



MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF THE CORPORATION OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Date: Tuesday 18th March 2014
Venue: Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 1735hrs - 1905hrs

Present: Mr S Sheard (Vice-Chair)
Mr S Brennand
Mrs K Clowes
Mr G Curry
Ms F Greeves OBE – late arrival
Mr N Webster
Mr N Wilson

Together with: Mr J Boyle (Observer)
Ms E Bellamy (Head of English and Modern Foreign Languages for the presentation)
Ms S Benson (Director of Learning)
Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
Ms E Trotter (Corporate Services Lead FCAT)
Mrs K Buddle (Assistant Clerk designate)
Mrs JA Trainor (Assistant Clerk to the Corporation)
Dr J Burgess (Clerk to the Corporation)

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| 1.2014 | Preliminaries and apologies for absence
The Vice-Chair welcomed Mrs Clowes, along with Ms E Trotter and Mrs K Buddle to their first meeting of the Committee. He introduced Ms Bellamy and noted the apologies of Rev Dr R Murphy, Ms K Talboys and Dr D Sanders. | Action |
| 2.2014 | Declaration of Interest
None. | |
| 3.2014 | Consideration of any items of urgent business
None. | |
| 4.2014 | Curriculum Area Presentation – English and Modern Foreign Languages by Estelle Bellamy, Head of Department
Ms Bellamy provided Governors with an informative overview of the Department, including staffing, courses and a detailed strategy for moving from “good” to “outstanding”. | |

Ms Bellamy empathised with the Committee by stating that she was also a governor and illustrated her presentation with images of her team, students and their activities with writers, poets and on exchange visits.

The importance of having a strong and talented senior team was critical, particularly having current examiners. Details of the Department's student population by programme and their present value-added performance were shared along with the strategies for improvement. Governors noted that a focus on independent study, encouraging greater student responsibility for their own performance and regular timed assessment exercises were imperative.

The Principal joined the meeting

Governors explored the value-added methodology in the context of a changing curriculum. The Principal advised that all sixth form colleges and most sixth form schools subscribe to this benchmarking service. The Vice-Chair warmly thanked Ms Bellamy for her presentation and wished her and the Department well in the future.

Ms Bellamy left the meeting.

5.2014 Minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2013.

(Paper A)

5.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be approved.

6.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 12th November 2013

The Deputy Principal and the Clerk confirmed that all actions had been addressed.

7.2014 Report on English GCSE, Maths Functional Skills and Institute of Financial Services (IFS) results

(Paper B)

The report provided information on the latest results and trends in these subject areas. Governors questioned the Deputy Principal on the progress in implementing the recommendations and received assurances that progress was well under way. They also wondered about the Institute of Financial Services and the Principal acknowledged the significant achievement of level 2 students in this subject area.

7.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Report on English GCSE, Maths Functional Skills and Institute of Financial Services (IFS) results be received.

8.2014 Analysis of Winter Mock Exams

(Paper C)

The Director of Learning outlined the background, preparations, rigorous cross moderation and subsequent progress reviews with students on their performance. Importantly all students had been set targets in the light of their performance.

Governors explored in some depth the slippage in results and the under-performance in certain subject areas. The disparity and difficulty in comparability between the previous assessment regime and the “mocks” were acknowledged as well as the difference in approach adopted by the College. With the move to linear assessment, the Vice-Chair wondered if there might be a drop in overall performance nationally. The Principal advised that this might be a big question for the awarding bodies over the summer.

The Student Governor acknowledged that the mock examinations had been very useful but commented that there was some anger and unhappiness in the student body about the delay in receiving the results. Management recognised that better communication to students was needed next year.

Governors were pleased to note the detailed recommendations and quality improvement action plans following the results.

8.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Report on the Analysis of Winter Mock Exams be received.

**9.2014 Termly Report on impact of Disadvantaged Funding Strategy
(Paper D)**

The Deputy Principal reviewed the improving picture with regard to the success rates, retention rates and high grades within the Report. Mr Boyle advised that Ofsted expects college governors to be fully aware of the impact of disadvantaged funding on student performance. Governors questioned the Deputy Principal about the outcomes of her meetings with Heads of Department and the development of improvement strategies.

Governors concluded that the Report was a welcome addition, but suggested that it might be more helpful to have a colour version, with an executive summary and the detailed analysis in the appendix at their next meeting.

Deputy
Principal
To action

9.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Termly Report on impact of Disadvantaged Funding Strategy be received.

9.2014 D1 Resolved: that the next Termly Report be enhanced for the benefit of all governors by providing a colour version, with an executive summary and a detailed appendix.

