

SANDWELL COLLEGE

Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on
Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 3.30pm

Present: N Makin (Independent) (Committee Chair)
J Tew (Independent)
G Pennington (Principal)

Apologies: H Singh (Independent)
B Lok-Shun Hussain (Student Governor – Cadbury)

In attendance: D Holden Vice Principal, Curriculum
E Scotford Clerk to the Corporation
J Stevens Vice Principal, Quality
Sanjiv Parmar AP, Curriculum & Quality
Mark Salter TITLE??

Absent: T Kaur (Student Governor – Sandwell)

		Action
L24.16	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Harpinder Singh and Bilal Lok-Shun Hussain and were accepted by Governors. Taranpreet Kaur did not arrive.	
L24.17	<u>Declarations of any new personal or business interest or conflict with any agenda item</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: There were no new declarations.	
L24.18	<u>Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on 22 January 2024</u>	
	The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record for signing by the Chair.	
	RESOLVED THAT: the minutes be approved.	
L24.19	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
24.19.1	Minute No. L24.4.1 - Governors asked that the Programme Standards Review at the next meeting was on High Needs and Special Needs – actioned, see agenda item 5.	
24.19.2	Minute No. L24.7.3 – next meeting to include a report from Ian Smith on how apprenticeships had improved since the last SAR – outstanding, deferred to next meeting.	DH/JS
24.19.3	Minute No. L24.9.2 – safeguarding – the Safeguarding Link Governor advised that he had reviewed the SCR on his visit to the College on 20 February 2024.	
L24.20	<u>Programme Standards Review: High Needs and Special Needs</u>	
	Presentation by Elaine Groves, Head of Foundation Learning, and Mark Salter, TITLE??	

20.1	<p>There were 203 learners on different programmes which included 16-18 and 19+ with EHCP. There were 147 high needs funded learners.</p> <p>The growth over previous academic years had resulted in the student numbers this year. The target was 165-170 and the College overrecruited to that number.</p> <p>The target next year was currently 230, with 127 returning learners.</p> <p>Students were recruited from schools, independent specialist providers, Connexions, via the Connexions Adviser and in consultation with LAs.</p> <p>There were over 250 consultations for HNF next year and 70-80 would be Foundation learners.</p> <p>Activities were organised around enrolment including taster days and early enrolment next week for learners. Potential students had had access to taster days and tours of departments and the wider college. Schools were invited in on Fridays for tours of the whole campus to help transition for learners.</p>	
20.2	<p>Students were offered a number of different pathways and a holistic experience including: lifelong learning, independence; employability - for those who were more independent, next steps into the wider world of work, support for those learners working at entry L3 who need more emotional and social support - learning programmes and strategies were developed to help them cope.</p> <p>Also available was: the Sports Academy which worked in collaboration with the Albion Foundation; introduction and preparation for FE – which were one year programmes each; a supported internship programme which consisted of 70% of time in the workplace.</p> <p>A link programme was in place one day per week with the Meadows School which included a mock transition into college to make the process smooth.</p>	
20.3	<p>Governors asked if this covered sixth form and FE.</p> <p>The College explained that Foundation learning provision was housed within Central Campus at Sandwell with a separate learning area. It was curriculum delivery area for 16-18 year olds.</p>	
20.4	<p>There were 2 new pathways this year for lifelong learning.</p> <p>Complex needs provision – situated on the ground floor at Central Campus with 10 learners within that programme, the number would increase next year.</p> <p>All students received additional support, mostly 1-1, and following a holistic approach to learning and the total communication environment. Staff were trained in Makaton??, covering print and verbal communication.</p> <p>Learners were fully integrated into wider the College environment, e.g. college planters at the front of Central Campus.</p> <p>The base downstairs had a sensory room, a medical room, and personal care facilities, and was a hub for those learners to feel safe to encourage their autonomy.</p> <p>Introduction to FE and preparation for Foundation Learning</p> <p>Introduction to FE - was a one-year programme for students.</p>	

