

Tuesday 26th September 2017, 5.30pm

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Mr C Garvey, Co-Chair, Foundation Governor
Ms P Rowe, Co-Chair, Co-opted Governor
Mrs S Flannery, Principal
Mr G Thompson, Associate Principal, Curriculum & Quality
Fr G O'Shaughnessy, Foundation Governor
Ms C Ezekwe, Foundation Governor
Mr R Vianello, Foundation Governor (from 5.40pm)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs E Lewis, Clerk to the Governors

The agenda had been circulated to all members of the governing body. All governors with the exception staff and student governors had been invited to attend the meeting.

Mr Garvey was in the Chair and opened the meeting at 5.30pm. It was quorate throughout.

1. **Opening Prayer:** Mrs Flannery prayed a Franciscan Blessing.
2. **Apologies:** Had been received from Ms S Jones
3. **Declarations of Interests:** there were none
4. **Minutes of previous meeting, 6th June 2017:** Had been circulated on 28th June 2017 and included in the papers for this meeting. An amendment proposed by Mrs Flannery was agreed to page 1, para 5.1 so that the fourth sentence would read "The HMI may return for a final visit in the autumn term....." With this change made by hand to the signing copy, the minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were duly signed by Mr Garvey.
 - 4.1. **Matters Arising:** there were none that were not included on the agenda for this meeting or addressed by actions to be reviewed, item 4.2.
 - 4.2. **Actions to be reviewed:**
 - 4.2.1. **Governance Group within London Sixth Form Partnership:** A governor liaison group had been introduced in the programme of meetings for 2017 – 18 with a first meeting scheduled for Tuesday 10th October 2017.
 - 4.2.2. **Focus group with students:** Would be taken forward once the new student body had settled. **ACTION: Mrs Flannery**
 - 4.2.3. **Review of published arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the preservation and development of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities" [Article 5 (2) (b)]:** A selection of examples published by other colleges had been included in the papers for the meeting. **ACTION: It was agreed that Mrs Flannery and Mr Thompson would re-draft the existing statement for the committee to review at the next meeting.**
5. **Quality Improvement and Outcomes [1 QUALITY]:**



- 5.1. **Results 16/17:** A booklet, *Results – GCE 2017* reporting provisional outcomes subject by subject colour coded to show the position against “All England” 2017 benchmarks had been shared with all governors by email and included in the papers for the meeting. The report was used as the basis for discussion along with a supporting *Observations – Provisional Results 2017* report which headlined the results and offered a commentary summarising where improvement and weaknesses lay with a responsive action plan.

Mr Garvey asked Mrs Flannery and Mr Thompson to highlight where their particular concerns were and how they would be addressed. Mrs Flannery explained why she had used the JCQ all England benchmarks and confirmed the definitions of the RAG¹ ratings in the report. She noted where there had been reform or a change of exam board and what the impact had been on outcomes. Mrs Flannery commented on the performance of each subject and outlined strategies for improvement where outcomes were below benchmarks or the number of high grades was disappointing.

GCE A Level Exam Results:

Pass grades A to E were 93.84% compared with the benchmark of 97.9%. Ms Rowe was concerned that, whilst A* grades had increased by 0.42%, overall the percentage of students who had not achieved A to C grade passes was too high. Mr Thompson explained how students were encouraged to aspire to the highest grades - the success of this would be shown by analysis at subject level of the Value-added data once that was published. He advised that where results were below expected level this would have an impact on value added scores. Mr Thompson predicted, based on algorithms from previous years, that a small improvement value-added might be seen in A Level but greater on vocational value added.

Mrs Flannery said there would be a focus on achieving higher grades in A Level sciences and improving outcomes in A Level Psychology and A Level Politics.

Mr Garvey observed that all teachers had worked hard. He asked Mr Thompson to describe the process of discussing the detail of exam outcomes with a head of department. Mr Thompson explained that if the results were poor, the discussion would be with Mrs Flannery or himself. Otherwise it would be a conversation between the head of department and his / her head of faculty (faculty was formerly known as school) of which there were now four since the structure had been revised.

Mr Garvey sought assurance that the conversations were sufficiently challenging and systematic – not “cosy chats”. Mr Thompson explained that he, in turn, held weekly meetings with the Heads of Faculty at which he would follow up and challenge the subject level reviews. Self-assessment of 2016 – 17 was underway demanding course level scrutiny of outcomes and identification and evaluation of improvement plans.

Additionally, managers were using enhanced exam analysis to analyse student performance question by question in the examinations and then focus teaching and practice accordingly. Mrs Flannery showed examples of how data could be interrogated using the *Results Plus* tool.

