



WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held (via Microsoft Teams) on Friday 4th September 2020 at 3pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Mary Mamik, Chair
Andrew Cropley, Principal/CEO
Kate Truscott
Spencer Moore

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Director of Governance
Matt Vaughan, Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality
Diane Booth, Assistant Principal: Quality and Standards
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience
Suzanna Smith, Director of HR & Organisational Development
Rebecca Joyce, Governor and Observer for this meeting
Sean Lyons, Governor and Observer for this meeting

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
1	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u>		
	The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.		
2	<u>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>		
	Apologies for absence were received from John Grey, Mel Stirland, Steve Sutton, Jane Hawksford and Andrea Morrissey.		
3	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2020</u>		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.		
	AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 18 th June 2020.		
	There were no matters arising.		
4	<u>ACTION PROGRESS REPORT</u>		

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

Date: 06/11/2020

The committee were happy to note the content of the update provided.

5 STUDENT OUTCOMES

The vice principal introduced this item and confirmed that the paper covers a number of reporting aspects. He advised that the college is still waiting for a number of vocational and technical outcomes; therefore, at this stage, the report cannot be considered as 'final'. He indicated that the college has received some BTEC results but that analysis has not yet been possible because they were late and there are still some results outstanding. As a consequence, this report will focus on a number of key items, including:

- A-Levels – this was described as a positive picture, with much more detail provided within the QIP. The college is now back to the position it was in 2017/18, with 2018/19 very much considered a 'blip' because of the turbulence seen in that year. One concern in relation to A-Levels, however, is retention as it decreased. There were 42 learners who did not progress from year 12 to year 13. He confirmed a 100% pass rate, with 16 learners obtaining A*s. He acknowledged that the college cannot see a repeat of the retention issues and provided assurance that this is a focus for staff. The committee were advised that the college is looking to over-recruit and that this will be supported by a really stable staff base, which is now in place.
- English and maths GCSEs – he confirmed that the college saw the best performance for a number of years; however, there is still a need to improve high grades. That being said, there is positive movement and the QIP gives greater detail regarding the number of learners who improved their grades. In English, 48% improved their grades, but 12% declined. In maths, over 35% improved their grades, but 16% declined. He explained that, previously, the college over-relied on agency staff, which will not occur again. All agreed that there needed to be a better understanding regarding those students whose grade declined and to identify what support could have been put in place to prevent this.
- The committee then considered the overall retention rates for study programmes and it was explained that there are some specific areas of curriculum concern which are being reviewed.
- In relation to attendance, there was 74% regular online engagement. It was described as a broad mix across curriculum areas, with the position generally being amber/green; however, there were some specific red RAG-rated areas. It was confirmed that lockdown did have an impact on attendance, therefore this needs to be a continuing area of focus given the uncertainties regarding this academic year and whether lockdown will be repeated.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

Date: 06/11/2020

The vice principal: curriculum & quality confirmed that there would be a vocational outcomes report presented to the next meeting.

VP C&Q

6th Nov
2020

In considering the report presented, a challenge from the committee was that there is still a way to go to get to where the college wants to be, and they asked what the key outstanding actions are that will get the college to the next level. The vice principal indicated that these include:

- Maintaining a stable staff base
- Improving the level of challenge and extended learning
- Greater expectations and challenge associated with this.

In relation to 2020/21, he confirmed that heads of maths and English are now in place and all learners will be streamed, which is new and should have a significant impact. The college has developed a maths and English corridor with really vibrant base rooms available. Lessons have been reduced to one hour each so that they are short, sharp and focused, with clear expectations set from day one. He confirmed that there is vocational staff 'buy-in'. He expressed the view that staff could still be more self-critical, but that this is improving. He indicated that the college was aiming to be 'good' by January 2021.

The committee felt that it was important to acknowledge that progress had been interrupted because of COVID. A challenge from one member of the group was that it would be helpful for governors to see the expected trajectory, now that the building blocks are in place. The vice principal indicated that the key KPIs are the foundation for this, including:

- 40% of students improving by one grade
- 25% of students improving by two grades.

He confirmed that a report would be presented on this to the next meeting, setting out where the college currently is. In terms of high grades, the vice principal expressed the view that the college was still a way from where it wants to be, i.e. 50%-55%; however, WNC is above a lot of other colleges. A challenge from the committee was to benchmark against the best in class wherever possible.

