

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
QUALITY & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
held on Tuesday 26th June 2019 at 16.00.**

- Present: Mrs. Sally Bromley (Principal), Professor Melaine Coward (Governor), Ms Emily Leddy (Student Governor), Mr. Roger Raymond (Staff Governor), Dr David Skipp (Governor)
- Apologies received: Mrs. Rebecca Aylett (Parent Governor), Ms Liza Karandeja (Student Governor), Dr Grant Powell (Governor)
- In attendance: Ms Andrea John (Assistant Principal - Student Support), Mr Dan Lodge (Vice Principal – Curriculum and Quality), Mr Steve Martell (Deputy Principal), Mrs. Helen Mayer-Dean, Ms Ciara McMullan (Student Observer), Ms. Nicola Whitehead (Clerk)
- Chair: Dr David Skipp

The Chair welcomed the two students to their first meeting.

There were no consent items. Members agreed that agenda items 8, 9 and 10 merited the most attention – the QIP update, Safeguarding reports, and survey results.

1. **Declarations of interests:** None
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2019** were approved.
3. **Matters Arising**

Item 6: The Vice Principal reported on feedback from **S7** with regard to **university subject choices**. This suggested that all colleges were different, according to factors ranging from the wider local jobs market and size of college to the enthusiasm of individual teachers, both in respect of their strengths in teaching and ability to signpost associated careers. Biological Sciences and Medicine were popular university courses at Collyer's. Members noted with interest that the use of Unifrog had resulted in students making different choices, including destinations further afield and more aspirational. The student governor commented on how, without much family experience of university, Unifrog had been useful in seeing the options available – to include apprenticeships - and the potential progression routes, as well as providing more immediate help in building a CV, and all at no cost to students. The site was easier to use than that of UCAS which was more formal and timed users out. The Deputy Principal welcomed this feedback given the leap of faith in adopting Unifrog at a time when it was developing into the current more accessible offer.

4. **Quality Assurance Policy**
Paper: Quality Assurance Policy

Members noted the minor changes to the policy, to include the updated College mission statement, progress review process and job titles.

Resolved: The Quality and Curriculum Committee approved the revisions to the Quality Assurance Policy.

5. **Admissions Policy**

Paper: Admissions Policy

The DP explained that this policy had last been reviewed only the previous year but was being brought to the Committee early to reflect a number of changes recommended by the SMT. Additions had been made to update job titles and distinguish post 19 Employability, formerly ASDAN, students. There was clarification re: Level 2 entry, transfer exams (for entrance into year 2) and the addition of Oathall as a new partner school. The expectation that students declare any previous exclusion/ disciplinary action had also been included. The staff governor commented on the desirability of consistency in applying the policy unless there were a strong and reasoned case for some flexibility. As such, members agreed a change to the related policies list to signal that factors such as disciplinary action would be pertinent to decisions (as would Fitness to Study- FTS- procedures). **(Action: Deputy Principal to add to the Related Policies list.)**

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the Admissions Policy at their next meeting.

[16.22 Professor Coward joined the meeting].

6. **KPIs: Student Progress**

Paper: Key Performance Indicators 2018-19

The Principal explained that, with 1855 applicants by end April (now over 2000), the prospects for 2019/20 enrolment were good. The forthcoming Welcome Days – from which, experience suggested, a conversion rate of 78-82% could be expected – would give some indication of final numbers although nothing would be wholly clear until after enrolment, not least because some students applied to two institutions.

There had been a further slight drop in retention in 2017/18 impacting on 2019/20 income. SMT action to address this in 2018/19 was expected to bear fruit in funding terms in 2020/21 given the two-year lag in the calculation. Attendance (whilst up overall) appeared to have dipped recently, possibly due to the late Easter and exams starting before May half term, but this would be further examined.

[16.22 Mrs Mayer-Dean joined the meeting].

Members noted that 100% of staff had been observed by the end of May with the Humanities Head of Faculty due to review the methodology in the year ahead. The process had evolved over recent years moving from graded LOBs to the inclusion of a 'Learning Walk' week with a greater emphasis on peer observation. Some staff missed the certainty of a graded session but most favoured a staff development focus with good quality feedback and targets going forward. A thematic approach such as stretch and questioning was also deemed helpful.

