

## **Preston College**

### **Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 at 5.30 pm, Boardroom**

#### **Present:**

Mr Martin Collard	Chair
Mrs Louise Doswell	Principal and Chief Executive
Mrs Janine Garcia	(Zoom)
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	
Mrs Laura Mason	
Mrs Lynda Mason	
Miss Maty Geuye Seck	From Minute 6

#### **Apologies:**

Mrs Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Nevan Hunter	
Miss Jessica Hopwood	

#### **In attendance:**

Mrs Vivian Caparros	Head of School Skills Development, ESOL & Community (until Minute 2)
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mrs Lyndsey Roe	Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning
Mrs Tina Southworth	Designated Safeguarding & Prevent Lead (from Minute 6 to Minute 9)

#### **1. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Committee noted that apologies had been received from Mrs Haworth, Mr Hunter and Miss Hopwood.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Laura Mason to her first meeting and welcomed Mrs Caparros to the meeting.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

#### **2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Learner Review**

Mrs Caparros, presented her Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Learner Review report making reference to:

- the revised EDI corporate objectives approved by the Board in 2021;
- the establishment of a Cross College EDI Working Group and the work of the group to date including: revising and updating the College's Equality Statement to include the Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement (Fredie) principles and the College's adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) statement, reviewing mandatory EDI staff training and the introduction of gender neutral toilets alongside male and female toilets.

Mrs Caparros referred to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learner Review 2020/21, at Appendix A, and highlighted:

- that when comparing 16-18, adult (Higher Education) and apprenticeships the achievement rates for apprenticeships were lower than those of classroom learners. Mrs Caparros explained that apprenticeships had been more greatly affected by the pandemic;
- that there were a high number of different nationalities of learners at the College;
- that the ethnicity achievement gap had closed and was above national benchmarks, with the exception of gypsy/Irish Traveller and, whilst this was a small demographic of learners at the College, closing the achievement gap in this area was a focus for 2021/22;
- that in 2020/21 the College recruited broadly equal numbers of male and female learners and the achievement rates of both genders were similar and above national benchmarks;
- that learners with learning difficulties were given additional support and achieved equally with other learners;
- that the College recruited a significant proportion of learners from the most deprived socio economic wards and achievement for all learners was equitable across all areas. In addition, those learners living in the most deprived wards achieved significantly above national averages;
- that the support provided to High Needs learners as functional skills had been discontinued pending review and learners were now working towards GCSE qualifications. Mrs Caparros reported that many learners were developing their Maths and English, whilst not yet achieving GCSE grades;
- the summary of progress to date and areas for continuing improvement.

The Committee noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learner Review 2020/21 and commented positively on the report and the work of the College's staff and learners. In particular, a member commented that it was important to record that the achievement of the College's staff and learners should be viewed in the context of the significant diversity and socio-economic demographic of Preston. Members discussed how the closing of achievement gaps at the College despite challenges was an important "levelling up" narrative.

In response to a query on performance by gender, and whether there was consistent achievement across the different College schools, management explained that the gender breakdown of learners varied by course, for example construction learners were much more likely to be male and hair and beauty and dance learners were much more likely to be female. Notwithstanding, it was noted that work was ongoing to challenge gender stereotypes as part of the College's Access to Participation Plan.

The Committee discussed the differing academic background of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners and the diversity of this cohort of learners. Mrs Caparros reported on the College's initiatives to encourage more learners from ethnic minority groups to join apprenticeships, including sharing case studies with ESOL learners. It was noted that less diversity in apprenticeships remained a sector issue.

The Committee noted the destination data provided and noted that more detailed EDI destination data was also being prepared.

Mrs Caparros and management responded to queries on:

- progress of High Needs Learners completing apprenticeships. Mrs Caparros referred to a joint project with Lancashire County Council, which involved nine High Needs Learners completing a supported internship, following which all learners had secured employment. Mrs Caparros undertook to share with governors a EDI presentation produced by internships learners;
- whether there were sufficient College staff to support Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) learners. It was noted that provision had been reviewed during Business Planning to ensure the right resources were allocated in the right areas to provide appropriate wrap around support and support learners' mental health, for example pastoral support was not always appropriate for Adult learners;
- a suggestion that it would be helpful for staff and SEND support staff to collaborate more closely together to support learners. Mr Noblett confirmed that this was in train and would continue to develop as part of the new extended learner induction programme. It was noted that the anticipated Covid response funding could help progress this work.

