

## Preston's College

### Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 5 March 2020 at 5:30 pm in the Boardroom, Preston's College

#### Present:

Ms L Hornsby            Chair  
Dr E Smith             Principal and Chief Executive  
Ms H Boulton         (Via Skype)  
Ms N Kirkbride  
Mr J McMullin  
Mr T Readett

#### In attendance:

Ms F Birtchet-Sharpe    Head of School, The School of Service Industries (until Minute 3)  
Ms J Melling             Interim Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning  
Mr M Noblett            Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning  
Mrs C Rayner            Clerk to the Board

#### Apologies:

Mr M Collard  
Mrs J Garcia  
Ms M Haworth            Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support  
Mr J Jepson

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. All members introduced themselves.

It was noted that apologies had been received from Mr Collard, Mrs Garcia, Ms Haworth and Mr Jepson.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

#### 3. Head of School Presentation

Ms Birtchet-Sharpe, Head of School - The School of Service Industries, gave a presentation on the work of the School of Service Industries, making reference to:

- learning pathways from L1 to L3 in Hairdressing; Beauty Therapy; Nail Technology; Early Years; Travel, Tourism and Events Management;
- provision was made up of 14-16; 16-18 and Adult learners studying a variety of pathways, which were specifically tailored towards designated careers within Service Industries;

- provision was delivered on College premises making use of Industry Standard resources, and in work placement settings;
- growth in learner numbers, particularly across Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy;
- performance tables including improvement in 16-18 study programme and apprenticeship achievement rates;
- a robust interview and selection process had improved retention rates;
- recent developments including a partnership with Ribby Hall Hotel and Spa, with level 3 Beauty Therapy students accessing bespoke training, apprenticeships and trade tests which could lead to future employment;
- the College had links with over thirty employers across the County, offering meaningful work placements to 60 L2 and L3 Child Care students;
- development of L1 Vocational Studies programmes to include specific career pathways in Health and Childcare and Hair and Beauty to promote learner progress and social mobility;
- educational visits to Blackpool, hosted by Merlin Entertainments, were used to enhance the learning experience for Tourism and Events students;
- future development opportunities for T-Level Pathways, advanced apprenticeship standards and World Skills UK;
- examples of case studies of activities within the School and positive feedback from employers.

The Committee discussed the presentation with Ms Birtchet-Sharpe, and in response to questions from members noted:

- potential growth areas for apprenticeships as events assistants and travel consultants;
- additional support for learners had yielded significant improvements with behaviour issues and attendance rates;
- changes in approach to learner induction had improve trust between staff and students allowed students;
- opportunities for students to participate in meaningful work experience and the benefits they provided;
- building business relationships with employers took time.

The Committee recorded thanks to Ms Birchet-Sharpe and her team in the School for Service Industries for their work.

#### **4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Committee noted that Mr Readett had been in attendance at the meeting on 21 November 2019 and the version of the minutes to be signed had been corrected. The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

**Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair.**

#### **5. Matters Arising**

The Committee discussed and noted the matters arising report.

##### **a) Minute 8 Corporate Self-Assessment Report**

Mr Noblett thanked members for submitting feedback on the quality of governance questions distributed after the previous meeting and reported that, where possible, the feedback had been incorporated into the Corporate Self Assessment Report.

##### **b) Minute 13 Student Governor and Student Council Update**

The Clerk reported that she had met with student governors in advance of the meeting to discuss the papers and had progressed questions raised by student governors at the meeting with the Executive Leadership Team. She reported that she would continue to offer to meet with student governors in advance of meetings. It was noted that whilst Ms Garcia had not been able to join the meeting on this occasion due to work commitments, she planned to join future meetings with student governors.

The Clerk distributed copies of a draft glossary of FE terms and acronyms which had been requested at the last meeting. She asked members to review and provide feedback on the draft. It was noted that the final version would be made available for all governors on the Governors' Portal. The Chair highlighted the importance of members asking for unfamiliar acronyms and FE terms to be explained during meetings as this would enhance discussions.