The staff governor commented on his subject evidence from the recent transfer exams which supported the belief that there was a close relationship between attendance and performance. Such feedback was thought to be valuable for student induction. The students commented on the importance of building a rapport with teachers for which attendance was essential although they also thought the correlation reflected the support from home. Members agreed on the importance of teachers following up on any disengagement and reasons for absence.

7. **Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**

Papers: College QIP Review June 19

The Vice Principal (VP) explained that this second update on the QIP reflected further progress, with the impact to be more fully appreciated once results were known and the College's self-assessment completed. Looking forward, the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) might necessitate some changes to the format.

In respect of the first of four key themes- **raising aspiration**-, the VP explained that the in-year data on students' progress was looking (possibly even a little too) strong pending results. Collyer's Aspire was addressing underperformance and the high-grade focus was also bringing dividends.

The second wave of **T Levels** had recently been announced for a September 2021 start. With Bexhill and Reigate Colleges successful, three of the eight S7 colleges were now involved. There had been good news in the form of a promise of an additional £82k funding for Collyer's for 2019/20. Colleges' readiness in the first round was being measured through regular returns to the ESFA. With 11 of its 15 target work placements secured, Collyer's record in capacity development was not uncommon across the sector. The Head of Business (and new Assistant Director of the Business Faculty) was taking over from the Arts and Communications Head of Faculty in seeking further interest in placements. Careers advisers, on hand during 2A enrolment, had helped engender some new interest.

Turning to **pastoral consistency**, the Assistant Principal (AP) commented that the College was confident in its targets but was reviewing the new measures introduced this year e.g. action plan interventions and FTS procedures, to ensure they met the objectives.

Finally, the DP reported that **international student numbers** were looking healthy thanks to a number of new links and programmes including those with Swiss students and the Guangya and Rikkyo Schools. Not only did these bring additional revenue but they also contributed to a more diverse and vibrant community.

In summary, the VP explained that at the recent S7 Teaching and Learning (T&L) conference, SMT had taken an early look at how the SAR/QIP would be shaping up. The Chair thanked the VP for the progress report and all staff involved for the considerable amount of work over the year.

8. **Student Support policy updates and Annual Reports 2018-19**

Papers: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Student Bullying and Harassment Policy; Substance Misuse Policy, Safeguarding Annual Report 2018-19; SEND & Wellbeing Reports 18-19

a) Policies

i) Members noted the relatively minor changes to the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** (reflecting staffing developments) following the significant rewrite in the autumn term 2018.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the minor changes to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at its next meeting in July (as a consent item).

ii) The **Student Bullying and Harassment Policy** also had minor amendments reflecting updates in statutory guidance, internal staffing changes and changes in related staff policies.

Resolved: Members approved the changes to the Student Bullying and Harassment Policy

iii) The Assistant Principal explained that the new **Substance Misuse Policy and Procedure** had been informed by the Department for Education and ACPO – Drug Advice for Schools (September 2012) and Screening, Searching and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (January 2018). The process of creating the policy and procedure had included consultation with staff at Collyer's, colleagues at other S7 colleges and education networks, as well as Drugs Awareness/ Prevention specialists. The operational need for the new policy had arisen from an increase in the presentation of issues as was thought to be the case in other local institutions. Having established a framework, it was intended to consult further with students on the procedures and to review the policy in the light of its first year of use.

The approach favoured by the College to-date was to have zero tolerance for both drugs and being under their influence on site, whilst also seeking to show support to students to help them make informed choices. As such the enrichment/ tutorial programme was particularly important for the College's specific age group. The experience of the HE/ Safeguarding link governor might usefully be brought to bear in fine-tuning the procedure which included pointers as to what signs and symptoms might be evident. Heads of House had received training including search procedures but to-date the decision had been taken that any student not complying e.g. with a request to empty pockets, would be asked to leave the College site. As such the College was not employing all its potential powers such as testing for drug use. Whilst this could be preventative, it was also considered beyond staff's remit.

