

**Thursday 1st February 2024 at 5.30pm
Remote Online Meeting via ZOOM**

Members:

Dave Navarro – Chair of the Committee
Kate Bainbridge
Nader Sheta
Keni Thomas
Chukwuweta Uraih
Graham Thompson (Principal)
Sarah Medicoff

Invited to attend:

Ms Karen Foan (Associate Principal)
Clare Baskott - Clerk to Governors
Rebecca Shortland - Head of RE

Minutes

The meeting was quorate throughout.

Item 1 Opening Prayer

The Chair of the Committee opened the meeting at 5:32pm.
The Principal led the meeting in prayer.

Item 2 Apologies:

Apologies were received from Nader Sheta, who would be leaving the meeting early.
No-one was absent without apologies.

Item 3 Declarations of Interests

The Clerk advised that Kate Bainbridge had recently updated her declarations of interest.

Item 4 Minutes of previous meeting, 10th October 2023, for review and agreement for signing

The committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting, 10th October 2023.
Clerk to move to the approved minute file for electronic signature. **Action: Clerk.**

Item 5 Matters Arising for this meeting not on the agenda

None.

Item 6 Subject Presentation - Rebecca Shortland – Head of RE

The Head of RE, shared her presentation with the Committee and explained that Religion and Philosophy was at the heart of college, and educated the whole person.

5% of student's timetables were given to RP. RP lessons were a forum for discussion and reflection, and the aim of the subject was to increase student's religious literacy.

The Head of RE gave an overview of the course and shared the schemes of work for each level and outlined the statutory requirements.

Governor: Is the RP curriculum aligned with the Diocese?

Response: Yes, the RP curriculum comes from the Catholic Education Service, and it was agreed by the Diocese, and they advise how it should be implemented. A local diocesan officer oversees the course and has recommended the college as a shining example of the teaching of RP.

The Head of RE gave an overview of the speakers who had attended the college, including a Holocaust survivor, Modern slavery groups and a representative from SCOPE.

The Head of RE gave an overview of the lessons and planning for individual cohorts.

Governor question: Is the RE Policy based on a model policy?

Response: Yes, the model policy is from the Catholic Education service. The policy is based on the model policy, with some amendments which are specific for a sixth form college setting.

The Head of RE reported that there was free training available on the CES platform.

A discussion took place about the current conflict in the Middle East. The Head of RE explained that students wanted to discuss the issue and teachers had focused on 'how do we know what is real, what is the truth and had looked at some fake news stories on social media. The Head of RE was also liaising with 'Solutions not Sides' who will be coming into the college to discuss the conflict with students.

It was agreed that the RSE policy will be included on the agenda of the next FGB meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

The Committee thanked the Head of RE for the update.

The Principal reported that the college was now preparing for the Catholic School inspection.

Item 7 Update on the Ofsted Report

The Ofsted report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Principal gave an update and said that they were delighted with the outcome which had been a very fair process. Inspectors understood the context of the college and the SLT were open and transparent about the college's weaknesses.

The Associate principal reported that the Ofsted improvement plan mirrored the College's QUIP. A key focus was to move the college from good to outstanding. The

Ofsted feedback meeting had given the SLT comprehensive areas in which to make specific improvements.

A discussion took place about the Maths results. The Associate Principal reported that the college was looking at trialling the Welsh Exam Board for Maths GCSE exams in the future.

The Principal reported that an area for improvement was regarding skills and to provide more evidence about how the college had engaged with employers. Departments had changed the order they taught subjects in response to employer's requests. The sociology department had changed exam boards following feedback from Leicester university. An employer board will be set up to demonstrate the college's commitment to working with employers.

It was agreed that funding for the UpLift platform will be added to the agenda for the Finance and Resources Committee to review and agree at their next meeting. Clerk to add to the agenda. **Action: Clerk.**

The Principal paid tribute to students and staff at the college and said that Ofsted inspectors were pleased with the level of student attendance (94%), which they recognised as being high for the sixth form sector. The college was graded outstanding for their high needs provision.

A discussion took place about other colleges which had recently been inspected.

The Committee paid tribute to the staff and students at the college.

It was agreed that the QUIP and the Post Ofsted Action Plan will be a standing item on the agendas for future FGB and CSQ meetings. **Action: Clerk.**

Nader Sheta left the meeting at 6:18pm.

Item 8 Quality of Provision (improvement and outcomes): Principal/Vice Principal

Item 8.1 College QuiP with summary of key emerging issues (*paper*)

Item 8.2 College Collective update

The College QUIP had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Associate Principal (KF) gave an overview of the College QuiP and reported that the English department's results were above national comparators and the SLT were investigating what made the English department so successful.

The college was making significant changes in the Maths department and was trialling a Welsh exam board to assess its impact for specific cohorts. The Maths department were making improvements on the initial assessments of students who joined the college and needed to re-sit GCSE Maths. In future, students whose GCSE grades were 2 and below, will take part in a year long programme to make significant improvements, rather than re-sitting the exam in the autumn term. The Associate Principal paid tribute to the Maths department for the strong relationships they had

with students and for the improvements they had made to student's GCSE results; nineteen students had improved by two grades since joining the college.