In response to a query on the Gatsby Benchmarks it was agreed to invite Ms Ireland, Head of Curriculum, to present an update at a future meeting. In the interim, members noted that Ms Ireland had presented an overview of the introduction of Gatsby Benchmarks at the meeting on 13 June 2019 and the report was available on the Governors' Portal.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the matters arising report.**

##### **Actions:**

- **Members to provide feedback on the draft glossary of FE terms and acronyms.**
- **To include Gatsby Benchmarks on the agenda of the next meeting.**

#### **6. Performance Outcomes and KPIs**

Mr Noblett, Vice Principal Curriculum Delivery and Planning, presented a report on Performance Outcomes and KPIs, making reference to:

- monitoring of Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) targets in line with the 5 Year Strategic Plan, and the associated milestones for 2019/20 which were aligned to the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and the Quality Code for Higher Education;
- in year retention rate was strong for all classroom based provision;
- the College's approach to teaching, learning and assessment;
- whilst improving attendance remained a key priority for the College, attendance remained in line with national average at 86%, with particular areas of focus level 1, 16-18 provision;
- the College had changed its approach to learner attendance and now took into account that an individual learner's attendance rate, whilst still under national average and the College's targets, might have significantly improved from their school attendance;
- increased Continuous Professional Development support for staff;
- increasing the capability and capacity of Heads of Schools in line with the approach of the new Education Inspection Framework;
- the KPIs for Curriculum Quality and 'red' rated risks.

During discussion of the report members commented:

- Ofsted and Office for Students (OfS) were looking for examples of outstanding practice;
- the government's classification of Special Education Needs Support (SEND) Support (K).
- teaching approach could be aligned with the College's PGCE Certificate of Education course. Members noted that this was in progress and an update would be provided.

The Committee discussed the report with management and in response to queries noted:

- messages regarding the importance of consistent attendance were communicated to all students, however the approach now varied for different cohorts of students as management recognised that an individual learner's attendance rate was a significant improvement for that learner;
- initiatives to improve attendance of 16-18 year old students, particularly for maths and English;
- transitional information from schools would be useful, particularly for SEND learners. However, this was not currently shared with colleges. College management continued to lobby education bodies in Lancashire to enable sharing of historic student attendance data and other useful data between schools and colleges;
- following a request from student governors, apprenticeship attendance data would be included as a KPI going forward;

- the College's shift in approach to teaching, learning and assessment;
- efforts to streamline lesson planning administration to allow staff more time to develop creative and innovative teaching resources. This approach would also align with the new EIF;
- more information would be provided to the Committee on the varying requirements of Looked After Children and support provided by the College to bridge the attainment gap;
- more information would be provided at the next meeting on how the College's strategies which impacted on KPIs.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the performance and progress against Quality KPIs targets 19/20 to date.**

**Actions: To include Apprenticeship attendance data as a KPIs;  
To provide the Committee with more information on:**

- **College strategies which impacted on KPIs;**
- **alignment of the teaching approach with the College's PGCE Certificate of Education teaching;**
- **the definition of a Looked After Child and the College's action plan for addressing the varying needs of Looked After Children.**

## **7. Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan**

The Principal and Chief Executive, Ms Melling, Interim Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning and Mr Noblett, Vice Principal Curriculum Delivery and Planning, presented a report on Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) making reference to:

- actions from the Post Inspection Action Plan had been incorporated into the Quality Improvement Plan;
- as part of the new EIF, inspectors started with a top-level view of the school's curriculum, followed by 'deep dives' and review of evidence with a greater emphasis on how teaching was delivered;
- many aspects of the QIP had been discussed by management during the report on performance against KPIs;
- a further report on the impact of the QIP would be provided at the next meeting.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan report.**

## **8. Curriculum Development and Planning Update 2020/21**

Mr Noblett presented his report on Curriculum Development and Planning 2020/21, making reference to:

- the Board's strategic planning meeting on 31 January 2020 had provided governors with an update on curriculum development at the College and an opportunity to meet with Heads of Schools;
- a gap analysis of the current curriculum and pathways had been undertaken and development of new pathways, such as Access to HE Construction, would be considered during Business Planning;
- there had been a significant increase in the number of College applications and interviews held. However, not all applicants joined the College;
- implementation of T-Levels at the College and impact on other qualifications which were currently embedded in the College's curriculum pathways;
- the College might be able to access to FE capital funds for its implementation of T-Levels;
- a summary of the opportunities and risks related to curriculum development provided at Appendix A.

