting in an amber rating for upper and lower sixth despite being above college target. The biggest concern is attendance on level 2 courses all of which are below target, however action plans include, Target 96 rewarding students with good and improving attendance, sharing best practice between departments and further improvement to be made with pastoral mentors following the ShOW process.

The Deputy Principal stated by the end of the first week of using Target 96 significant improvements had been made.

The Chair asked for abbreviations to be written in full in future reports to avoid any confusion

Questions from Directors

Asked about the correlation between the performance of teaching staff and attendance rates it was noted that GCSE results in English and Maths were strong and even better when level 2 results were extracted.

SLT

The AP: Vocational informed Directors of staffing issues regarding level 2. In previous years students have been monitored by the level 2 coordinator who was responsible for their study programme experience, general progress, attendance and retention. This year due to illness this has not been possible and students have been distributed amongst pastoral mentors who are more used to working with level 3 students, this has highlighted a training need. Directors were informed that there are some quick fixes that will have a positive impact.

In response to a question about the spectrum of teaching capabilities and the impact on attendance it was noted that very few staff at the college are graded below good or outstanding in their teaching capabilities.

The Deputy Principal pointed out that the retention for lower 6 and upper 6 is 99.9% of the whole group attending which is very good. The Chair asked that actual numbers be presented in future reports alongside the percentage points.

SLT

It was noted this report does not pick up on early leavers, as a consequence it does not show the significant number of students remaining after the 42-day window however, information is captured during exit interviews with students. The number of early leavers has been reduced in comparison to previous years. It was agreed to add early leavers' information to future reports.

SLT

In response to a question about student study day and the effect on falling attendance, it was noted this could be due in part to the timetable changes made this year whereby students have only three subjects as oppose to four in lower sixth and therefore if they miss a day which could be three or four lessons the proportion in relation to the total is higher and therefore the % is higher, creating a bigger impact.

The Principal informed Directors about the changes to the enrolment process which is having a positive impact on retention. Student Director praised the enrolment process highlighting the difference it had made to her after speaking to subject leaders.

79.2016 Student Voice

The Deputy Principal gave Directors a summary of the report highlighting the discussions with students regarding catering prices which included a price comparison of college food to that of other colleges showing good value for money. Student Directors noted that posters displayed in the Café 6 area are very prominent and effective. The Deputy Principal drew attention to the review week which includes questions from students in regards to their lessons and the responses from staff. She also highlighted the welcome evening and indicated the increase in the number of parents attending.

Questions from Directors

Asked about a generic anonymous email account for students to send comment and thoughts, it was noted that this is in fact being explored.

80.2016

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

a) Progress against Minimum Target Grade

Directors considered the report and were informed of significant changes to the college assessment policy in order to prepare for the curriculum changes for A levels and BTECs, as well as the college decision to move away from Alps value added (VA) measure of progress to level 3 VA. This has also resulted in a change to the way that college has used target setting for staff, as a result of the changes, staff, students and parents will have a clear idea of where students are in terms of the MTG grade at any given point.

Assistant Principal: Academic highlighted the coloured column in the report and said that these are early predictions but are showing a very positive position. Further training on predicting grades will be given to all staff as part of the action plan, and Heads of Departments will continue to quality assure key assessment grades (KAGs) and predicted grades (PGs) to be as accurate as they can be. She also informed Directors that this system is a complete culture change and work will continue to support staff through the changes.

Questions from Directors

In response to a question relating to staff predicting lower grades it was noted that staff are very conscientious and are encouraged to predict the MTG as high as possible. In response to a question about the pressure on students who are already achieving high grades and finding it difficult to achieve a green rating which suggests they are above their MTG.

Directors suggested reaching out to students and finding out if this is having a negative effect, it was noted that reaching above the MTG is hard and not always going to be achievable. Student Director raised the point about achieving A* in As year it was noted that this is not possible and that prediction grades are for two years. The Chair noted the responsibility to recognise students' stresses and the opportunity to get assessment accurate.

The Principal stated that it is a huge step up from GCSE to A level the process has to be tough to be inspirational. It was agreed to look at this further.

b) Equality and Diversity Results

Directors considered the Equality and Diversity results report 2016 (paper 11.2) it was noted that the term highlights in section 3 will be changed to key points in future reports and the number of students involved in the data will be included.

Deputy Principal offered to answer questions, there were no questions to answer. She noted the 10 attainment gaps identified in summer 2015 have closed or a closing, this demonstrates the success of the action plan and is testament to the hard work of the staff.

81.2016

Directors Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Directors reviewed the progress made against the Quality Improvement Plan. The Chair pointed out the most salient point issue 1: succession planning, it was noted that key members term of office will be coming to an end resulting in a skills gap of education, finance and health. Replacements have yet to be found which could result in threatening the performance of the board as a whole.

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It was agreed succession planning should be discussed in detail at the Residential Conference in February. The Principal informed the Directors that succession planning is one of the priorities for the internal audit in December and asked Directors to give it some serious thought and try to recruit suitable Directors for the future. Directors noted the increase to social media correspondence raising the profile of the Blackpool Sixth.

Debbie Taaffe left the meeting

82.2016 Directors Residential 2017

The Principal shared a draft programme with Directors proposing a similar agenda to last year with slight changes to times and subjects. She invited Directors to suggest a guest speaker for the evening,

83.2016 Identification of any new risks

No new risks were identified

Date and Time of next meeting

Monday 27th February 2017 at 5.30pm

Signed _____

Date _____