



St Helens College

ST HELENS COLLEGE CORPORATION

**MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE HELD AT
1.00 pm on MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2015
IN THE BOARD ROOM, TOWN CENTRE CAMPUS**

MINUTES

MEMBERSHIP:

- * Mrs E Brocklehurst (**Chair**)
- * Dr J Burford
- * Mr N Gribben
- * Mrs S Jee
- * Mr J Middlehurst
- * Mr P Round

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr B Dean, Deputy Principal
Mrs V Roberts, Vice Principal (up to Minute number 837 only)
Mrs C Lascelles, Director of Contracts and Data Analysis
Mr J Hays, Director of HR
Mrs C Jones, Clerk to the Corporation

829 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest notified.

830 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

831 NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business notified.

832 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2015

The Minutes of the above meeting were **agreed** and signed as a correct record.

833 MATTERS ARISING

a Minute 823.1 p5 – Learner Performance Report

The working group to undertake a further analysis of student retention will now be convened, as the SFA audit had now been finalised. An interim student retention report was requested to be presented at the next meeting.

ACTION: Principal to present an interim retention report at the next meeting of the Committee

834 SUCCESS RATES 2015/16

The Deputy Principal presented the latest success rate report for 2015/16.

The overall performance for 2014/15 (best case) was reported at 80% which was 4% below the previous year's outturn position. The reasons were attributable primarily to curriculum changes for the 16-18s, namely AS levels which were discussed at length at the previous meeting, and the English and maths GCSE which is now compulsory for a large number of students. The increase in the adult performance was highlighted. The challenges relating to the significant growth in 16-18s taking English and maths GCSEs in 2015/16 were noted by the Committee. The Committee also discussed the high numbers of students identified to re-sit GCSE English and maths who originated from St Helens schools, which was in the context of the local press advertising an increase in examination outcomes across the Borough. The Executive responded by stating that the College's first priority was to support all students in achieving their goals and aspirations going forward.

The Success rates report for 2015/16 was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

835 LEARNER PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Contracts and Data Analysis presented the latest Learner Performance Report and Performance Dashboard.

The Committee noted that the commentary indicated that the reduction in the 16-18 group A success rate was mainly due to poor AS results. The English and maths success rates recorded GCSEs A*-G (not A* - C) and therefore did not affect the results significantly as presented. This was standard Proachieve methodology.

Following a question from the Committee about the performance dashboard, it was confirmed that the rag-rating was reported against the best-case target position. The Committee asked whether there was a correlation between the teaching and learning qualitative indicators and the actual student outcomes, and it was confirmed that the changes in curriculum were the most likely cause and effect on the outcomes. The Committee requested that the 16-18s Extended Diploma L3 achievements be further analysed for consideration at the next meeting.

ACTION: Deputy Principal to oversee that the 16-18s Extended Diploma L3 achievements be analysed for further consideration at the next meeting

The Learner Performance report, and Performance Dashboard, were accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee as presented.

836 ANNUAL REPORTS

836.1 CPD Report

The Director of HR presented the Annual CPD Report, which was based on the College's 8 key strategic themes. The plan was primarily about supporting staff in adapting to change, as well as aiming to improve performance.

Following a question from the Committee about the few negative evaluations received from staff, it was confirmed that follow-up has identified that some staff have attended an incorrect CPD session and some staff may have been directed to attend a CPD event which had conflicted with their individual priorities. It was confirmed that none of the negative feedback received was linked to the standard of the CPD offered.

Following a question from the Committee about the impact of non-attendance by staff at CPD events, it was confirmed that this receives careful follow-up and those staff would then be identified to attend the next course. Mr Round reported that he had attended several CPD sessions, which had been excellent. Measuring the impact of the CPD remains work in progress.

The Annual CPD Report was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee as presented.

836.2 Safeguarding Report

The Director of HR presented the Annual Safeguarding Report, drawing Attention to Appendix 2 which reflected an increase in the number of concerns raised, none of which it was confirmed involved College activity or were linked to members of staff. The Committee discussed the number of cases that were linked to mental health issues, The total number of accidents from August 2014 to July 2015 were also noted by the Committee, and the one reportable accident to the HSE was detailed, with the person making a full recovery following the accident. Following a question from the Committee, it was reported that the number of accidents were comparable to the previous year. The number of 'near misses' was also raised by Governors, and this would be given further internal promotion, and to support the current system of reporting 'near misses' which was available to staff via the Intranet.

ACTION: The reporting of 'near misses' to be given further internal promotion

The Annual Safeguarding Report was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee as presented.

837 HE: PROGRESS REPORT

Mrs V Roberts, Vice Principal, presented a report which provided an update on progress with the HE Strategy and included reference to all of the HE Developments currently underway, including the launch of the University Centre St Helens, which has been very positively received by staff and students. Some of the branded St Helens University merchandise was shown to the Committee.

The Governors commended the excellent HE results, as detailed within the presented report.

Details in relation to the HE Access Agreement and fees, curriculum development, university partnerships and employability were summarised in the presented report.

As requested by the Higher Education Funding Council, the Committee received appropriate assurances from the Executive that the quality of the student experience after removal of the Student number controls in 2015 had been maintained. This assurance would be provided to HEFCE.

ACTION: Principal to sign the return to HEFCE in relation to the above assurances

The work of the Heart of Glass partnership was outlined, which is a new arts commissioning project supporting work made with, for and about St Helens people and place.

