

**Minutes of the
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee
held on Thursday 7 March 2019 at 8.00am
in Room 814 at the Matthew Boulton Campus**

| Present: | Apologies: |
|--|-------------------|
| Keith Horton (KH) (Chair) | Elaine Bonar (EB) |
| Daniel Millington (DM) | |
| Veronica Docherty (VD) | |
| Cliff Hall (CH) Principal | |
| Angela Myers (AM) | |
| Prue Huddleston (PH) | |
| Jane Smith (JS) Staff Governor | |
| Sam Coles (SC) Staff Governor | |
| In Attendance: | |
| Sir Dexter Hutt (SDH) | |
| Louise Jones (LJ) | |
| Liam Nevin (LN) | |
| Gill Coldicott (GC) for item 6 | |
| Connor Curtis (CC) (Student Representative) for item 6 | |
| Anthony Dennant (AD) for item 7 | |
| Patrick Geary (PG) for item 3 | |
| Jan Myatt (JM) for item 5 | |
| Alison Jones (AJ) for item 4 | |
| Hazrat Islam (HI) (ESFA Observer) | |

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Elaine Bonar.

Declarations of Interest

There were none save for those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

Item 1 - Minutes of Meeting held on 7 February 2019, Action Log and Matters Arising

It was noted that there was a missing word on page 1 and that the record should read "the data showed." Subject to this amendment the minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

The action log was noted.

Item 2 – Post Inspection Action Plan

LJ introduced this item and advised that the report reflected the position up to the end of January 2019. In that respect the table demonstrated that of the five themes, good progress was being made against two but the remaining three were RAG rated amber because it was necessary to see more evidence of impact. Amongst these it was noted that progress towards target grade for level 3 students was 34% as against the target of 40%. These were being addressed through termly review boards and targeted intervention.

PH asked how the data in relation to underperforming students was used and LJ advised that each student had an expected grade on Markbook, and staff were expected to record what was being done to support each student.

VD asked for clarification of what the 34% target measured in relation to students being "on track" and LJ clarified that this was the year end grade expected based on the students current performance. It wasn't expected that all students would now be working at the target grade but the January target reflected the proportion of students that the College expected to be working at this grade.

KH stated that he considered this to be a matter that required greater clarity, particularly in respect of where students were in the cycle of learning.

CH advised that the College was reporting that based on assessments, 34% of students on level 3 programmes were achieving stretch targets and there was a further 14% who were close. The other 52% required a greater focus.

SDH stated that the figures assumed that teachers were assessing accurately and he questioned the work being done to check and moderate this.

CH advised that he was confident that the College had a number of staff who had expertise in assessing the data, and that this was particularly true of BTEC programmes.

SDH further noted that a risk mitigation set out in the report was that the impact of training was being monitored through learning walks, but whilst these could provide a flavour of progress they were not rigorous.

LJ stated that the College had adopted an approach that was similar to an Ofsted observation and the Progress and Learning Coaches had received coaching from Ofsted inspectors providing tips on what to look for in the classroom. These were recorded against a short matrix as evidence of what was seen in the classroom.

SDH noted that the Ofsted report highlighted a significant weakness in teachers not using starting points as a basis for assessing progress and he questioned whether learning walks were facilitating the observation of progress from this baseline.

LJ stated that staff would use the information from what they observed and whilst it would not necessarily provide this evidence, the evidence from learning walks was supported by information gleaned from progress checks.

KH stated that he remained concerned that it was not clear to governors what proportion of students were where the College expected them to be at this point in the cycle, and LJ stated that the position was that 66% of students were not working at target grade but of this proportion 14% were close. However, at this point in the cycle the College expected 60% not to be performing at target grade.

KH noted that progress to target grade was variable across the four colleges as set out in the table on page 2 of the report. LJ advised that Stourbridge College was of most concern in this respect and management were interrogating how students were performing thorough the Termly Review Boards.

SDH questioned how a measurement of whether students were meeting stretch targets compared with Ofsted expectations of good progress and LJ advised that the measure was based on the top quartile of progress nationally and this would provide a good ALPS score.

KH noted that attendance had declined and asked whether this was a cause for concern. LJ advised that it was 1% higher than the same point last year but 1% lower than target. CH stated that the attendance rate compared favourably with the sector.

It was agreed that the concerns around the measurement of progress would be further discussed in the context of the presentation to follow at agenda item 3.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Item 3 – Progress Measures/ALPS Briefing (Presentation)

PG delivered a presentation on the ALPS scoring methodology and the measures that the College used to assess progress.

Following the presentation, KH asked for clarification of the different measures used with Markbook and Pro-Monitor systems. PG advised that Markbook primarily recorded academic attainment whereas observations focussed on skills development.

