

Present: Jo Venn (Committee Chair), Yvonne Bradshaw, David Grime,
Robert Cobourne, Tony Webster, Steven Haycocks, Clare Russell (Principal)

In Attendance: Zoe Smallman (Deputy Principal), Martin Rigby (Deputy Principal),
Fatema Hussein (Head of Governance)

Meeting began: 1.30pm

Meeting closed: 3.30pm

Attendance: 64%

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Graham Murphy and Safaa Hafiz.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Governors / members were invited to declare any pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interest in any matter on the agenda for the meeting

There were no declarations made.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2021

3.1 Approval of the Minutes

Agreed that: the minutes are signed as a correct record and authorised for publication

3.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The action progress log was reviewed, and it was noted that there was one action being carried forward. In response to a question, the Head of Governance confirmed that Governor information re curriculum intent was to be updated and be uploaded to Convene.

The Deputy Principal Martin Rigby confirmed that the curriculum intent statements were being reviewed by SMT next week.

Governor Questions

Q. Had Vocational students been able to catch up with practical tasks now that they were back on campus?

A. They had caught up, but the current closure could impact on this. The campus may have to open on weekends to ensure that all the practical elements were completed

Q. Was Runshaw Radio still operating?

A. It was confirmed that it was

Update on Campus Closure

The Principal reported that following confirmation that 2 people had tested positive for the Indian variant of Covid 19, a decision had been made to move to online learning until Monday 17th May. College had been in discussions with Public Health England who had recommended that students and staff did not continue to mix with each other on campus.

Governor Questions

Q. Were parents supportive of the decision?

A. There had been a few complaints, but College wanted to prioritise the health and safety of students and staff and had acted in accordance with guidance from Public Health England

3.2.1 Autumn 2020 A Level & GCSE Exam Results

The Deputy Principal presented the report with the following points highlighted to the Committee:

- There was not usually an Autumn A level exam series but following the Centre Assessed Grade (CAG) process, students had been offered the opportunity to sit Autumn exams if they wished to try to improve their grade
- Almost half of Autumn exams had resulted in an improved grade from the CAG
- 115 students had entered for GCSE English and 99 students for GCSE Maths in November 2020
- This included learners enrolling as new Runshaw students in September and those who had entered independently because they wished to improve their CAG but were not supported by Runshaw teachers
- Students on the fast track programme with Runshaw were more successful than those who had entered independently

Governor Questions

Q. Were History and Government & Politics a concern as students had got a lower grade in the exam than the Centre Assessed grade?

A. The number of students that had entered was low and had self-selected themselves to sit the exam

Q. Were quality assurance processes being reviewed for those subjects where results had gone down?

A. They were to be reviewed after the half-term break

Governors requested that the Classical Civilisation Teacher was congratulated on her recent award.

4. STUDENT RETURN TO CAMPUS & ENGAGEMENT / UPDATE

It was noted that:

- All students had returned to the campus full-time
- All classrooms had been marked up with teacher “safe zones” so that teachers were at least 2m away from students during lessons
- Cumulative attendance on the A level programme remained above target and above the equivalent point last year in both year groups
- Student ratings across most questions in the January A level blended learning survey had been positive

Governor Questions

Q. The lowest score in the blended learning survey had been for the Teacher's learning and understanding of the subject. What was the reason for this?

A. This was being investigated further

Q. Was any action being taken to support lost learning due to the impact of the pandemic?

A. The course teams were reviewing and updating the action plan for this year's students. Actions to support students next year were to be discussed at SRG meetings

Q. GCSE attendance was low. Were there any plans to continue with blended learning?

A. Attendance in the last 3 weeks had increased and some form of blended learning may continue

5. MONITORING OF KEY ISSUES REPORT

Discussed under reserved business.

6. 16-18 GCSE ENGLISH & MATHS*

It was noted that assessments were to be undertaken in the next two weeks.

7. APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION

The Deputy Principal Martin Rigby reported that:

- Good progress was being made with the action plan and College was hopeful that the targets would be met
- An Apprenticeship Guide for trainers has been developed and shared with staff
- A Team leader for Apprenticeships was to be introduced from next year

Governor Questions

Q. Some of the "amber" actions within the plan were ongoing and did these need to be incorporated into normal day to day operations?

A. The actions had been kept on the plan as some curriculum areas had been slow to transfer to standards

Q. The Apprenticeship guide was excellent. Were there any plans to have one for employers?

A. The Employer guide was under development

The Co-opted member David Grime agreed that a handbook for employers would be beneficial.

7.1 Apprenticeship Strategy Update

The Deputy Principal Martin Rigby reported that some slight amendments had been made to the strategy. Based on employer feedback, the option of adding L4 Data Analyst and L3-L4 Project Management apprenticeships to the portfolio was being explored.