The Committee commended the College's HE developments led by the VP, which has been undertaken within an increasingly competitive HE landscape. It was noted that the College's HE student numbers may be affected due to the removal of the cap on HE entries and the drop in entry requirements of some local universities.

The progress report in relation to Higher Education was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

Mrs V Roberts left the meeting at this point.

838 14-16 ACADEMY: PROGRESS REPORT

Mr N Gribben, Vice Principal, presented a progress report in relation to the 14-16 Academy. The 42 original students have been welcomed back into year 11, with 60 new year 10 students enrolling this year. The curriculum remains the same this year as last, with Engineering proving particularly popular amongst female students. It was noted that the new dining room at the Technology Centre also serves the 14-16 Academy pupils. Following a question from the Committee, the capacity for further growth at the Academy was discussed and considered to not be a limiting factor for the near future. It was confirmed that the forthcoming GCSE examinations were being carefully tracked and monitored.

The progress report in relation to the 14-16 Academy was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee, with detailed performance progress reports to be presented at future meetings.

839 ENGLISH AND MATHS: PROGRESS REPORT

Mr N Gribben, Vice Principal, presented a progress report in relation to English and maths, with an English poster campaign underway in all classrooms and staffrooms throughout the College. The posters were presented to the Committee. Functional Skills continued to be offered alongside the new GCSEs in English and maths.

Assurances were given to the Committee that there was a continuous drive across the College to enable performance improvements. It was noted that weekly English and maths meetings were taking place chaired by the Vice Principal.

The progress report in relation to English and maths was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

840 'A' LEVEL: PROGRESS REPORT

841.1 'A' Level Policy

The 'A' Level Policy was approved by the Standards and Curriculum Committee as presented, subject to two typographical errors.

It was noted that weekly meetings between the Deputy Principal and the 'A' level Academy staff were being held and the progress of each individual student was discussed.

841.2 ALPS Report

The Committee **agreed** that, as the ALPS reports have only just been published, some internal analysis was required before sharing with the Committee at the next meeting.

ACTION: Vice Principal to present the ALPS report at the next meeting

841 NEW COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

The Deputy Principal delivered a presentation which detailed the new Common Inspection Framework, including hot topics and key messages received from OFSTED. There would be an increase in the review of Governance which was primarily attributable to the number of colleges experiencing significant changes in their grades.

Following a question from the Committee about whether the decrease in the 16-18 results at the College could trigger an inspection, it was explained that the success rate position in relation to English and maths would have been typical across the FE sector, and that this issue had also been communicated to OFSTED separately by the MCA colleges, in order to alert them of the position. It was felt that it was unlikely to trigger an OFSTED inspection.

It was noted that OFSTED would now inspect types of provision and not subject sector areas. The new short inspections have been designed to promote constructive, challenging professional dialogue between inspectors, leaders, managers and governors, and would take place at two working days' notice. Following a question from the Committee, Governors were reassured that the Executive had addressed each of the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection, with the details outlined.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the new CIF framework and commended the presentation to all staff. It was also **agreed** that the presentation would be shared with all Governors at the next Corporation meeting scheduled on 8 December 2015.

ACTION: Deputy Principal to share the new CIF presentation with all Governors at the December Corporation meeting

842 AOC'S CODE OF GOVERNANCE: REVIEW OF POSITION STATEMENT

As agreed by the Corporation, some identified sections of the AoC's Code of Governance were presented to the Committee for further review.

The Committee **agreed** the following actions to address the identified areas:

3.2: The Committee requested a report to confirm that there is a policy in place relating to each of the identified areas.

3.7 The revised Safeguarding Policy would be presented to the Corporation for approval and would include the duties arising from the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

5.3: The Committee requested more information about the systems in place which facilitated engagement with external stakeholders.

5.5: The Committee requested more detailed reports about student progression.

5.7: Stakeholder engagement would be addressed as a continuing action and, for example, through the forthcoming Employer Stakeholder breakfast event.

8.7: It was confirmed that there were currently measurable Equality and Diversity objectives in place, which would be reported within the Equality and Diversity Annual Report due to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

ACTION: Clerk to oversee the presentation of reports on the above aspects of the Code as requested by the Committee

843 URGENT BUSINESS (AS NOTIFIED UNDER MINUTE NUMBER 831 ABOVE)

There were no items of urgent business notified.

844 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 1.00 pm on Monday 23 November 2015.

KEY OUTCOMES:

LEARNER PERFORMANCE REPORT: The Standards and Curriculum Committee continues to closely monitor and scrutinise the Learner Performance position.

14-16 ACADEMY: PROGRESS REPORT: The Standards and Curriculum Committee continues to closely monitor the progress of the 14-16 Academy and has requested regular progress reports.

ENGLISH AND MATHS REPORT: The Standards and Curriculum Committee continues to closely monitor the progress of English and maths and has requested regular progress reports.

NEW COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK: The Standards and Curriculum Committee received an overview about the new Common Inspection Framework and have commended the presentation to all Governors.

AOC'S CODE OF GOVERNANCE: REVIEW OF POSITION STATEMENT: As agreed by the Corporation, some identified sections of the AoC's Code of Governance were reviewed by the Standards and Curriculum Committee, with feedback reports requested where required.

'A' LEVEL ACADEMY: The Standards and Curriculum Committee continues to monitor the progress of the 'A' Level Academy and has requested regular progress reports.