The Committee discussed the report with management and in response to queries noted:

- key areas of growth in applications was in construction and STEM;
- the Executive Leadership Team would consider the future resource implications of a potential increase in learners;
- management welcomed feedback from student governors on how the College's IT provision supported its curriculum;
- further information would be provided to the Committee on T-Level qualifications as implementation plans developed;
- a report would be provided at the next meeting following a review of compliance with new ESFA guidance relating to sub-contracting and effective management of partnerships.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the update on Curriculum Development and Planning 2020/21.**

**Action: To provide the Committee with a report of the review of sub-contracting and the effective management of partnerships.**

## **9. Student Council and Learner Voice Update**

Mr Noblett presented an update report on Student Council and Learner Voice, making reference to:

- an update on the activities of the Student Council which was chaired by Niamh Kirkbride, student governor (16-18),
- topics explored in Learner Voice sessions for 2019-20 to date included: the College Induction programme, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Health, Wellbeing and What's going well and What could be improved?';

- Learner Voice feedback to management following the Learner Voice meetings held in November 2019.

Niamh Kirkbride, student governor (16-18), provided an update on recent Student Council activities, making reference to:

- the Council planned to place student feedback boxes around College;
- planned fundraising activities;
- proposals to establish a permanent informal workplace for the Student Council.

The Committee discussed the Learner Voice feedback with management and noted:

- importance of staff consistently ensuring students adhered to the College's standards for class room behaviours;
- recognition that the College had involvement in many different environmental initiatives and these should be collated and communicated more widely for greater impact;
- feedback from a student governor on the importance of ensuring at the outset that the required software was available on college computers; members noted that the matter referred to had been rectified;
- a suggestion from the student governor (adult) that the canteen could open from 5pm – 6pm for learners attending evening sessions at the College.

Members suggested it would be advantageous for the Committee to have more opportunities to engage with learners.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Student Governor and Student Council Update.**

**Actions: The Clerk to review if opportunities for governors to meet with learners could be included in the future work programme of the Quality and Standards Committee.**

**Management to review feedback from student governors.**

#### **10. Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy Review Curriculum Development & Planning 2019/20**

The Clerk reported that College policies were reviewed on a rolling cycle and referred to the proposed changes to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy at Appendix A.

The Committee approved the proposed changes to the SEND Policy.

**Resolved: The Committee approved the proposed changes to SEND Policy.**

#### **11. Review of Quality and Standards Terms of Reference**

The Clerk outlined proposed changes to the Resources Committee Terms of Reference which the Search and Governance Committee would propose to the Board, making reference to changes to:

- the process for approving decisions in writing between meetings;
- policy review and approval process.

The Clerk referred to the necessity to strengthen Board and committee oversight of HE in light of OfS conditions of funding. She outlined the proposal to discontinue the HE Sub-Committee and for the Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference to include oversight of HE Quality and Standards. She explained that an additional meeting Quality and Standards would be held in the autumn term to facilitate this. She explained that the other committees of the Board would have oversight of the appropriate OfS conditions e.g. the Audit Committee to review the HE risk register, the Resources Committee to review HE fees/charges, funding incomes, student protection and sustainability and the Search and Governance Committee to consider HE related governance matters.

The Clerk explained that the Committee could also suggest further changes to the Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference.

The Committee discussed the proposed changes to Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference and agreed the proposed approach should strength Board oversight of HE and ensure that HE matters were not discussed in a silo. In response to a query regarding how the Board would ensure it retained overall oversight of HE matters discussed at committee level it was noted that the Board would receive biannual reports on HE performance, strategy and compliance with OfS conditions and would also continue to receive minutes of all committee meetings.

The Committee noted the proposed changes to the Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the proposed changes to the Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference.**

## **12. Date of next meeting**

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee was scheduled to take place on 25 June 2020.