GCE AS Exam Results:

Mrs Flannery explained that subjects with fewer than five entries had not been RAG rated to avoid distortion. She reviewed the changes to the AS qualifications and defined which types of student would have elected to take an AS. Fast track courses had been discontinued. The committee reviewed results subject by subject, noting the overall reduction in entries which had been as expected with the move to linear. Pleasing outcomes in EPQ and Further Maths were noted. Maths had improved but was below benchmark. Mr Garvey noted that overall the college AS pass rate of 84.64% (benchmark 89.3%) had improved by 3% on the previous year and moved closer to the benchmark – with far fewer entries.

General Applied Results for Summer 2017:

Mrs Flannery commented that overall the results had been pleasing.

Level 1 had achieved a 91% pass rate (possible outcomes were pass or fail). All students had

¹ Red = more than 5% below benchmark; Amber = below benchmark; Green = on or above benchmark



successfully achieved PSD² qualifications. Mrs Flannery announced enhancements for the current year to the already cohesive programme to increase interest.

Level 2 programmes had included external tests which Mrs Flannery explained had held back achievement. The effect of this was an obliteration of Starred Distinctions and Distinctions in the outcomes. Mrs Flannery reviewed the results of the three one year programmes noting particular success in Health and Social Care which had achieved 55% Merit awards. The target for level 2 programmes would be to improve test outcomes.

Level 3 Mrs Flannery reported strong outcomes of 96% pass rate overall (63% passes at Distinction / starred distinction). Raw indicators in all courses were improved with the exception of Health and Social Care. She reflected on outcomes on individual courses. The Engineering diploma had achieved a pleasing outcome in its first year.

Ms Rowe asked why there were 14 students with no grade outcome. Mrs Flannery explained that this was because they had not submitted all the units to complete the award. She emphasised the effort that staff put in to encourage completion and the size of the cohort.

GCSE ENGLISH & MATHS RE-SITS 2016 / 17 – BEST GRADE OF NOVEMBER & JUNE SESSIONS: – Mrs Flannery confirmed that the students had taken legacy GCSE exams. She reported improvement in the provisional A to C pass rates for both English (37.25%) and Maths (22.5%). English results were up 4.15% exceeding benchmark by 13.44%; Maths was up by 2% at variance with the benchmark by -0.4%. Mrs Flannery noted that the new numeric grading of GCSEs had unexpectedly achieved higher pass rates than legacy by a significant differential. She confirmed that the 4.5 was the equivalent of a C grade. This year the pass grade had been 4 and above but this may be reviewed up to 5 next year.

The committee interrogated the observations made by Mrs Flannery on the increase in U grades at A level.

- 5.2. **Progress against Post Inspection Action Plan (inc QUIP):** Mr Thompson introduced the *Impact Assessment of Post-Ofsted Action Plan (Sept 2017 Update)*. Progress towards priorities and impact had been updated with the summer 2017 exam results.

Mr Thompson reviewed the subjects which had been under scrutiny highlighting where improvement had been achieved and reviewing where strategy had not been successful. He described the impact on areas where undergraduate support had been invested and summarised that one to one work had been the most successful. Future use of undergraduates would be directed based on tested successful strategies.

Mrs Thompson announced that VESPA³ a college-wide growth mindset programme had been launched. Mr Thompson explained how it was hoped that attendance, punctuality and achievement would improve as a result of embedding the VESPA culture across the tutorial programme. It aimed to encourage awareness and aspiration amongst students.

He reported teachers had gained confidence in the setting of smarter targets and more understanding of the hurdles students face in achieving them.

Ms Ezekwe asked how the benefits of VESPA would be assessed at milestone points. Mr Thompson explained that this would be seen through the impact on attendance; meeting of deadlines and evidence of dialogue between students and teachers with regard to target setting and diagnostic analysis of progress towards targets.

Ms Ezekwe referred to the VESPA day which had been held on the day of this meeting and asked if there was any sense yet of how it had gone. Mr Thompson said the College had been busy and purposeful. Mrs Flannery explained a reward system that was also being attached to the programme.

² Personal and Social Development

³ Vision, Effort, Systems, Process Attitude



Fr O'Shaughnessy commended the engagement with students under the pastoral system of personal tutors.

- 5.3. **Support and Challenge:** The HMI may visit the college this term – he would be waiting to assess the exam results and how the timetable settles down. Mrs Flannery confirmed that, regardless, Ofsted could announce the re-inspection at any time. Inspections had recommenced the previous week.
- 5.4. **New Timetable:** Mr Thompson confirmed that the new timetable (included in the papers) had been launched and had introduced a significant change. He explained that macro lessons – the key feature of the new timetable – would facilitate more in-depth teaching and independence of learning for students. Students would have less “trapped” time in their schedules and would be kept busy for concentrated periods then have some time off in the week. He reported that aspect was working positively so far and that the college appeared calmer. The committee discussed the impact on energy and tiredness for students and staff. Mr Garvey commented that absentees missing a macro lesson might find it harder to catch up. Mr Thompson replied that this would be analysed and monitored for impact on learning. It would be expected that the students would use the opportunity provided by the chunks of free time to catch up and the resources would be on the VLE to support them. Mrs Flannery cautioned that it may be more expensive in terms of agency fees because teacher absence would have to be covered.
- 5.5. **London Sixth Form Partnership:** The programme of activities for 2017 - 18 was provided to the committee and discussed. Mr Thompson said it was a successful, developing partnership that could be tapped in to in numerous ways. Each of the five member sixth form colleges had made a financial investment in the partnership. Mr Thompson described how staff were engaged and sharing support on different levels – he could provide a summary of engagement in the programmes. A current research project “Teach like a Pro” was underway involving 22 SFX staff in a supported experiment. The Governor liaison group would hold three meetings in the year as a new feature of the leadership and management programme. Mr Thompson added that some students would be getting involved.
ACTION: Mrs Lewis to circulate partnership programme to all governors highlighting the Governor dates.
6. **Student Experience / Learner Voice Survey [1 QUALITY]:** Mr Thompson introduced the “**Summary of the Annual Learner Voice e-survey 2016 - 17**” report and tabled copies for the committee. He outlined the methodology that had been used and summarised that the overall response to the twenty questions in the electronic survey was positive. The committee reviewed the survey. A focus group would look at the nitty gritty of the responses and there would be follow up where responses showed least satisfaction.

Mr Garvey left the meeting at 7pm. Ms Rowe took the Chair. Before he left, Mr Garvey suggested that a Head of Department should attend the first part of the next meeting. Mr Thompson suggested a vocational subject, Ms Rowe proposed English.

ACTION: Mrs Flannery / Mrs Lewis: for next meeting.

Ms Rowe resumed the discussion of the learner voice. She said it would be interesting to use the survey results to triangulate with other research and drill down to areas of most concern. Mrs Flannery spoke about how the learner voice had been developed so that it could be used to make year on year comparisons. The committee agreed that the report was a useful, accessible document.

Mrs Flannery observed that the survey was one aspect of the learner voice process which also included focus groups and course ambassadors to feed back to staff.

7. **Adult Learner experience [7 NON-CORE ACTIVITY]:** The committee received the report which had been included in the papers for the meeting summarising participation levels and satisfactory feedback



from adults who had attended the cost-recovery non-accredited programme of short part time courses mostly held in the evenings.

8. **Investors in People [4 HR]:** Mrs Flannery reported that the renewal of recognition had concluded the previous week with a three day visit by the assessor. The process had changed since the previous renewal. Staff views had been gathered via an online survey as well as meetings between the assessor and a selection of staff. The outcome would be announced once the data had been tested and was expected by the end of October. The level of recognition would be determined by the evidence gathered.
9. **Governance: [12 GOVERNANCE]**
 - 9.1. **Self-Assessment process & plan for focus morning:** Mrs Lewis confirmed that the main session on Saturday 14th October would be preparation for inspection based on group work to prepare confident responses to “Questions from Ofsted for governors – checklist” which had been included in the papers and circulated following discussion at the previous meeting. Self-assessment of the effectiveness of governance in 2016 – 17 and a skills audit would also be undertaken using a questionnaire.
 - 9.2. **Training review of 2016 – 17 and plan for 2017 – 18:** A report “Review of Governance Training & Development 2016 – 17” had been included in the papers for the meeting and was received by the committee. It was agreed that the training plan for the year would be drawn from the self-assessment completed at the focus morning.
10. **Effectiveness of committee [1 QUALITY; 12 GOVERNANCE]:** A summary of returns reviewing 2016 – 17 had been included in the papers for the meeting. Other committee members were invited to submit completed questionnaires in advance of the focus morning on 14th October.
11. **Risk Management [12 GOVERNANCE]:** Governors considered that risks were reflected on the register.
12. **Any Other Business:** there was none.
13. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 22nd February 2018

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

Membership:	Mr C Garvey, Chair	Ms C Ezekwe	Ms P Rowe
	Mrs S Flannery	Mr G Thompson	Ms S Jones
	Mr R Vianello	Fr G O’Shaughnessy	