In response to queries from members, Mrs Caparros undertook to provide further details of:

- the progress of high needs learners on apprenticeship programmes;
- the gender achievement rates for Maths and English. Members requested data from Grade 4 passes and above.

The Chair thanked Mrs Caparros for her report and attending the meeting.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Learner Review.**

**Actions: Mrs Caparros to provide details on:**

- the progress of high needs learners on apprenticeship programmes;
- the gender achievement in Maths and English. Members requested data from Grade 4 passes and above.

*Mrs Caparros left the meeting.*

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

No declaration of interest were made.

### **4. Minutes of the Meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were approved.**

### **5. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the matters arising report.

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

The Chair explained that, as discussed at the previous meeting, to enable more time for questions and debate, presenters should assume that the Committee had read all the reports and only key items should be highlighted before the Committee's discussion.

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

Mr Noblett, Vice Principal Curriculum, Delivery and Planning, presented a report on Performance against KPIs. Mr Noblett reported:

- on the Board's objective of having greater oversight of the College's Quality and Standards work;
- that despite the College's withdrawal from faith schools, 16 – 18 recruitment numbers were ahead of the same point in 2020/21 and an enhanced learner engagement programme was in place to support the increased numbers;
- that due to increased 16-18 recruitment in 2021/22, the College had benefited from in year funding for 2021/22 and College income would increase in 2022/23;
- on the challenges for tutor recruitment in the construction department as the construction sector itself was buoyant;
- on the reasons why the numbers of Visual Performing Arts learners had decreased, primarily due to the removal of the residential allowance;
- on the importance of continually reviewing the College's adult offer and the national drivers;
- the country's recovery as it moved into the Living with Covid stage;
- that management were maintaining a watching brief on adult numbers;
- on a national government campaign to encourage people to consider Further Education opportunities.

Management responded to questions from members including:

- a question on whether the College could recruit school leavers for apprenticeships in July and whether the College could engage with training providers who could support this. Mr Noblett responded that, whilst some apprenticeships did start over the summer, there were logistical difficulties with July apprenticeship recruitment, including quality risks as this was traditionally the time of year when staff took their summer leave and many learners also went on a final family holiday after leaving school. The Principal and Chief Executive explained that many sectors also closed during this period. However, more 16 year olds were joining apprenticeships and the demographic was changing and the increased number of Higher Apprentices would be covered as part of the HE update;

- a question on whether learner attendance had improved. Members noted that there had been improvements in 16- 18 learner attendance in the New Year. However, adult attendance had only marginally improved. The Committee noted the additional pressures on adult learners, for example their employers might not release them for study if the business was short staffed or they were more likely to have caring responsibilities. The Committee noted the implementation of action plans and support plans to continue to improve learner attendance across College. Following a query, members noted that, due to the impact of Omicron variant on attendance, it was difficult to compare attendance with the previous four weeks;
- a question on whether management had considered increasing the learner attendance targets. Members discussed with management the targets set for attendance and the advantages and disadvantages of setting higher attendance levels;
- a question on apprenticeship retention and outcomes. It was noted that retention was not expected to significantly improve in 2021/22 due to a number of withdrawals to date, many of which were out of the control of apprentices. It was noted that this was a sector issue and the College's achievement rates were performing comparably with other colleges nationally;
- a question on whether the College could mitigate against the impact of Covid. Members noted that this had been difficult and depended on the sector. Mr Noblett confirmed that the data could be adjusted to demonstrate the impact of Covid if required;
- a question on whether learners that had left apprenticeships due to Covid impact could be contacted and encouraged to return to study. It was noted that the College former learners were contacted;
- a question on destination data. Members noted the difficulties with collating destination data from all learners, particularly as the College recorded actual destinations rather than intended destinations in order to provide more accurate figures.

Members thanked management for the report and agreed that the quality key performance Indicators for 2021/22 were positive.

**Resolved: The Committee is asked to note the report on Performance Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators.**

## **7. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update**

Mrs Roe, Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning, presented the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update. She reported:

- on how the College had managed staff and learner absence due to Covid since January. It was noted that, whilst the College no longer operated a formal blended approach, some learners had continued to join lessons remotely;
- on the introduction of an extended six week induction at the start of the 2021 academic year which had allowed staff to get to know learners better;

- on examples of outstanding engagement of learners which had been observed during learning walks, for example Automotive learners were using 3D scanning to develop component parts and examples of excellent barbering teaching provision where barbering students accessing the science labs to create their own soap. Mrs Roe undertook to share a video with governors and other learners;
- on the continued roll out of T Levels at the College. It was noted that the latest round of T Level learning walks had been postponed due to staff absence.