The Associate Principal (KF) and Principal gave an overview of the key changes the government were proposing to vocational courses. BTEC and CTEC courses will be replaced by T Levels and several of the current subjects were expected to become A Levels in the future. The exam boards were expected to upload the specifications to the DfE website soon. There were concerns about some of the reforms, particularly BTEC Business, Criminology and Applied Law, as there were no plans for these to be replaced. BTEC Business and Criminology were popular courses at the college. It was expected that a change of government may lead to a pause in the proposed reforms.

A discussion took place about the difficulties colleges will have in marketing courses, with so much uncertainty about future courses.

The Principal reported that the college had introduced the Skills Builder Framework, which was now embedded. Skills Week had been delivered in tutorials and across the curriculum. An Employer Board had also been set up and the college had received positive responses from the employers who attended the first meeting.

The Principal reported that the Catholic Schools Inspection was imminent. The SLT had attended an Away Day and had worked through the framework and had self-assessed the college as outstanding. The sixth form annex of the framework takes into account the context of sixth form colleges. It was noted that the Associate Principal (CG) was now a trained Catholic School Inspector.

Governor question: What do the inspectors take into account, in the relation to the sixth form context?

Response: Inspectors understand that there will be fewer Catholic students in a sixth form college. They also appreciate that there is not always a place for collective worship and that students are not always on site. Students are involved in online reflections every morning via zoom, which meets part of the collective worship section of the inspection.

Item 9 Focus Morning 2024 – 9th March 2024 – To agree the Focus

The Committee agreed the following:

- Catholic School Inspection
- External Review of Governance.
- Progress with the Post Ofsted Inspection Plan.

It was noted that the review of governance needed to have taken place by the end of the summer term to meet the DfE deadline. It had been agreed that the college would commission David Wright to undertake the review, as he had experience of Catholic sixth form colleges and was a National Leader of Governance. David Wright had recently joined the governance review team at the Association of Colleges.

It was agreed that the Clerk will send calendar invites for the Focus Morning to all Governors which will take place from 9:30am – 12:30pm on Saturday 9th March 2024.

Action: Clerk.

Item 10 The Student Experience

The Student Experience survey had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Principal gave an update and reported that overall scores had improved in comparison to July 2023.

Governor question: Do you think the scores will be impacted by the Ofsted judgement?

Response: Students were also given a survey to complete during the Ofsted inspection. The lead inspector said the response from students and staff was above average in both quality and quantity. The feedback from the internal survey has improved on every level. We have asked every Head of Dept to run student focus groups and this feeds into the department's self-assessment.

Item 11 Staff Survey

The Staff Survey had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Principal gave an update. The responses were above the national benchmarks and provided a positive picture. The survey was based on the TES staff poll with an additional focus on well-being. Staff were positive about the support during Ofsted.

Governor: Do you think the Ofsted grading will attract more people to apply for jobs at the college? Response: We think that being graded as 'Good' with outstanding element is likely to attract more people to apply for jobs at the college. There are teachers who would not want to work in colleges which had been graded as RI. We are currently re-writing our recruitment marketing, which will include information about what it is like to work here. We have some good quotes from surveys regarding workload and well-being, which we will be able to include.

Item 12 Link Governor updates

The Clerk gave an overview of the current Link Governors:

Safeguarding & Prevent: Kate Bainbridge

Mental Well-being: Kate Bainbridge

Religious Life: Nader Sheta

EDI: Chukwuweta Uraih

Sustainability: Chukwuweta Uraih

SEND: Michael Belfour

Business: Chukwuweta Uraih

English: Nader Sheta

Science: Sarah Medicoff

Economics: Dave Navarro

Geography & Travel & Tourism: Keni Thomas

Item 13 Update on the external review of Governance (Summer 2024)

The GB Effectiveness Action Plan had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Principal and the Clerk gave an update. The scoping meeting had been scheduled

to take place on 22nd April 2024. The actual review will take place in the summer term and the NLG will attend the meeting on 2nd July 2023. The governance review will be a key focus for the focus morning.

Item 14 Effectiveness of committee:

The link to the Effectiveness question had been circulated prior to the meeting, all Governors were reminded the completed the questionnaire. **Action: Governors.**

Item 15 Risk Management: Have governors identified any new risks or modifications to existing risks on the register?

Governor question: How will allowing students to type during examinations impact on the college?

Response: Some students already have access arrangement which mean they can type during exams. Allowing more students to type will add to the complexity of exams. Some exam boards are no longer using online computer-based assessments due to the issues which have had with online exams e.g. poor Wi-Fi and computer issues.

It was agreed that this will be added as a risk under the IT infrastructure section of the Risk Register. **Action: Principal.**

Kate Bainbridge left the meeting at 7:09pm

A discussion took place about Artificial Intelligence. The Principal reported that two members of staff are liaising with other staff at other colleges about artificial intelligence and virtual reality to assess the best use of both. The college was also looking at AI platforms which would help with teacher workload.

It was noted that there were potential safeguarding issues which had been reported in the media regarding.

The Clerk advised that at the recent Clerk's conference the Association of Sixth Form Colleges had recommended that all colleges now had an AI Policy. The Principal reported that the college currently had an interim statement.

Item 16 Any Other Business

None.

Item 17 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 11th June 2023 at 5:30pm

The meeting closed at 7:16pm

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Chair of the Committee