VD asked whether all level 3 students were set stretch targets for top quartile performance and PG advised that every student had an individual target and the stretch target was a progress measure based on the distance travelled from the starting point.

KH stated that the Committee would welcome a further discussion with the Principal and key staff to further explore the measures that were being used to determine whether students were on track for the point in the year at which they were being measured.

Item 4 (i) Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report

AJ summarised the report and advised that the College had made good progress across a number of areas; disclosure rates had improved with 14.8% of students now disclosing a disability and achievement gaps were also narrowing. There was also considerable work being done with student engagement and recent work on improving accessibility had resulted in the award of level 2 Disability Confident status.

KH thanked AJ and SC and noted that there was some interesting and excellent work demonstrated. He asked AJ whether there was an analysis or reflection of what interventions were effective. AJ advised that the report did not go into the detail in the action plan and which provided further information and a breakdown of the assurances.

SC stated that the impact measurement was ultimately the closure of achievement gaps and KH stated that he would welcome a summary commentary on the impact of interventions over the last twelve months.

VD stated that the document would benefit from a review to ensure that it was user friendly before it was added to the College website, and in particular the use of acronyms should be scrutinised.

KH stated that the Committee should see the final version of the document for review prior to publication

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That subject to the amendments set out in the preamble to this minute and the final review of the document by members of the Committee, the report be approved for publication on the College website.**

(ii) Gender Pay Gap Report

AJ summarised the report, the publication of which is a legal requirement of the College. The Committee's attention was drawn in particular to section 3 of the report which summarised the gender pay gap.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **The Committee recommend to the Corporation that it approves the content and format of the report for publication on BMet's website and the gender pay gap portal of gov.uk**

Item 5 – Priorities and Plans for Matthew Boulton College – Presentation by the Assistant Principal

JM delivered a presentation setting out her priorities for Matthew Boulton College.

At the conclusion PH queried how the College was working with employers on project based work and JM confirmed that the College was working with a range of employers including the fire service and the National Trust.

VD asked how JM was planning to address recruitment given that student numbers at the College had dropped. JM stated that curriculum staff would invite applicants in for discussion at the open evening events, with a focus on a more informal approach centred on a discussion around options for career pathways and what BMet could offer that would be unique. In addition members of her team would be joining the Schools Liaison staff for school visits, to discuss options with year 11 students.

Item 6 – Student Council Report

GC and CC attended to discuss this item. GC advised that the Student Council was progressing well and the report set out the priorities that had been agreed by the Council. It was notable that the Council had through its own initiative worked on LGBT issues, taken up first aid courses, set up a trip to Gambia to undertake voluntary work. Student satisfaction surveys were also showing an improving trend

CC further advised on some of the notable work being done by the students which included work with homelessness charities and recent attainment of the Educate and Celebrate Silver Award for LGBT student work.

VD asked CC what issues students were raising and how quickly these were responded to and CC stated that these included study spaces for A level students and more generally catering facilities, both of which the College had responded to.

The Committee noted the positive work and influence of the student Council and thanked GC and CC for attending the meeting

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Item 7 – Update on Harborne Academy

TD summarised the paper and advised the Committee that the results from 2018 had now been finalised and these were positive with eleven out of thirteen areas showing improvements against targets set. The report also contained the forecast for the forthcoming exams and this was also positive.

Teaching and learning was generally very positive with the Head Teacher having instigated a clear focus on what was happening in the classroom and the behaviour of pupils in school. SDH asked whether teachers were following lesson plans and TD confirmed this and explained the arrangements for differentiation and target setting.

TD further advised that the school was now over pan for the first time, with a waiting list and a growing cohort of demand from prospective pupils from the Harborne area.

VD stated that the Academy had progressed considerably over the last two years and sought reassurance that this could be sustained because it was apparent that considerable additional resources including consultancy support had been provided during this time. TD advised that that there were no longer any consultancy costs in the school and the agency budget was low.

SC queried the reference to work scrutiny in the report and TD advised that this entailed a review of the work completed by students in their subject books and this was a further review measure used by the school in addition to observations.

KH noted the encouraging progress at the Academy and thanked TD for attending and presenting the report.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Any Other Business

AM updated the Committee on the learner walks that she had recently undertaken. These entailed fourteen observations across the Arts Centre, Stourbridge College, James Watt and Matthew Boulton. In each case her views had largely aligned with the Assistant Principals who had accompanied her.

In summary, the teaching observed at Matthew Boulton was much improved from the last visit, the Arts centre classes were good, but two sessions observed at Stourbridge and one at James Watt were not sufficiently extending the learning and stretching the students.

Date of the next meeting – Thursday 13th June 2019 8.00am

Signed:..........(Chair)

Dated:.....13th June 2019.....