The Committee discussed the report with management. Members highlighted the importance of conducting deep dives and sharing best practice across College Schools and asked for an update on the College's approach. Mrs Roe referred to ongoing initiatives and explained that it was considered best practice for learning walks to be supportive two way professional discussions rather than formal reviews and this was how learning walks at the College were conducted. Mrs Roe explained that a collaborative approach was particularly important in light of the pressures staff had faced due to Covid. Members agreed that this was an appropriate approach and suggested it would be helpful to share case studies with staff and governors which captured the impact of teaching and learning at the College.

A member referred to discussion at the last meeting on reduced staff engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities in the first term and the importance of staff CPD as the College continued its progress towards outstanding. The member queried if staff were engaged in the Education Training Foundation (ETF) mentoring programme. Management confirmed that two staff were currently part of the ETF programme and shared best practice with other staff. Members agreed it would be helpful to hear more case stories of the impact of CPD.

The Committee commented positively on the content of the report.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update.**

**Action: Management to share more case stories with the Committee going forward.**

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

Mrs Roe presented the report on Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). She reported:

- management regularly reviewed progress against the QIP and the key focus of the QIP was moving the College towards outstanding;
- tutors needed time to adjust to teaching on campus before the re-introduction of all the College quality processes and before further CPD was rolled out. Since January staff were engaging more frequently with the TLA hub;
- the timing of ongoing CPD sessions had been reviewed to ensure it was accessible to staff and a CPD day had been arranged for all academic and business support staff in March;
- focus on improving attendance at maths and English classes and the potential for link tutors to be introduced in the next academic year;

- support provided in maths and English classes for learners and support provided outside of class where this was more appropriate.

A member queried whether the attendance targets for maths and English were challenging enough and his experience of the benefits of setting higher aspiration targets. Members discussed with management the targets set and the advantages and disadvantages on increasing attendance targets. Management were of the view that for some learners, with a low baseline starting attendance, significant progress might have been made without achieving attendance targets and that ensuring incremental attendance growth was more important. It was noted that internal attendance targets were not shared with learners. Members and management agreed that it would be useful to continue to revisit this debate at future meetings.

Members agreed the information provided in the QIP greatly assisted governors when reviewing progress to date. On behalf the Committee, the Chair acknowledged the considerable efforts of staff in teaching and supporting learners during the many challenges of the pandemic.

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

## 9. Policy Review and Approval

Mrs Southworth, Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead, introduced the revised Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy at Appendix A. She reported:

- that Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) had been updated in September 2021;
- that a new Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy had been produced based on the template from Lancashire County Council and in line with the changes to KCSIE;
- on the changes made including: a new section on sexual violence, peer on peer abuse, contextual safeguarding and the role of the Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Link Governor.

Mrs Southworth referred members to the Prevent Action Plan at Appendix B.

Mrs Lynda Mason, the Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Link Governor, suggested including reference to abuse related to a person's sex/gender and the increase in online hate toward females known as 'Incel' culture. Members and management discussed these issues. The Committee agreed that short references should be added to the draft policy.

Subject to the amendments agreed, the Committee noted and approved the new Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy for recommendation to the Board.

It was noted that the Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent policy was reviewed annually and the front page of the policy would be updated to reflect the Committee's review.

Mr Noblett referred to the existing SEND Policy which was scheduled for review. He reported that the Department for Education (DfE) were reviewing the current SEND reforms following an eighteen month delay and this review would inform the College's SEND policy and procedures. He explained that for this reason it was proposed that the existing policy be extended until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The Quality and

Standards Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the extension of the current SEND policy until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

**Resolved: The Committee noted Prevent Action Plan and:**

- approved the Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy for recommendation to the Board, subject to the amendments agreed.
- agreed to recommend to the Board the extension of the current SEND policy until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

**Action: Ms Southworth to revise the draft Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy to include reference to safeguarding risk of abuse related to a person's sex/gender and reference to safeguarding risk related to the increase in online hate which had stemmed from 'Incel' culture.**

*Tina Southworth left the meeting.*

## **10. Curriculum Planning 2022/23**

Mr Noblett presented his Curriculum Planning Report 2022/23. He referred members to:

- an update in the report on the progress of the Strategic Development Fund; National Skills Fund and Institute of Technology;
- the implementation of T Levels at the College;
- subject to the passing of the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, the Board would have a new statutory duty to review provision in relation to local needs. Mr Noblett referred to the DfE's draft publication: *Review how well the education or training provided meets local needs: Statutory guidance for further education colleges, sixth form colleges and designated institutions*, at Appendix A, which set out the purpose and guidance relating to this change, reinforcing that college curriculums should be subject to review once every three years as a minimum. The Committee noted that a governance framework would be introduced which provided enough time and scope for the required test, challenge and reporting.