	Disconnected with education was designed to reconnect learners and encourage progress on cross college courses - this year all 20 students progressed. Example given of a student, previously disengaged with education, who had initially taken a taster session and was now progressing onto an L2 photography course next year.	
20.5	Preparation for independent learning was a one-year bespoke package. This benefitted those who had attended alternative provision who needed a very differentiated provision to access college. This built up into a full-time study programme.	
20.6	Both courses included behaviour strategies and independent living designed around social, emotional needs and managing own behaviour.	
20.7	<p>Governors asked, based on experience in the previous year, how effective had the one-year preparation for FE been.</p> <p>The College explained this was the first year of this provision so no comparison was available but all learners were going on to cross-college provision, courses listed. This first year had been very positive and successful, with relationships being created with Heads of Department so that students became accustomed to engaging with others, following rules, and managing their own behaviour. Without this provision, those students would not otherwise be accessing college as they would not have the skills. The College was putting groundwork in place with them to help them to be successful.</p>	
20.8	Programmes and outcomes were outlined.	
20.9	An example of the learner journey was given.	
20.10	Video played of learner reflections.	
20.11	New opportunities this year were highlighted: 25 different providers had been invited in, examples given. This would help prepare learners for their next step and provide parents with the information they needed to support the learners in their home life as well. Excellent feedback had been received.	
20.12	Governors suggested they visit the ground floor provision for complex needs at their next opportunity.	
20.13	Governors congratulated the College on the growth it had maintained.	
20.14	<p>Governors recognised that different methodologies were used when recruiting high needs students and asked how those first introductions were made.</p> <p>The College explained it had close relationships with 8 LAs who did transitional work and it was the preferred provider for Sandwell and Birmingham City Council because it could meet the most diverse range of needs. An explanation was given of the LA consultation process for those at secondary school with EHCPs who were asked to name their preferred place of education. Good relationships were also in place with Connexions offices and SENCos for referrals. The College received 250 consultations.</p> <p>The College had a good reputation with social workers so received many Looked After Children (LAC) referrals.</p>	
20.15	Governors appreciated the whole area was resource intensive and asked how many internal staff were involved.	

	The College advised there were 78?? teachers and LSAs working in high needs including academic and admin roles, and 17 academic staff members in Foundation Learning.	
20.16	<p>Governors asked if high needs students integrated with the wider college.</p> <p>The College confirmed they did, they were very much at the heart of the College community and were involved in non-curriculum events including One World and business events. They accessed the theatre and watched shows and were involved in Performing Arts and Photography. The Foundation learning area was on the same floor as Health and Social Care, a busy, vibrant floor. Health and Social Care students had placements supporting the College's high needs learners. The College was a large general FE college but it had a very inclusive environment.</p>	
20.17	Governors thanked the team for everything they were doing for the students.	
20.18	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the presentation on High Needs and Special Needs.	
	EG and MS left the meeting	
U24.21	<u>Quality Improvement Plan</u>	
21.1	Governors received and reviewed the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).	
21.2	Staff had asked for training, particularly in AI, because technology was changing rapidly.	
21.3	<p>Governors asked what were the priority actions looking forward.</p> <p>The College stressed a continuous process was needed. From September, welcoming students and the induction programme had to be a continuous programme. The Quality team had been restructured as a result to continually improve the quality of teaching and learning. A couple more Quality leads had been employed to enable that process. New staff needed to understand the College's way of working, examples given. Checkpoints were built in during the year.</p>	
21.4	<p>Governors noted the learning walks programme and asked what proportion of students were picked up in them.</p> <p>The College mirrored the methodology of Ofsted: an area was selected, with visits to all 10 teachers' classrooms.</p>	
21.5	Governors noted that the survey highlighted learners enjoyed their lessons.	
21.6	<p>Governors asked if all staff would be included in CPD programmes.</p> <p>The College confirmed they would and a whole CPD week was planned. Plans for the week were outlined.</p>	
21.7	In response to a Governor's question about reviews, the College acknowledged that the situation was improving but reviews needed to be more frequent.	
21.8	<p>Governors asked for an explanation of the new concept of Feed Forward.</p> <p>The College explained that Feed Forward was the next step. It was based on students understanding what they were doing well at this point, learning from the past and identifying what to do next, ensuring teachers were communicating to students how and what they needed to do to improve and</p>	

	how to apply their knowledge to future careers and courses.	
21.9	<p>Governors asked if progress had been made on monitoring destinations post-college.</p> <p>The College advised that it was trying to maintain contact via students' personal email addresses. Another option was to use a private company to contact students and feedback to the College. Other colleges had similar difficulties in monitoring destinations post-college as students moved on with their lives.</p>	
21.10	<p>Governors noted 2 areas of progress were the virtual learning platform and the virtual apprenticeships programme.</p> <p>The College explained its work in these areas. It had created an online working platform and had invested in high tech equipment. The next step was a virtual showcase.</p>	
21.11	<p>Governors noted the changing leadership structure in the Quality department and asked if there had been any new appointments since the last meeting.</p> <p>The College advised that Rachael Aston was now Director of Quality and AP over apprenticeships and Sanjiv Parmer had taken over her post as AP for Quality. A Quality and Standards Manager had been appointed along with a Quality lead, 2 more were due to be appointed with one more vacancy to be filled.</p>	
21.12	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Quality Improvement Plan.	
U24.22	<u>Quality Strategy Annual Report and Review</u>	
22.1	The Quality assessment process was explained.	
22.2	The aims of the Quality Team in 2024/2025 were: to drive continuous development and improvement across all curriculum areas and provision types, so that all provision is consistently good or outstanding by the end of the current academic year; to execute a simple, rigorous quality cycle to drive quality assurance and quality improvement.	
22.3	This would be achieved via the key strands of: College Self-Assessment and Post Inspection Action Plan; Internal Curriculum Review; External Quality Assurance Review; External Quality Assurance.	
22.4	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received and monitored the Quality Strategy Annual Report.	
U24.23	<u>Achievement targets next year</u>	
23.1	Estimated grades this year and targets for next year were outlined.	
23.2	<p>L2 and L3 were impacted by the number of exams for which outcomes were unknown at present. Targets were set in line with National Average as well as stretch targets for next year.</p> <p>Governors asked where were the real challenges apart from L2 and L3.</p> <p>The College confirmed these were the challenging areas. L2 was dominated by GCSE, L3 related to increasing numbers of AS students and A2 students. Also, this year would see a return to where results should have been without the Covid impact.</p>	