**10.2014 ALPs Pupil Premium Report
(Paper E)**

The Deputy Principal advised that this very positive Report focused on last year’s student cohort and in response to Governors’ questions set out the criteria for eligibility. Up to a third of the College’s students are captured within the scope of the parameters of the survey.

10.2014 D1 Resolved: that the ALPs Pupil Premium Report be received.

11.2014 Early Leavers Report 2014

(Paper F)

The Deputy Principal noted the improvements in the retention of students in comparison to last year. Governors discussed the high rates from particular schools and the suggested rationale for students' decisions. They were impressed with detailed recommendations that the management team had initiated.

11.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Early Leavers Report 2014 be received.

12.2014 Update on Lesson Observations

(Paper G)

Governors were pleased to note the overall rise in good or outstanding sessions in spite of the increasingly tough observational regime employed by the College. The target was to achieve 33% grade 1 and 100% grade 2 and above. The Director of Learning described the strategies in place to improve grade 2 performances. Governors expressed concerns about the potential skewing of outcomes by focusing upon star performers. The Principal advised that actually the opposite occurs and drew attention to the 'best in year' grade profile.

12.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Report on Lesson Observations Grades be received.

13.2014 Inspection of Provision Reports on Social Sciences and Sport, Tourism & Public Services

(Paper H)

The Deputy Principal explained the rationale for the re-introduction of this Ofsted styled quality control instrument and outlined the benefits it brings to assist teachers and departments to improve their performances. The Director of Learning attested the rigour of the approach adopted.

Governors critically reviewed and questioned the outcomes of two Reports on Social Sciences and Sport, Tourism & Public Services. The Vice-Chair sought clarification about the cycle of planned inspections and whether the subsequent reports would be made available to external bodies. The Principal advised that whilst there had been some local debate about the re-introduction of inspections, four would be completed this year and the results were available to external inspectors.

13.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Inspection of Provision Reports on Social Sciences and Sport, Tourism & Public Services be received.

14.2014	<p>Multi-Academy Trust Update</p> <p>The Principal advised that Unity was progressing well, with improving results and a positive morale. Currently, there was some adverse national publicity with regard to Aspire Academy but assured Governors that strategies were in place to stabilise the situation with enhanced leadership.</p>	Action
15.2014	<p>Stakeholder Feedback - Compliments, concerns and complaints leaflet (Paper I)</p> <p>The Deputy Principal introduced the new leaflet, which would be available on the web site and at Reception. Governors wondered if compliments could be given greater prominence and whether they could be made verbally. There was discussion about making the summary reporting of concerns and complaints more open and transparent. Mr Boyle suggested that the web site links to the Complaints Policy ought to be more accessible. The Deputy Principal agreed to reflect on these points.</p> <p>15.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Compliments, concerns and complaints leaflet be received.</p>	Deputy Principal <i>To action</i>
16.2014	<p>Stakeholder Feedback – Mid year Complaints and Compliments (Paper J)</p> <p>The Deputy Principal reported a rise in the number of complaints received in comparison to last year, in part in response to having raised awareness of the process. Governors reviewed and questioned the issues raised in the report particularly in respect of student behaviour and staffing matters. They considered that the process ought to be fully compliant with the latest guidance from the Education Funding Agency and noted that normally the Principal receives and hears any final appeal. It was particularly pleasing to note that Catering consistently does not receive any complaints.</p> <p>16.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Mid year Complaints and Compliments Report be received.</p>	Deputy Principal <i>to confirm compliance</i>
17.2014	<p>Draft Strategic Aims 2014 - 2018 (Paper H)</p> <p>The Principal updated Governors on the draft changes to the Strategic Aims following the review and discussion at the Governors' Residential Conference in February 2014. In response to questions she advised that the 'diverse curriculum offer' captured the notion of attempting to provide an education for all and the work of the Teaching School and Academy Trust was included in 'collaboration and partnerships'.</p> <p>Governors considered that the expressions 'best we can be' and '21st century skills' ought to be adopted in the final version.</p>	Principal <i>To action</i> Action

17.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Draft Strategic Aims 2014 – 2018 be received.

17.2014 D2 Resolved: that following amendments the Strategic Aims 2014 – 2018 be recommended to the Corporation.

Clerk
To action

18.2014 Estimation of new risks

Governors considered that there were no new risks identified during the meeting.

19.2014 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was confirmed as **Tuesday 24th June 2014 @1715hrs.**

Members
Note

The Vice-Chair thanked members for their support, attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....