VP C&Q

6th Nov
2020

It was confirmed that strategic targets are included within the strategic plan and grade improvements are a key part of this. Despite there being more to do, the committee all agreed that it was important to acknowledge the achievements and congratulated both staff and students.

The vice principal indicated that there have been a large number of meetings with parents, particularly in relation to maths and English GCSEs where grades were lower than a 4. The college is confident regarding its internal systems, with robust processes in place, and can therefore argue that the grades given are genuine.

The committee felt that, whilst there were some issues to address, they

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were assured that the senior team have a laser focus on these. This allows the committee to be confident that something 'unknown' will not come out of the woodwork.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

6 QIP

The vice principal: curriculum & quality introduced this item and described the QIP as the most important document, as far as he is concerned. He described it as a really strong working document and explained that it has been revised and shortened over the summer. It chronicles over the six key areas of weakness/areas requiring improvement, and the new arrows introduced show trajectory, i.e. positive, negative or static.

Key aspects that he drew to the committee's attention included:

- 1,371 learners engaged over the summer.
- The college can do better in terms of maths and English attendance.
- The college really needs to rapidly make improvements in terms of apprenticeship provision. The position is currently 'requires improvement' and the college has to get to 'good'. There are too many students who are past their end date and not achieving.
- The college is very positive in terms of teaching and learning. CPD for staff has been impressive. Governors' attention was drawn to page 2, which summarises all of the teaching and learning initiatives that have taken place or are planned.
- There will be a series of deep dives in five areas planned in the autumn, which will include a short cycle of assessments. The college is confident that it now has the right language in place and, as a consequence, the teaching and learning trajectory is a positive one.

In considering the document, a challenge from the committee was that, whilst there are relatively few red areas, there does seem to be an issue in relation to OneFile, and they asked for an explanation as to what is being done to improve this. It was explained that the data is impacted by learners inputting, or not inputting, information on the system. It is believed that the system has not fully captured what is done and therefore looks worse than it is; however, it was acknowledged that this needs to be improved. It was confirmed that there is now a new apprenticeship manager in place who has this issue as a priority to address.

The committee asked whether there were any additions to the QIP following the summer results. The vice principal indicated that, in relation to maths and English, JCQ-regulated mocks will now take place and the college will no longer rely upon internal mocks. These will be

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completed in the February half term so as not to impact upon planned teaching time. In terms of vocational qualifications, staff are bringing forward the external assessments so that there is evidence 'in the bag', having learnt lessons from this year.

The college will continue to drive forward assessments and exam behaviours; this is needed in case there is a repeat of this year. Staff are looking to improve sequencing so as to ensure delivery is as effective as possible. He provided assurance to the committee that no learners had lost out; however, he did feel that the college could be 'sharper' in terms of its arrangements.

A challenge from one member of the group was that the 'action by when column' does, in some instances, look a little vague and is not a consistent approach. The vice principal confirmed that he would review with the team.

A question and challenge from one member of the committee was how the impact of CPD is measured. The vice principal confirmed that there are a number of measurement mechanisms, including:

- Learners' progress – there are five progress points
- Quality of teaching and learning
- Deep dives

In relation to deep dives, he reminded the committee that they are focused on the areas where there are most concern: e.g., in 2019/20, this was health and social care, motor vehicle, apprenticeships and maths and English. He confirmed that the outcome of deep dives directly correlates to the CPD planned and delivered.

The vice principal advised that the college is introducing a 'rate my course' initiative this year, which will be another mechanism for obtaining feedback. One governor asked whether there were any areas where there was a perceived unwillingness to improve. The vice principal confirmed that there have been pockets in the past; however, there are none anymore. The vice principal indicated that there were 27 SAR meetings undertaken last week, all of which were completely participative. He expressed the view that there was still a way to go in terms of engineering provision at Oddicraft; however, there is confidence that the team are 'getting there'.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

7 **STUDY PROGRAMMES AND ADULT LEARNING – 2019/20 YEAREND REPORT**

The vice principal: curriculum & quality drew the committee's attention to the written report and confirmed that there are both strengths and weaknesses, with the report summarising the mix. He indicated that a bespoke issue for study programmes is attendance, as it has declined.