The Principal and Chief Executive provided an update on the Strategic Development Fund project which was already on going and was a good fit with the government's green agenda.

The Committee noted the Curriculum Planning report 2022/23.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Curriculum Planning Report 2022/23.**

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

Mr Noblett presented the Learner Voice and Student Council Update which provided a summary of Learner Voice feedback to date for 2021/22.

Miss Gueye Seck, Student Governor and Chair of the Student Council, reported on the feedback the Student Council had provided to management, including requests for more healthier and vegan options in the canteen. Miss Geuye Seck reported that the cost of food at the canteen was also raised, particularly by Year 11 learners. Management undertook to check as many Year 11 learners received free meals.



Miss Gueye Seck reported that the Student Council were considering which charities to support with student fundraising and noted a suggestion to also include fundraising for Ukraine. Mr Noblett asked Miss Gueye Seck to contact management or their Student Manager if any support was required.

Mr Noblett referred to the approach to Learner Voice now all learners were back on campus, with a mixture of seeking feedback from face to face sessions and online questionnaires to provide both qualitative and quantitative data. He referred members to:

- the Learner Voice Update which had been provided to the Board in January 2022 at Appendix A;
- the *You Said We Did* report at Appendix B.

A member highlighted that Ofsted were now focused on how much learners were learning and progressing rather than how engaged learners were and suggested it could be helpful to review the Learner Voice questions in light of this. Mr Noblett thanked the member for this helpful feedback. Members noted that the focus had initially been on engagement as learners attended College after a period of remote learning.

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

## **12. Higher Education Update**

The Principal and Chief Executive presented the Higher Education Update. The Principal and Chief Executive reported on:

- that the College had started to draft its response to the Office for Students (OfS) consultation on a new set of Quality measures which would include assessing all Level 4 and above provision and Higher Apprenticeship programmes and the potential impact on the College's threshold due to relatively low numbers;
- the College continued to 'teach out' continuing University of Derby learners;
- in commemoration of 30 years of partnership activity, the University of Central Lancashire and Preston College would plant a tree on both sites;
- the proposal to extend the Access and Participation Statement for 2022/23. It was noted that the current version, at Appendix A, had been formatted in the new College brand and some proposed minor amendments were shown in track changes.

Following a request, the Principal and Chief Executive agreed to include actual learner numbers alongside percentages for future reports on HE in year retention.

The Committee noted the Higher Education Update and approved the Access and Participation Statement for recommendation to the Board.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Higher Education Update and approved the Access and Participation 2022/23 for recommendation to the Board.**

**Action: To add actual learner numbers alongside percentages for future HE reports on in year retention.**

### **13. Ofsted Presentation**

The Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the Ofsted Presentation at Appendix A. She explained this presentation was an extended version of the presentation delivered to the Board on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and had been shared with the Board and the Committee for information.

Management and the Committee discussed the presentation and agreed it provided a very useful summary of College's progress since the last Ofsted inspection and the key matters governors should be aware of and asking questions about. It was noted that management were compiling responses to the key questions outlined in the report.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the extended Ofsted presentation.**

**Action: Management to produce a report on the key questions outlined in the report.**

### **14. Internal Audit Planning 2021/22**

The Clerk referred members to the Internal Audit Plan report and plans for internal audits from 2021/22 onwards. She referred to the request from the Audit Committee for all committees to review the Audit Needs Assessment (ANA) produced by Wylie and Bisset, the College's new auditors, and provide any feedback from the perspective of their committee.

The Principal and Chief Executive highlighted that the report included a list of internal audits completed in the last two years to assist committees with their review.

The Committee suggested that although a Safeguarding and Prevent internal audit had been completed in 2021, it would be helpful to repeat this in the latter stages of the 2021/22 – 2023/24 audit plan.

The Committee noted the Internal Audit Plan report and the ANA.

The Committee requested a copy of the internal audit of the Student Experience when it was completed.

**Resolved: Members noted the Internal Audit Plan report and the ANA and suggested that a Safeguarding and Prevent internal audit had been completed in 2021, it would be helpful to repeat this in the latter stages of the 2021/22 – 2023/24 audit plan.**

**Action: The Clerk to share the internal audit of the Student Experience once this audit was completed and considered by the Audit Committee.**

### **15. Date of next meeting**

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee would take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.