23.3	<p>Governors asked if Cadbury had continued to make the progress the College had planned for.</p> <p>The College confirmed it had at A2. AS was challenging last year because of numbers but action had been taken. AS results last year were a result of softening of the results the year before. The amount of exams at Cadbury was significant for L3 and made estimates more difficult.</p>	
23.4	<p>Governors asked if the target for apprentices was realistic at 67%.</p> <p>The College believed it was as it had worked closely on apprenticeships and monitoring progress throughout the year so knew exactly where students were at this point in time and they had to go through their end point assessments.</p>	
23.5	RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the achievement targets for the next academic year.	
U24.24	<u>Outcome of visits by external verifiers</u>	
U24.25	<u>Safeguarding update</u>	
25.1	<p>The pattern of safeguarding incidents was very similar to the previous report with most relating to mental health in a variety of forms. The last couple of months centred on exam anxiety which could be because some students the lasting impact of the Covid situation as they had not taken written, unseen exams. This manifested in self-harming which had increased over the last few months.</p> <p>The number of safeguarding incidents was higher than previously because students were more comfortable and confident to declare any issues and the stigma of admitting having a problem had been removed. The routes for reporting concerns were made clear to students.</p> <p>There were more incidents relatively at Cadbury around exam anxiety.</p> <p>There had been a decline in gang affiliation in West Bromwich that had been a worrying trend in recent years.</p>	
25.2	<p>Other incidents included physical assault but there were no major outbreaks in college or in the vicinity of the College. Most occurred around the town. The College had taken measures to stem this behaviour using College Ambassadors.</p>	
25.3	<p>Governors noted the categories and changes in numbers.</p> <p>The College explained that many students came from Birmingham where many LA services had been cut because of budget issues.</p>	
25.4	<p>Governors asked if exam anxiety would reduce as students became more accustomed to them.</p> <p>The College advised that as the Covid impact reduced, students would have taken a variety of exams at school. The College was running revision and drop-in sessions over the holidays. These were a useful sounding board for how students were feeling so any issues could be resolved.</p>	
25.5	Governors' thanks to be passed on to the Safeguarding Manager and team.	
25.6	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the safeguarding update.	
U24.26	<u>Risk Register</u>	

26.1	No risks had been raised relating to the curriculum.	
26.2	One of the risks, the change in Principal, was not included as some issues had been resolved. There was a risk with the changeover of senior leaders.	
26.3	Governors noted the highest risk was education reform, but with the General Election that might rise or decline depending on the outcome as Labour would pause the reforms.	
26.4	The College pointed out that achievement rates had been high for a number of years and were not a particular risk as there was no real change this year.	
26.5	The College pointed out that leadership change was a risk factor for Ofsted. The new cycle of inspections was due to start soon and this might accelerate when the College's next Ofsted took place.	
26.6	Governors referred to Risk 10, English and Maths, which showed a current risk score of 6, but that should be the target risk score in the end column.	
26.7	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Committee's areas of responsibility in the Risk Register.	
U24.27	<u>Policies</u>	
27.1	Access Arrangements	
	Policy deferred until it had been reviewed by SLT.	
27.2	AI	
27.2.1	Governors reviewed the policy.	
27.2.2	Ofsted would not directly inspect colleges on the usage of AI but on what impact it had made on the learner journey.	
27.2.3	Governors asked if plagiarism was an issue in the College. The College advised that AI was in its very early stages. Some students were using AI to generate their assignments but there was no way of identifying misuse at present. Software was being developed which would help. Staff and students were being trained in how to use rather than misuse AI. An AI training event was planned for teachers next term to learn about AI and was a topic for CPD week w/c 24 June 2024.	
27.2.4	Governors would welcome an AI training session.	
27.2.5	The policy would be reviewed on an annual basis to keep abreast of the rapidly evolving technology.	
27.2.6	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the AI policy.	
27.3	Care Experienced	
	Policy deferred until it had been reviewed by SLT.	
L24.28	<u>Committee Terms of Reference</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Committee Terms of Reference.	
L24.29	<u>Committee Effectiveness</u>	

	RESOLVED THAT: Governors would complete and return to the Clerk the Committee effectiveness questionnaire.	
L24.30	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
	There was no other business.	
L24.31	<u>Determination of Confidential Items</u>	
	Minute No. L24.24	
L24.32	<u>Date and time of next meeting</u>	
	Tbc	

The meeting ended at 5.15pm