VP C&Q

Sept. 2020

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Incentives offered during lockdown have helped and, therefore, the intention is to continue with these. It was confirmed that attendance at 86/87% is the norm; however, the college wants to be better than this and is looking to try to get to 90/91%.

He confirmed that the curriculum has been amended so that it is more active and interesting, and that this should then lead to more positive statistics regarding attendance and retention.

In relation to adult/community learning, there are 752 learners, with a large percentage making good progress. There were 41 ESOL-accredited learners, with 35 of these achieving.

A challenge from the committee was that Functional Skills maths and English still does not appear to be performing well. It was acknowledged that this is correct; however, it was explained that there are a number of appeals. That said, it was confirmed that this is still not good enough. He confirmed that data in relation to this will be presented at the next meeting and that, whilst small numbers, it is an area that is red RAG-rated.

VP C&Q

06.11.20

The committee asked whether the maths and English strategies available for discussion later in the meeting include all areas of cover. It was confirmed that they do cover both GCSE and Functional Skills. The vice principal indicated that staff stability is a key issue and that the quality of maths and English teachers is very important, as they are still very hard to find. He confirmed that delivery is now all through the new maths and English team, except A-Levels. He believes there is more that the A-Level maths and English teachers can do to support colleagues.

The committee then discussed the use of bksb and asked whether the college was making best use. The vice principal indicated that more could be done, particularly considering the fact that the college has two part-time posts to support this; however, it has not been particularly embraced by bksb staff. He expressed the view that bksb staff are very good in terms of the process but could learn more from practitioners in terms of learning.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

8 APPRENTICESHIP PERFORMANCE – 2019/20 YEAREND

The assistant principal: quality & standards introduced her detailed report. Key matters that she brought to the committee's attention included:

- Retention – there has been a slight decline; however, direct delivery may improve the position as there are 16 learners still awaiting end point assessments.
- Subcontracting activity is now down to the last 19 learners and,

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of these, 17 are just awaiting off the job training evidence.

- The retention position, without the historical issues, is more positive but is still showing a slight decline since the last report.
- End point assessments are positive, with a good pass rate and improvements in high grade achievement.
- Some reviews are still delayed but, in the main, this is due to annual leave over the summer months and also because assessors have no access to care homes.
- The position regarding off the job training remains the same, and table 7 explains what the college is doing to improve this. The next OneFile data date is Monday, therefore the hope and expectation is for things to improve further.
- Construction provision is an area of focus, with many actions identified to improve data capture.

In relation to the OneFile system, a member of the committee asked how easy it is to use. It was described as not overly complicated and the most significant issue is ensuring that learners tick the right box to say that they have had a review. Learner input on this is required, as the college will not simply rely on assessors confirming this has been done, and it often takes longer than envisaged to ensure learners have done this.

The committee took the opportunity to acknowledge the journey of improvement seen regarding apprenticeship provision. 38% of learners have not had a review for three months or more and, whilst not where the college wants it to be, the position several years ago was at the 58% mark. EPAs are positive across many areas, not just in focused areas, and there is some really good preparation given to students prior to the EPAs.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

9 **TLTA REPORT – 2020/21 PLAN**

The assistant principal: quality & standards introduced her detailed written report and confirmed that CPD is at the forefront of the TLA agenda; this can be seen from table 1, which shows the training sessions provided and the number of attendees. She confirmed that CPD has been offered at a level that has exceeded all prior years, with some really exceptional high-quality external speakers sourced, this again being an improvement on prior years.

The committee were advised that hybrid and online learning is still a focus and ILT skills for all staff need to be developed in particular. In terms of CPD generally, there is a really healthy level of staff engagement.

One further initiative that is showing positive results is the teaching and

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learning triangles which take place in smaller groups. In addition, the college has set up a TLA group which has some really good discussions and dialogue. The approach taken by the college is one of coaching, with an open door policy in place for staff to ask for support to improve where they think it would be helpful. At the next planned CPD day in October, there will be a carousel of staff who share best practice from their own areas.

A question from one member of the committee was where the college is in terms of sector comparisons regarding the investment made. The vice principal expressed the view that the college is ahead of most and is taking every opportunity that it can to learn from the best. It was explained that this is all part of the value process and the culture being developed where staff feel valued and supported. The aim is to really focus on the development of teaching as a craft.