Governor Questions

Q. Did the apprenticeship provision still present a risk to the College's Ofsted Outstanding grading?

A. An independent external review of the provision was to be undertaken at the end of May and College was confident that improvements had been made

8. SUMMER 2021 GRADING ARRANGEMENTS

The Principal reported that:

- The Deputy Principals had been leading on this and developed guidance for course teams
- Although students would be receiving Teacher Assessed grades, they would still need to be supported by evidence which was available for scrutiny
- Unlike last year's process, no algorithm would be used to calculate the appropriate distribution of grades
- Quality assurance measures would be in place to ensure that grades were accurate and based on the evidence available
- Students would have the right to appeal their grades
- Clear communication of the process (to all stakeholders) was vital, to ensure transparency and to limit any potential appeals
- Results days were earlier than usual this year, with A Levels on the 10th August and GCSEs on the 12th August

Governor Questions

Q. Had many staff volunteered to work on results day?

A. The response from staff had been positive and College was hopeful that it would have enough staff available. Staff who worked during results week would have the option to take time off in late August

Q. Were there any concerns about the impact that these changes would have on staff morale and welfare?

A. There was a concern and College had tried to keep the Teacher Assessed grade process as straightforward as possible. The end of term had been moved forward by one day to give staff some additional time off

Q. Would exam Boards be undertaking any quality assurance checks?

A. Checks would be undertaken, and College could be selected for one. It would have all the evidence available to demonstrate that a robust process had been used to calculate the grades

Q. Were there any conflicts of interest for staff that may have children at the College?

A. All staff were required to declare any conflicts and checks were undertaken to ensure that this had been done

9. COLLEGE SAR - MONITORING OF QIP'S - GRADE 2 SCHOOLS

The Principal reported that most Schools or Programmes graded 2 or 3 during the 2019-20 SAR process were making progress towards achieving the majority of agreed targets. There were 3 Schools where there were some concerns regarding the targets, and these were being monitored.

10. STAFF & STUDENT GOVERNOR FEEDBACK*

The Staff Governor reported that staff were comfortable with the move to online learning this week. The main concern was with the Teacher Assessed grades, but it was reassuring that guidance was being developed.

11. FEEDBACK – ONLINE LESSON OBSERVATIONS

The Committee received feedback from the Chair and Yvonne Bradshaw who had observed a variety of online lessons as part of the Governor learning walks programme. All of the lessons that had been observed were female Teacher led and the Chair commented that it would be useful to observe some lessons led by male Teachers.

12. PROPOSED CHANGES TO CURRICULUM PORTFOLIO

The Principal stated that the portfolio was still being developed as College wanted to meet the needs of employers which were evolving. A level 3 diploma in Criminology was to be introduced for A level students as well as a Digital Support Technician Apprenticeship.

Governor Questions

Q. Why were some courses being discontinued?

A. They were mostly courses with low numbers (2 or 3 learners). Two courses on the list had been discontinued externally

Q. Had any provision been planned for Teacher education?

A. College had partnerships in place with Edge Hill and the University of Manchester to support PGCE students

13. STRATEGIC PLAN MONITORING REPORTS 2020/2021

The relevant chapters of the Strategic Plan which set out key actions required and indicated progress to date with them were reviewed.

13.1 Chapter 6 – Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Support

Governor Questions

Q. Had the priority list for the Employability triangle been reviewed?

A. College was waiting for some IT development to support this

13.2 Chapter 7 – Student Support Services

Governor Questions

Q. Some of the actions were due to be completed by July 2020. Was this achievable in the current circumstances?

A. It was confirmed that it was

13.3 Chapter 8 – Quality

There was a lot of activity taking place to ensure that College was meeting the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework.

14. RISK REGISTER

The relevant section of the risk register was reviewed, and it was noted that the key strategic risk being monitored by the Committee was the loss of Ofsted Outstanding status, but College was confident that everything was on track.

A Governor suggested that it may be useful for the Committee to monitor the four key areas that Ofsted made a judgement on.

ACTION:

SMT to amend Risk Register

Tony Webster left the meeting at this point.

15. *GOVERNANCE IMPACT STATEMENT

- Staff Governor Feedback re move to online learning and Teacher Assessed grades
- Governor challenge re support for lost learning
- Governor suggestion re amendment to Risk register
- Governor feedback on Apprenticeship Trainer Guide and suggestion re guide for Employers
- Monitoring of Key Issues subjects
- Discussion on Teacher Assessed grades

16. APPROVAL OF RESERVED BUSINESS MINUTES –5TH FEBRUARY 2021

Agreed: that the minutes are approved as a correct record.

16.1 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Discussed under reserved business.

17. GDPR / CONFIDENTIALITY*

Governors were reminded of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and comply with GDPR regulations.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 18th June 2021 at 1.30pm

The Committee thanked all members of staff for their continued hard work and dedication and agreed that their professionalism was shining through another tough and challenging term.

*Standing Item

Chair's Signature:

Date: