

**EASTLEIGH COLLEGE BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 1700 HOURS IN ROOM A115**

Present: Mr J Course (Chair)
Mrs A Cross-Durrant
Mrs H Hills
Mrs G Thomas
Mr J Sendell
Mr P Quigley
Dr J Edrich, Chief Executive and Principal

In Attendance: Mrs K Quinn, Deputy Chief Executive (Director of Teaching & Learning)
Dr C Davis OBE, Clerk to the Board (minutes)
Mr G Goddard, Associate Director, Professional Studies & Workforce Development
(from item SS.17.15,I, ii)
Mr M Phelps, Associate Director, Business Development (item SS.17.15,I, ii)

SS.14.15 GOVERNORS' MEETING TIME WITHOUT SMT

SS.15.15 COMMITTEE MATTERS

i Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs V Hall.

ii Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests made by those present, financial or otherwise, in any item on the agenda.

iii Minutes of last meeting 10 June 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015 were agreed as an accurate record and signed.

iv Matters arising

Mrs Quinn reported that due to the importance of a strategic matter, time was not available for the briefing on the Governors' data dashboard at the September Board meeting.

Dr Davis reported that there would be an open invitation to all Governors to attend the Quality Review Committee meetings and that a calling notice would be sent to all Governors informing them of the date of the next meeting.

All other actions were complete and there were no further matters arising.

v Standards Committee Terms of Reference

Mr Course reported that he had discussed the Operation and Terms of Reference (ToRs) with Mrs Quinn and had agreed further amendments to the document.

The wording 'Quality Review Committee/Board' would be removed from the ToRs completely, as the strategies/reports/targets would come directly to the Standards Committee.

He went on to say that paragraph 2.2 needed further clarification as to the strategies, policies and targets, which the Standards Committee recommends annually to the Board.

Mrs Cross-Durrant added that the list should also include success rates and eventually value-added.

Mrs Quinn said that she would bring a comprehensive list to the February meeting.

ACTION: KQ

The title of Deputy Chief Executive (Director of Teaching & Learning) needed to be correctly annotated in paragraph 4.1.

Governors reviewed and approved the amended Standards Committee Operation and Terms of Reference.

SS.16.15 GOVERNORS' MONTHLY REPORT

i Safeguarding updates (including DBS issues and related training)

Mrs Quinn explained that because the report covered the period of the summer break it was relatively quiet in terms of safeguarding issues. The September period was as usual a busy month with many new students on site, with a considerably higher level of reporting of safeguarding issues from the previous month. Mrs Quinn outlined some of the more significant issues and the action taken.

Governors noted the safeguarding updates (including DBS issues and related training) in the Governors' Monthly Report.

SS.17.15 TO REVIEW

Mr Goddard and Mr Phelps joined the meeting.

i Outcomes for Learners 2014/15

Mrs Quinn began by highlighting some of the positive outcomes achieved at the College outlined in the report. The College's overall success rate remains high and at 89.1% is in the top 10% nationally. Success rates on a high proportion of apprenticeships have improved with excellent progress being made in improving apprenticeship success rates for 16 – 18 apprentices. Adult success rates remain very high and in particular at Level 1 and in English and maths, where a significant amount of learning takes place. Traineeships have continued to grow and whilst there are no national benchmarks, success rates are good. Mrs Quinn reported that progression to employment is an area for further development.

Mrs Quinn went on to mention that the report identifies remaining pockets of poor performing curriculum areas; especially GCSE English Grades A* – C, which declined significantly in 2014/15 and remain a key area for further improvement.

Governors then proceeded to examine page by page the fine detail of the report, with constructive questions being raised.

Mrs Cross-Durrant asked when the next set of data was going to be reviewed.

Mrs Quinn replied that the new data would be out in December or January and that immediate scrutiny would be carried out.

Mr Course focused on the success rates that fell below the National average on page 13 and asked if there were any answers to this problem.

Mr Goddard responded by saying that this is partly due to an increase in the volumes of students undertaking English and maths and the inclusion of this success in the overall Study Programme outcomes, which impacts on the overall result by about 10%.

Mrs Quinn added that the struggling courses have been identified and will be a key cross-college focus for 2015/16.

Mrs Thomas observed a correlation that where employer engagement was good, results tended to be better. She asked whether this was something the College intended to foster with employers with struggling courses.

Mr Goddard said that the College was working with employer focus groups to help shape the curriculum to pick out the units that are required by the industry.

Mr Phelps advised that more effort had also been taken to ensure that at the recruitment stage, more emphasis is placed on making both employers and students aware of the demands of the course and that expectations are managed.

Governors reviewed Outcomes for Learners 2014/15.

ii Proposed Curriculum area Self-assessment grades for 2014/15

Mrs Quinn reported that the results and groupings are presented in a new format, aligning curriculum areas whilst helping the programme managers who are looking after specific curriculum areas.

Mr Goddard went through the In-house delivery curriculum areas, highlighting those areas that had changed from the previous year, giving specific detail on the main changes and causes.

Mr Phelps drew attention to changes of grade in the Work place and Apprenticeships curriculum area, identifying programmes, which had changes to their grades from the previous year.

Governors reviewed the Proposed Curriculum area Self-assessment grades for 2014/15.

SS.18.15 TO RECEIVE

i Teaching Learning and Assessment Report 2014/15

Mrs Quinn provided evidence of the activities to date, which she said included implementation of a robust training and development programme, focusing on up skilling observers in relation to the current common inspection framework (CIF).

Mr Sendell asked a question relating to how progress is being measured.

Mrs Quinn explained that where the grading is concerned there is no longer a like for like, as a grade is now not awarded, however the judgments made define the same qualities. It is now not simply a system relying on quantitative percentages to say how good something is, it is a more thorough process analysing evaluative judgments.

Governors received the Teaching Learning and Assessment report 2014/15.

ii Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2014/15 – Summary Report

Mrs Quinn explained that this was the closing down report for 2014/15. She felt that this had been covered in papers received to date. The one area that had not made sufficient progress was Value added which remains on the Quality Improvement Plan 2015/16.

Governors received the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2014/15 – Summary Report.

iii Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2015/16

Mrs Quinn reported that eight objectives had been set out in the report. Success criteria are set out alongside each objective so that at the end of the year progress can be evaluated.

Concerns were raised over the significant percentage drops in a minority of courses' success rates.

Mrs Quinn explained that within each course there are specific reasons for this percentage reduction with an action plan to focus and mitigate further poor performance.

Mrs Cross-Durrant made Governors aware that from 2017 the DFE and BiS will change the way National averages for Value Added are calculated and against which Colleges will be measured.

A discussion followed on how Value Added could be 'teased out' of the data in the future and how the Standards Committee can keep abreast of the developments.

Mrs Quinn reported that all the new DFE and BIS information will be fed in to everything the College is doing, with processes changing and adjusting to accommodate this transformation.

Governors received the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2014/15

iv Minimum Levels of Performance (MLPs) monitoring 2015/16 – In House Learning and Work Place Learning & Apprenticeships

Mrs Quinn explained the rationale behind data and Red Alert and at Risk Course monitoring process, which identifies those courses that fall more than 5% below the national average and therefore trigger the Red Alert quality improvement process.

Mr Course asked a general question about the whole report stating that most of the courses highlighted were not in the previous year list, so was the College recognising far enough in advance those courses that needed to be added to the current year.

Mr Goddard explained that there are more Quality control processes in place with a new quality control system within Teaching and Learning looking at the trend data, therefore there is more monitoring taking place to allow for timely intervention.

Mr Goddard went on to explain that at every Business Senior Management Team meeting, a report outlining attendance and retention is included as an agenda item. This report is also discussed at Heads of Division so that monitoring can begin at all levels.

Governors received the Minimum Levels of Performance (MLPs) monitoring 2015/16 – In House Learning and Work Place Learning & Apprenticeships.

SS.19.15 TO APPROVE

i Curriculum Strategy

Mrs Quinn outlined the College's Curriculum Strategy, highlighting the key strategic focus for the development and implementation of its curriculum. She explained that the strategy had been closely informed by market intelligence including the Solent LEP's Skills Strategy 2014-16, MIDES and the RCU Vector tool, local, regional and national priorities, employment skills needs and local competition. It also links with the College's overarching Business Plan and Strategic Milestones 2015/17, focusing on streamlining what the College is doing, whilst driving up efficiencies.

Mrs Quinn went on to explain the targeted strategy for each type of provision for the next three years and defining what the College wants to achieve within each of these provisions.

Questions were raised over strategic goals, especially in relation to projected targets within the report.

Mrs Quinn felt that the targets for growth within the curriculum were sound and realistic in light of the present political and financial climate within the GFE sector.

Mrs Cross-Durrant felt that some of the broader statements within the strategy could be better amplified and stronger in their description, especially for external validation. The mitigating circumstances she felt needed to come at the end of the explanation.

Mrs Quinn agreed to take this away and explore ways of strengthening the Strategy's descriptive wording.

ACTION: KQ

A point was raised over the positioning of Apprenticeships within the types of provision and whether it should be placed at the top of the list, to highlight the importance of delivery of this key strength of provision at Eastleigh College. It was felt that the order should remain as it is, with 14-16 Students provision positioned at the beginning of the list.

Mr Course asked a question over whether in delivering the proposed strategy, would the College generate the required income to make it financially viable.

Mrs Quinn reiterated that the Strategy had been developed inline with the College's Business Plan and Strategic Milestones 2015/17. There are still savings that will have to be made, and there are budget assumptions involved in the strategic goals outlined in the Strategy but it was felt that the targets were achievable.

Mrs Cross-Durrant asked about outcomes/results in respect of functional skills that do not hit the target as predicted, and the effect it had on funding.

Dr Edrich said that this predicament was difficult to calibrate at the moment, because although functional skills were improving at the College, Nationally there had been a different trend. She felt it was very difficult to predict what would happen.

It was agreed to include the issue of outcomes/results in maths and English as an agenda item at future Standards Committee meetings.

ACTION: KQ/CD

The word 'employers' on page 53 needed to be verified.

ACTION: KQ

Post Meeting Note: Confirm current mission and vision is as stated in Curriculum Strategy.

Governors approved the Curriculum Strategy, subject to the changes and amendments identified.

SS.20.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 24 February 2016 commencing at 1700 hrs

Governors' Monthly Report: Quality matters; Safeguarding updates (including DBS issues and related training)

Standards Committee items on the Risk Register, including changes in risk scores of risk items (to receive)

SAR process for Autumn 2016 (to approve)

MLP monitoring/progress actions to date 2015/16 (to review)

Equality and Diversity Policy – to approve

Equality and Diversity annual report (to receive)

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (to approve)

Safeguarding and Child Protection annual report (to receive)

On completion of Standards Committee business, Mr Quigley provided an update on the Solent Area Review post the first steering group meeting held on the 4th November 2015. Mr Quigley outlined the agenda discussed and gave an oversight of the review process to-date. Further discussion took place with Mr Quigley concluding that he would continue to report and brief Governors on any further developments.

The meeting closed at 1905 hrs.