The committee all agreed that staff engagement is the critical issue, and they were pleased that the college has been fortunate to secure this. It was explained that this is helped by the fact that staff see CPD as a supportive approach and can see the value.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

10 **SUBCONTRACTORS REPORT – 2019/20 YEAREND**

The assistant principal: quality & standards introduced this item and reminded the committee that the focus of subcontracted activity now is AEB. Key matters noted were:

- At period 13 (20th August 2020), the retention rate is 0.3% above the final retention rate last academic year. Pass rate is 2.9% below the final pass rate last year, and the achievement rate is 2.9% below the final achievement rate last year, although there are 216 continuing learners. At the time of preparing the reports, the pass and achievement rates were slightly above the most recent national weighted rates.
- The committee were advised that the position has been significantly impacted by one subcontractor and, should this data be removed, the college would very much be in line with where it finished last year.
- Subcontractors are struggling to re-engage some learners: for example, the Inspire & Achieve Foundation, which deals with the most hard to reach in any event.
- Subcontractors have continued with face to face delivery via technology wherever possible.
- Grade profile of observations declined, however this was mainly to do with staff getting used to new technology rather than the actual teaching itself.
- The Inspire & Achieve Foundation has very few continuing learners and the pass rate for them could improve, as they are

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awaiting a number of EV visits.

- Some subcontractors work in very bespoke areas and, in a number of cases, they have not been able to get learners back on site.

In general discussion, the committee discussed the Inspire & Achieve Foundation and acknowledged that what it does is really important and, in terms of targets, the college would want them to continue to be aspirational, albeit that they may not hit the targets set.

It was confirmed that, in 20/21, the college's QA arrangements will move to deep dives rather than observations, and this will allow the college to see the bigger/whole story. This is a key change in the approach taken by the college. It was confirmed that there would be a deep dive report to the next meeting.

AP Q&S

Nov. 2020

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

11 STUDENT NUMBERS 2020/21

The vice principal provided an update on enrolment and confirmed that:

- 16-18 numbers are at 3,127, which is 106% of target and 108% of the funding target.
- The college is above the 19+ target set.
- The college is at 35% of the HE target, which is a concern.
- Some college courses are now full, including animal care, and motor vehicle has a waiting list with no new applicants being accepted. It is anticipated that electrical and another couple of areas in construction will also be full.
- The college continues to receive 100 new applications per day, which is significantly more than usual; however, the committee was reminded that processes have been significantly changed this year. There are a high number of students with auto-enrolment, and the college will know the true position in relation to these in the next few weeks.
- Enrolment rates demonstrate community confidence in site safety, and there are very few students who have anxieties associated with COVID.
- The 19+ position is at 108% of target. There are more remitted fees and the college is slightly down in relation to loans.
- Access to HE is looking good.
- Apprenticeship provision is also looking good, and the committee was reminded that the college took a very prudent approach in terms of targets. That being said, it is likely that the college will hit the profile starts. The college has identified a need to be discerning with the employers that it engages with, to ensure that their focus is on the learner and not just a government cash initiative.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

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It was confirmed that the staff mood seems optimistic and positive. There are five members of staff at home with potential COVID symptoms, either personally or because of members of their family.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

12 RISK REPORT

The vice principal: curriculum & quality introduced this item and confirmed that there was little change from the previous report, and that there continues to be three areas of risk relevant to this committee on the register.

Key matters noted were:

- The rollout of the series of actions being conducted to ensure the curriculum embraces the ASPIRE principles will be monitored in September and early November. Evaluation of the curriculum will then inform the 20/21 cycle of 'seven steps', 4Cast planning, business improvement project group, curriculum planning, and business improvement project group: first 42 days.
- Quality improvement and assurance actions are being conducted to ensure that overall effectiveness and quality of the college's curriculum are good. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that teaching and learning secures positive impact on learner outcomes. Key to this is the offer of onsite and online blended learning taking place to meet CV19 guidance. This also includes a valued workforce, informed middle management team, pertinent and frequent CPD and training for teachers, the learner voice, governors' training on deep dives, performance monitoring reviews, team meetings at all levels that focus on impact on teaching, and a listening and responsive executive team. He confirmed that the college was starting to see evidence that the workforce feels valued and supported, and this is leading to a change in culture.

The committee were then asked to consider the English and maths strategies, and the vice principal explained that a significant focus is on expectations and entitlement. The college needs to ensure that there is absolute clarity regarding the starting point for all learners, and then to set stretching targets for each.