The Principal confirmed her belief that the proposed approach was proportionate to the scale of the problem with few students denying responsibility when challenged. The tools existed to suspend students, investigate, hold a fair hearing and take appropriate action for those abusing the College's policies. Efforts were also underway to support parents in tackling the issue, for example through messages at 'Meet the tutor' evenings and extending workshops on mental health to drug use. The Chair supported the no testing approach.

The student governor welcomed what she considered to be a very good and realistic policy and the very valuable offer of support. She considered it important to recognise the different reasons for taking drugs and that habits could be well established pre-Collyer's. Intervention with this age group was however timely with students developing in their maturity and understanding over their two years at the College. She supported proposals for a range of messages including how to stop and age-appropriate signposting of advice on safer methods of experimenting. She thought more regular reminders through tutor/ induction days would be helpful, not least to help avoid students progressing to more serious drugs.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the new Substance Misuse Policy and Procedure at its next meeting (and delegate its future approval to the Q&C Committee).

b) Reports

The Director of Study Support and Student Wellbeing (DSSSW) introduced the range of comprehensive safeguarding reports commenting that the year had started bleakly with the loss of a much-loved colleague who was also much missed by students. Students had been presenting with increasingly complex needs, presenting challenges in meeting expectations and contributing to a restructure of services to enhance the provision offered.

i) SEND

SEND students comprised a fairly consistent number of Post-19 Employability students and those with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs), a decrease in the large number with exam access arrangements and a moderate increase in those calling into the Drop-In Clinics.

The Post-19 provision had had a successful year. New admissions procedures had introduced prospective parents to a wealth of information at an early stage. JubyLee Bakes had successfully bid for National Lottery funding, allowing them to expand their work on a commercial level and provide further work opportunities for students with SEND. Second year students were progressing to a range of destinations.

Those **students with EHCPs** were presenting with co-occurring complex conditions requiring a creative response in terms of enrolment and ongoing support. Managing the expectations of stakeholders remained on-going with more consultation necessary with local authorities (in response to their own funding constraints) as to what could be achieved in a mainstream setting. Indeed, the college was increasingly seen by pressurised external services as a solution to the problem in spite of the limitations on the college. The team were conscious of the need to make contextual reasonable adjustment. They were also sensitive to the impact of diagnoses on students and their parents, preferring to move away from labelling to individually tailored practical support. In response to feedback, the department had devised and focussed on building up two initiatives, a 'Life Skills' course and 'Social Hub', targeting areas of need on the 'pathway to adulthood' such as eating healthily, budgeting and interacting with new people, tailored individually to students.

Demand for **study skills support** had grown year on year with a notable increase in those attending the drop-in clinics with anxiety-related issues, leading to a new Academic Anxiety (AA) course. Small workshop sessions had also been established to help students with dyslexia and co-occurring conditions. Support for **English as an Additional Language** (EAL) continued and there had been a thorough review of **Exam Access Arrangements** (EAA) in response to senior management and JCQ concerns. A college 'protocol' establishing new benchmarks had produced encouraging results and been well received by staff. In all, 30% of Collyer's students had accessed Study Support in 2018/19 with 96.7% recording a high satisfaction rate.

ii) Wellbeing

The DSSSW reported further on the appointment of a Head of Student Wellbeing as part of the Department restructure. Continued development of provision included the student Wellbeing Booklet signposting support to promote effective self-care. CBT, the original .b Mindfulness course as well as extension support continued to run alongside the new AA course and courses had also been offered to parents. The report from the Mercers' research highlighted that the offer had had a positive effect on students' wellbeing as demonstrated in both the qualitative and quantitative data.

Members noted with concern the further rise in students in the MEN1 (Acute Mental Health issues) category albeit that the MEN 2 and total number of issues across the three categories had fallen. Furthermore, there had been an increase in demand for support from other 'green corner' categories including those students identifying as transgender/ transitioning. The **counselling service** had worked hard to meet increased demand for therapeutic support with their annual report due in late July.

The student governor commented on how grateful students were for the high level of staff commitment and the wealth of support offered which she thought really singled out the College.

The student observer highlighted the plight of care leavers at 18 who lost the support of the external services such as CAMHS and a social worker at an important time. The AP offered to discuss this further with the student.