In terms of a process, the assessment points are key, together with a really qualified workforce, which is the aim. He confirmed that there are a range of actions currently being taken, and that staff survey results help to evidence the change and influence improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

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13 **HE UPDATE**

The vice principal introduced this item and drew governors' attention to the NSS survey results, but she explained that the survey does not contact all of the HE students enrolled at WNC.

In terms of the detailed report provided, key matters noted were:

- HE students have all now moved over to NTU.
- Section 3.3 provides detail following the QDP survey results; however, the committee was asked to note that this is a very small cohort and there was only a very small response rate.
- Section 4.1 confirms that OfS has changed the college's registration to a fee-capped institution, which means that the college is unable to charge above the fee cap rate of £6,165 for full-time programmes and £4,500 for part-time programmes.
- Section 6.2 provides some interesting information regarding national developments and, in particular, England's most selective universities pledging to halve the access gap in the next five years. To support this, they will start to engage with students in schools at year 10, continuing right the way through to year 13.

The committee asked for an update in terms of the staffing position. The vice principal advised that most of the staff who have been TUPE'd to NTU will actually be in centre at Derby Road, therefore there will continue to be familiar faces for continuing learners. She indicated that what NTU can invest in the centre is far more than the college could, therefore students will see an enhanced offer.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

14 **SAFEGUARDING, PREVENT AND E&D – EXCEPTIONS REPORT**

The vice principal introduced this item; key matters brought to the committee's attention were:

- Lockdown has impacted on the number of referrals, which are significantly reduced. Table 1 provides the data.
- In July, the college referred one potential student to the police Prevent team due to concerns. The necessary enquiries have been undertaken and, due to other factors, the applicant will now not be joining the college as a student in September 2020.
- The college had, at the end of the year, one open CSE case, which no longer requires support from the college as the student has left due to the end of the academic year, does not wish to return to college, and has moved out of the area. This year, there are currently four students on child protection plans and 16 on child in need plans.

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- In terms of the start of year arrangements, there has been a delay in receiving some transition information, which has impacted upon the college's ability to plan transition effectively. College planning has been hampered and was described as 'running to catch up'.
- There are 1,400 students already flagged on the at risk register at the end of week one. There are some anomalies in the self-declared data from students, therefore staff are undertaking a quality assessment of the data available.
- Health and care trust links need to progress further and more quickly.
- The college is seeing quite a few issues regarding home breakdowns during lockdown, with students being asked to move out of home.
- An update to Keeping Children Safe in Education has been issued and key changes include:
 - a) Mental health now features
 - b) Contextualised safeguarding
 - c) Child criminal exploitation
- The safeguarding development plan has now been finalised and really identifies what the college wants to focus on versus the 'business as usual'.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

15 LEARNER VOICE

The vice principal provided an update and confirmed:

- Exit survey is not yet ready to report on as the deadline was extended to improve the response rate; however, early indications are that there are pretty positive results across the board.
- Section 2.3 identifies the areas where the responses were in the lower quartiles and include a number of actions that the college will take, including:
 - a) The need for a more strategic approach regarding work placements. The focus will be on level 2 and level 3 learners (80% of the effort), and the lower levels will be offered internal experiences.
 - b) Absence management – the college should be up into the high 90% range and has therefore fundamentally changed the processes for 20/21. There will be an automated text service to parents regarding generic attendance and also, specifically, maths and English attendance.
 - c) The college needs to better promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Learner voice framework and learner voice calendar for 20/21 have been agreed and the college will work with the student ambassadors to support this.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

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AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

16 **AOB**

There were a number of items of additional business, including:

- Preparation for the next FE Commissioner stock-take visit. Governors indicated that they would find it useful to receive a short summary of improvements made since the last visit and, also, a roundtable pre-meeting so that any questions can be answered.
- The vice principal confirmed that the college is working on an early SAR and this should be available shortly.
- It was proposed that all governors would be invited to participate in the FEC visit, should they wish to.

The committee chair took the opportunity to thank all staff for preparing the reports available at the meeting today. She acknowledged that there was a real energy, which was pleasing to see.

17 **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Director of Governance confirmed that this is Friday 6th November 2020.

Meeting closed at 5.10pm.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

Date: 06/11/2020