Members thanked the DSSSW for the very thorough reporting which reflected the considerable efforts being made to support the College's students.

[Mrs Mayer-Dean and Dr Skipp left the meeting with Professor Coward taking up the Chair.]

iii) **Safeguarding**

The AP referred to the complementary Safeguarding Annual report which, at the request of governors, included more qualitative and quantitative (whilst anonymised) data. That said the number of interventions addressing co-occurring issues made it difficult to measure their precise impact. The potential benefits of further analysis were therefore unclear and risked compromising pressing operational work. It was hoped however that a further internal audit of safeguarding, due in 2019/20, would provide further assurance and help to identify any gaps in provision to inform development of the student support strategy. Members were sympathetic to this approach given the pressure on resources and looked forward to the audit review.

In addition to the team developments covered, the AP reported that whilst external services continued to lack capacity to meet the needs of young people, liaison with them had been helpful in informing the College's own safeguarding and wellbeing provision and supported the completion of referrals where they were likely to meet the threshold. Increased direct communications with GPs and other health and support services had also been constructive, underpinned by appropriate student consent - both to respect the right to confidentiality and ensure GDPR compliance.

Staff training on safeguarding had been undertaken reflecting the new statutory guidance. The DfE's Prevent Regional FE/HE Adviser had been consulted on the College's policies, procedures and training to inform further training and tutorial materials in the coming year. Trips and visits continued to be carefully risk-assessed with a new WSCC online system due to be implemented to assist with planning.

Members examined the nature of safeguarding and child protection incidents concerning 'at risk' students and the common responses and interventions undertaken by the College. Whilst challenging in their nature, there had been no significant in-year problems in the internal management and referral of the issues.

9. **Stakeholder Survey Results 2019**

Papers: Student evaluations executive summary 2018/19; Staff Survey on Support Services

The Vice Principal reported that the **Student (and staff) survey results** were generally very encouraging given the high levels of satisfaction. The new approach (but consistent questions) advised some caution in interpreting trends. It had meant a c. 20% reduction in completion (albeit to 75% of the cohort) and some minor reduction in very high levels of satisfaction, except in respect of study support which was unchanged. 96% of students were happy overall with their course with general consistency across faculties and the ability to drill down to subject level in course review panels and the SAR/QIP review. 97% were happy with the tutorial and study support and 98% responded positively in respect of support services and facilities.

Members discussed with SMT the impact of the new and simultaneous student self-assessment processes on MyProgress which had possibly resulted in survey fatigue and the scope for some differential in timing whilst ensuring they covered a comprehensive period and avoided exams.

The results of the **Staff survey** (considered by the F&GP Committee) were also positive with an average positive response of 97% although this covered a range from 87.5% to 100% and a broader range still in terms of 'strongly agree' with particular praise however for Reception, Reprographics and Exams. Staff had responded positively to areas for improvement including cleaning and healthy eating and would also reflect these in their forthcoming SAR/QIPs.

Turning to the response to the **Parents' survey**, the Principal reported that overall satisfaction levels were good. Themes emerging concerned students adapting to a new environment and more independent learning and thinking, as well as support for non-HE progression options. The response rate had been disappointing however, with a marked drop from the previous survey in spite of dedicated prompts via e-mail, Facebook and Twitter. As such, the Principal intended to boost the interim 'Pulse' survey the following year and incentivise returns through the provision of a student benefit upon completion;

10. Any other business

The VP shared a flyer with the Committee detailing the launch of **new scholarships** including Richard Collyer Scholars, Horsham School Awards, Mercers Industry Placement Scholarships and Music Bursaries. These would be promoted at the forthcoming event for Current Year 10 students from the immediate and wider catchment area.

11. Governance Quality Framework: Committee Annual Assessment

Paper: Committee Annual Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Terms of Reference

Members noted that it was intended to address limited attendance issues for the coming year through some movement between committees whilst the two existing governor vacancies were outside the Governing Body's control, being subject to external appointments.

12. Date of the next meeting: 27th November 2019 at 15.30 (provisional).

Meeting ended at 17.52

Chairman

Date

NCW 26-06-19